

## **School of Engineering enrollment ranks first in state**

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University of Bridgeport's School of Engineering boasts more graduate students than any other university in Connecticut, and it has the second-largest enrollment in New England, according to an annual survey of engineering schools released this month by the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE).

In addition, more master's degree students graduate from UB than from any other school in the state, and graduation rates at UB are the second-highest in New England, after MIT, outpacing such schools as Northeastern University, Yale, and Brown.

Specifically, master's degree graduates doubled in 2008, to 302, up from 155 who were conferred degrees in 2007. And as of the fall semester of 2008, UB had 1,477 students enrolled in master's degree and Ph.D. engineering programs.

"That's huge," said Michael Gibbons, ASEE director of data research, who prepared the report, "Profiles of Engineering and Engineering Technology Colleges." "Schools that aren't very small but are medium-sized have enough of an infrastructure to grow, and UB sits in that sweet spot."

The ASEE report comes amid news that engineering schools throughout the U.S. are starting to grow after a protracted slump in enrollment, and amid warnings about widening gaps between the need for a fresh crop of engineers and declining enrollment rates of trained professionals.

Across the country, the number of master's degree candidates who graduated rose to 39,000, an increase of 5.4 percent.

Tarek Sobh, dean of the School of Engineering, credited its emphasis on providing practical multidisciplinary programs. "Why this is happening is because of new programs, like biomedical engineering, that are interdisciplinary and real," Sobh said. "They're designed for people to go on and do research or get a job. Our kids get out ready to work. We also have internships with 600 companies – UBS, Sikorsky, Pitney Bowes, Unilever – and our students know that they'll go on and work with these companies."