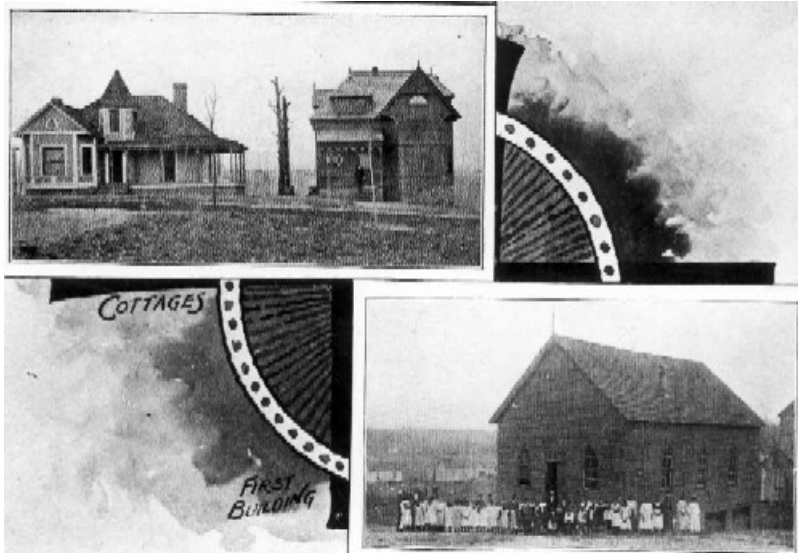


## Winston-Salem State University <sup>[1]</sup>

### Winston-Salem State University

by Charles W. Wadlington, 2006

See also: [Historically Black Colleges and Universities for K-8 Students](#) <sup>[2]</sup>



Slater Industrial academy and Cottages, constructed 1890s. Image courtesy of Winston-Salem State University Archives.

[Winston-Salem State University](#) <sup>[3]</sup> was founded in Winston-Salem <sup>[4]</sup> as the Slater Industrial Academy, a school for African Americans <sup>[5]</sup>, on 28 Sept. 1892. Housed in a one-room frame structure, the school had 25 pupils and 1 teacher. In 1895 it was recognized by the state of North Carolina, and two years later it was chartered by the General Assembly as Slater Industrial and State Normal School.

In 1925 the General Assembly recognized the school's leadership in the field of elementary teacher training by granting it a new charter, extending its curriculum above normal school level, and changing its name to Winston-Salem Teachers College. The school thus became the first African American institution in the nation to grant degrees for teaching in the elementary grades. In 1953 a nursing school was established at the college, awarding graduates the degree of bachelor of science. The state legislature once again revised the college's charter in 1957



Winston Salem State University. Image courtesy of NC Office of Archives & History.

<sup>[6]</sup> by authorizing expansion of the curriculum to include secondary education and any other specific types of training as directed and determined by the State Board of Higher Education. The General Assembly also approved changing the school's name from Winston-Salem Teachers College to Winston-Salem State College in 1963, and to Winston-Salem State University (WSSU) in 1969. Two years later, the General Assembly reorganized higher education in North Carolina, and in 1972 WSSU became one of the 16 constituent institutions of the [University of North Carolina System](#) <sup>[7]</sup>.

By the early 2000s WSSU enrolled more than 2,900 students from all over the United States and many foreign countries. Majors are offered in traditional fields such as English and business and in newer fields such as commercial music and sports management. Graduate programs are offered through an interinstitutional arrangement. The school's 94-acre campus is the home of a sculpture garden and the [Diggs Art Gallery](#) <sup>[8]</sup>. The university also owns a 250-acre camp, Camp Robert Vaughn, located about 20 miles from the main campus.

## Educator Resources:

Grades K-8: <https://www.ncpedia.org/historically-black-colleges-and-universities-K-8> [2]

## References:

"Historical Sketch," *Winston-Salem State University Catalog* (1985).

William S. Powell, *Higher Education in North Carolina* (1970).

