Aviation Summer Camp
Frequently Asked Questions

When does camp fill up?
Historically, Aviation camp has filled up by March, and Advanced Flight camp has filled up by the middle of January. However, this does not predict 2020 registration. Ultimately, the earlier you register, the better. We will have a wait list after the camp has filled up. The website will be updated once a camp is full. To add your name to the waitlist, please email reina.t.cooke@wmich.edu. Please note that while we are happy to take names for the waitlist, we will not be adding any additional space and any openings would be the result of a cancellation. There is no need to submit a deposit until WMU contacts you regarding a new open space.

Why does Advanced Flight Camp fill up so quickly? How can I get in next year?
Our Advanced Flight Camp is designed as a follow-up camp for previous WMU Aviation Summer Campers. Therefore, we give previous WMU Aviation Summer Campers early access to registration. Additionally, space is extremely limited. Based on the nature of the camp and our resources, we are only able to offer ten camper slots. We recommend registering as soon as possible, preferably the first day that public registration opens. To access early registration next year, join us for Aviation Summer Camp!

What is the registration process like?
When registration is open, a gold button that says “Register” will populate at the top of the summer camp webpage. Clicking on this button will walk you through the process. Registration includes two downloadable forms and a brief essay. The first form, which will ask for basic biographical and contact information, will be uploaded online with the essay. The essay will ask you to respond to the following:

- Who are you? (Describe your family, educational background, and your career goals) Describe your course load, extracurricular activities, and general work capacity
- Any previous aviation experience that you have had
- What are your reasons for pursuing a college degree?
- What are your reasons for registering for the Aviation Summer Camp?
- Any fun facts, hobbies or interests, and things you would like us to know about you.

Thoughful, well-constructed, honest responses are expected. The essay will only be used by camp staff to get to know you before you arrive at camp. The second form, which consists of medical information and waivers must be downloaded, printed, completed, and put in the mail within one week of submitting the online application.
Finally, a deposit is required to hold your spot. The $500 non-refundable deposit can be made online by clicking the “Make Payment” button on the summer camp homepage. We accept Visa, Mastercard, and Discover. The deposit will not be processed by WMU until camper placement is confirmed.

I wanted to join the Advanced Flight Camp but now it’s full. Won’t the Aviation Summer Camp be too basic for me, or not relevant to a future pilot?

We certainly don’t think so! Campers in the Aviation Summer Camp still fly twice, once during the day and once at night in our Cirrus SR20, in addition to our simulator, but also have other activities that allows them to gain experience in all aspects of the aviation industry. This includes hands on aircraft maintenance, airport and airline management activities, and a behind the scenes look at some of the biggest and best aviation companies’ aircraft and operations. Ultimately, these experiences are still extremely relevant and beneficial to a future pilot! Experiencing other aspects of the industry make a well-rounded pilot who can appreciate all that it takes to keep aircraft flying! Many students who have previous flight experience or who have grown up in an aviation family still choose to register for the aviation camp. Our goal for the Aviation Summer Camp is to expose campers to all of the career opportunities within aviation, including the different options even within piloting (airline, corporate, cargo, etc) that they might not have previously considered.

The Advanced Flight camp was originally developed as a “follow up” camp for campers who had already attended the WMU Aviation summer camp and therefore does not participate in a number of the activities that the Aviation Summer Camp does. In previous years, we have even had a few students who did not attend the aviation camp with us before the advanced flight camp who felt like they "missed out" on some of the activities that our aviation campers got to do.

All of our camps also give campers a preview of life as a WMU Aviation student, or a “try before you buy” a full semester of tuition 😊 This is extremely helpful in gauging whether Western Michigan University could be the right fit for your next educational step. All campers will gain a familiarity with campus, staff, and student life at WMU, making the transition much easier if they do choose WMU.

How do I know my camper spot is confirmed?

