Purdue University is one of 69 land grant colleges and universities which owe their origin to the Land-Grant Act of 1862, otherwise known as the Morrill Act. Three years after its passage, the General Assembly of Indiana voted to avail itself of the provisions of this Act and began preliminary plans for a school devoted primarily to the agricultural and mechanical arts.

In 1869 the Assembly voted to accept a gift of land and money from John Purdue and other generous Lafayette citizens declaring in appreciation the name of the new institution to be Purdue University. The University is supported mainly by state appropriation, supplemented by federal grants.

Actual instruction began in 1874 with 39 students and a faculty of six. Today Purdue conducts classes and research in more than 50 principal buildings and controls over 7,000 acres of land. Serving on its various staffs are more than 3,000 persons. In terms of undergraduate enrollment Purdue's School of Engineering is the world's largest.

Undergraduate and graduate instruction is offered in agriculture, aeronautics and air transportation, chemical, metallurgical, civil, electrical, and mechanical engineering, engineering-law, trade and industrial education, home economics, pharmacy, physical education, science, and education and applied psychology.

Extensive experiment stations in both engineering and agriculture are maintained by the University. The agriculture extension division, through the county agents, services the entire state. Courses credited toward a college degree and the two-year Technical Institute diploma are offered through Technical Extension Centers throughout Indiana. The main Purdue centers are at Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, Michigan City, Hammond, and Columbus. A variety of courses are also offered by the Adult Education programs sponsored by the University.

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