## Additional Resources:

Slater Industrial Academy (1915 image), Digital Forsyth: <http://www.digitalforsyth.org/photos/1184> [9]

A Brief History of Winston-Salem State University: <http://www.wssu.edu/cg-okelly-library/archives/brief-history.aspx> [10]

Historic Marker Dedicated to, Dr. Simon Green Atkins, Saturday, June 11, 2005, Chatham County Historical Association: <http://chathamhistory.org/atkinsarchive.html> [11]

Portrait of Simon Green Atkins, founder of Slater Industrial Academy, Digital Forsyth: <http://www.digitalforsyth.org/photos/1868> [12]

NC Highway Historical Marker J-31: <https://www.ncdcr.gov/about/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program/Markers.aspx?sp=Markers&k=Markers&sv=J-31> [6]

Act to charter Slater Industrial and State Normal School, Public laws and resolutions of the State of North Carolina passed by the General Assembly at its session of 1899 [13], North Carolina Digital Collections.

Act to change name, 1925, Public-local laws passed by the General Assembly: Private laws passed by the General Assembly [1925] [7], North Carolina Digital Collections.

Act to change name, 1963: Session laws and resolutions passed by the General Assembly [1963] [14], North Carolina Digital Collections.

Act to change name, 1969: Session laws and resolutions passed by the General Assembly [1969] [15], North Carolina Digital Collections.

Winston-Salem State University Yearbooks: <https://lib.digitalnc.org/search?ln=en&p=691:%22Winston-Salem+State+University%22%20AND%20655:%22Yearbooks%22&sf=year&so=a> [16]

## Image Credit:

Slater Industrial academy and Cottages, constructed 1890s. Image courtesy of Winston-Salem State University Archives.

Winston Salem State University. Image courtesy of NC Office of Archives & History. Available from <https://www.ncdcr.gov/about/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program/Markers.aspx?sp=Markers&k=Markers&sv=J-31> [6] (accessed November 16, 2012).

## Subjects:

Black and African American People [17]

Education [18]

Gilded Age (1876-1900) [19]

Universities and colleges [20]

## Authors:

Wadelington, Charles W. [21]

## Origin - location:

Winston-Salem State University [22]

## From:

Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press. [23]

1 January 2006 | Wadelington, Charles W.

---

**Source URL:** <https://ncpedia.org/winston-salem-state-university>

## Links

[1] <https://ncpedia.org/winston-salem-state-university> [2] <https://www.ncpedia.org/historically-black-colleges-and-universities-K-8> [3] <https://www.wssu.edu/> [4] <https://ncpedia.org/geography/winston-salem> [5] <https://ncpedia.org/african-americans/introduction> [6] <https://www.ncdcr.gov/about/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program/Markers.aspx?sp=Markers&k=Markers&sv=J-31> [7] <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/public-local-laws-passed-by-the-general-assembly-private-laws-passed-by-the-general-assembly-1925/4118086?item=4146740> [8] <http://www.wssu.edu/diggs> [9] <http://www.digitalforsyth.org/photos/1184> [10] <http://www.wssu.edu/cg-okelly-library/archives/brief-history.aspx> [11] <http://chathamhistory.org/atkinsarchive.html> [12] <http://www.digitalforsyth.org/photos/1868> [13] <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/public-laws-and-resolutions-of-the-state-of-north-carolina-passed-by-the-general-assembly-at-its-session-of-...1899/4115703> [14] <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/session-laws-and-resolutions->

passed-by-the-general-assembly-1963/4020463 [15] <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/session-laws-and-resolutions-passed-by-the-general-assembly-1969/4020460> [16] <https://lib.digitalnc.org/search?ln=en&p=691:%22Winston-Salem+State+University%22%20AND%20655:%22Yearbooks%22&sf=year&so=a> [17] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/african-americans> [18] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/education> [19] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/gilded-age-1876-1> [20] <https://ncpedia.org/category/subjects/universities-and-> [21] <https://ncpedia.org/category/authors/wadlington-charle> [22] <https://ncpedia.org/category/origin-location/coastal-55> [23] <https://ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/encyclopedia->