Once we have confirmed we have space available for you, we will process your deposit. Doing so will send you a confirmation email letting you know that we have processed your deposit and that we will be sending more information shortly. If we do not have space available, WMU will not process your deposit and will instead contact you regarding your position on the waitlist. Please allow up to 24-48 hours for us to evaluate your registration packet and camper slot availability. Deposits will only be processed during business hours Monday-Friday.
Can I log the flight time?
Yes! Half the time campers spend in the air is loggable, as we have two campers (one flying, one in the back seat observing) in each aircraft with a flight instructor. Campers will fly to their destination airport, get out, and switch positions. The time spent flying (in front) is loggable. We will give each camper a logbook, but encourage you to bring your own if you already have one.

What is your cancellation/refund policy?
WMU is happy to return any payment towards the remaining balance, with the exception of the deposit. The $500 deposit is non-refundable unless a family death or verifiable medical cause prevents the camper from attending.

Do you offer payment plans?
Please contact reina.t.cooke@wmich.edu if the two payments of $500 and $1,095 (or $1,595 for Advanced Flight) is not feasible for you.

Is financial assistance available?
We offer a camp scholarship application for a maximum award of $500. We are also happy to discuss setting up a payment plan that works for you, to help make the payments more affordable. Please contact reina.t.cooke@wmich.edu if you would like to set up a payment plan.

How many other campers will there be?
We have capacity for thirty-two campers each week. In July, ten of these campers are Advanced Flight campers.

When will I get my camp schedule?
Campers will receive their schedule upon check-in on the first day of camp. Our schedule is heavily dependent on weather and external partners and is therefore subject to change. WMU will provide a list of planned activities along with the Camp Guide a few months before camp.

What age are the campers?
All campers are in high school, ages 13-17. The average age is 16 and most campers tend to be entering their junior year, but all ages 13-17 are welcome. Historically, we have all age groups represented.

Will I have a roommate?
Yes, rooms are double-occupancy. We do our best to keep campers of the same age or close to it in the same room. The residence halls are co-ed, but males and females have separate wings.
Can I request my roommate?
Yes! All roommate requests must be submitted by both individuals and submitted to Reina Cooke at Reina.T.Cooke@wmich.edu by May 15th, 2020.

Will there be chaperones?
Three student counselors will be with students during all activities, as well as two full time staff members for supervision.

How do I get to camp?
Campers are responsible for getting to and from Kalamazoo.

Driving

- To get to the University’s main campus, take Interstate 94 to exit 74 North onto U.S. Route 131. Travel 2.8 miles on U.S. 131 N to Stadium Drive East or exit 36. Stadium Drive east about 2.5 miles. Turn left on Oliver Street. Turn right onto Ring Road South, and then left onto West Michigan Avenue. Turn right onto Ring Road North. The Western Heights Residence Halls will be on the left side of the street.

Flying

- AZO: Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport
  - 5 miles from WMU Main Campus
  - WMU Camp Staff can arrange transportation from airport to campus*
  - Uber, Lyft, taxi services and rental cars are available
- GRR: Gerald R Ford Grand Rapids International Airport
  - 55 miles from WMU Main Campus
  - Uber, Lyft, taxi services and rental cars are available
- DTW: Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport
  - 130 miles from WMU Main Campus
  - Rental cars are available
- ORD: Chicago O’Hare Airport
  - 160 miles from WMU Main Campus
  - Rental cars are available
- MDW: Chicago Midway Airport
  - 140 miles from WMU Main Campus
  - Rental cars are available

Train

- Kalamazoo has an Amtrak station 3 miles from WMU Main Campus
- WMU Camp staff can arrange transportation from station to campus*
*If you plan to use transportation from camp staff, you must notify Reina Cooke no later than Friday, May 15th. Please send your flight/train information, estimated time of arrival, and number of passengers to be picked up. Flights/trains must arrive between 2-6pm on Sunday for staff to be able to accommodate transportation. Please contact Reina Cooke directly for specific questions and arrangements.

Transportation during the week of camp will be provided by WMU.

**Are cellphones allowed?**
Yes! In fact, we encourage the use of cell phones to stay in contact with parents/guardians. Take plenty of photos! There will be times throughout the week when we ask campers to refrain from using their phone out of respect to the presenter or tour guide.

**What is the daily schedule?**
Every day is unique! Generally, we begin each day with breakfast at 7:15am and end with a social/fun activity around 9pm. With only six days at camp, we pack each day full of activities. A complete daily schedule will be given to students upon check in. Our schedule is heavily dependent on weather and external partners and is therefore subject to change.

**What do campers eat?**
WMU camp staff will provide three meals per day. Breakfast and dinner will be provided at our Hoekje/Bigelow Dining center, where students can eat as much as they like from the wide array of choices. WMU Dining services offers a variety of dining options designed to meet a wide range of food preferences and needs. Camp staff throughout the day will also offer snacks. Campers will have the opportunity to purchase additional snacks throughout the week. Lunch will be provided from a variety of local restaurants, as we will be off campus during the day. We are happy to accommodate any dietary restrictions.

**I have dietary restrictions or allergies. What do I need to do?**
We are happy to accommodate any dietary restrictions. The medical information asks for allergy and dietary needs. We will ensure that options are available and are happy to work with you to provide alternate options as needed. For breakfast and dinner, WMU’s dining services labels every item with potential allergens and can provide individually prepared meals if needed. For lunch, we will issue a “lunch menu” with various options from local restaurants for you to complete. We will include options to accommodate any allergies or dietary restrictions you listed on the medical information and can discuss additional options if you do not see one that meets your needs.
**Is this camp safe?**
Camp counselors and staff are committed 24/7 to ensuring camper safety. Our staff has completed significant training and background checks. At the WMU College of Aviation, safety is not just a rhetorical exercise. Safety is a practical exercise in risk identification, measurement, and mitigation. The focus on safety is broad and extends from the classroom, to the laboratory, to the flight line, to the skies above them all. The culture of safety impacts everyone at the college. Safety is at the core of what we do. The equipment and training tools used by the college, and the manner that individuals utilize the equipment, demonstrates the College of Aviation’s commitment to safety.

**Should I bring spending money?**
Spending money is not required. The camp fee covers all necessary expenses for the week, including food (three meals a day). However, campers will have the opportunity to purchase snacks and additional food from nearby Kalamazoo restaurants/shops some evenings. The residence hall has a microwave and refrigerator available. There are also vending machines located in the lobby.

Campers will also have the opportunity purchase spirit wear or souvenirs from the WMU Campus Bookstore, the WMU Aviation Spirit Shop, the AirZoo Gift Shop, and other tour gift shops (if time allows). Campers will be responsible for holding any spending money that is sent with them. Campers are encouraged to keep their rooms locked and their spending money kept hidden/secure.

**What if I’m not comfortable with one of the activities?**
We understand that it may not be for everyone! Campers are welcome to stay with the camp staff and not participate during an activity if it is out of their comfort zone.

**Is housing available if I arrive early or stay after camp?**
No. All campers will have to check in and check out at the assigned times. We would recommend a hotel if you need to stay in the Kalamazoo area before or after camp.

https://wmich.edu/visit/hotels

**As a parent, I’d like to stay in the Kalamazoo area during the week of camp. Where should I stay?**
There is no on-campus accommodations for parents, with the exception of The Oakland hotel. You can find a complete list of hotels in the Kalamazoo area here: https://wmich.edu/visit/hotels.
As a camper, can I drive myself to camp and leave my car parked on campus during the week?
Yes. Please ensure you contact Reina Cooke to arrange a parking pass before camp begins. If you do not arrange a parking pass, your car is subject to ticketing.

Can I go running or go to the gym during camp?
University Policy does not allow minors to use the gym facility. If time allows, campers can run around campus, pending parental/guardian approval for this to be unsupervised. We are not able to dedicate one staff member for individual supervision and do not leave campers alone with camp staff.