



PROGRESS REPORT ON UWS/WTCS CREDIT TRANSFER

May 2007

Competing successfully in the 21st Century requires a workforce with stronger academic foundations, more and greater technical skills, and an appetite for lifelong learning. The occupational preparation programs offered by the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) continue to provide important opportunities for young adults and working-age adults to gain the skills and knowledge needed to begin a career. As the needs of the workplace continue to evolve, career advancement opportunities for many technical college students will depend on the ease with which they can access additional formal education and training.

The University of Wisconsin System (UWS) and the WTCS have worked together since 1989 to improve transfer opportunities for WTCS students. Through the adoption of the Joint UWS/WTCS Plan, the two systems have committed themselves to further enhancing credit transfer opportunities. In undertaking this effort, the leadership of the WTCS and the UWS have placed their priorities on developing solutions that are responsive to the demands of students, employers, and taxpayers, maximize UWS recognition of the skills and knowledge acquired through course work completed at a technical college, and promote seamless solutions to transfer while safeguarding the integrity of the educational experiences offered by the technical colleges and UWS institutions.

Further, the WTCS and UWS have worked to align curriculum, increase the rigor of technical college offerings, improve advising services for WTCS and UWS students, and adopt policies that promote increased options for WTCS students transferring to UWS institutions. The UW Board of Regents has periodically adopted changes in UWS transfer policies that have expanded the number of and kinds of technical college credits UWS institutions could accept. As a result, the number of former WTCS students successfully transferring credits to UWS institutions has expanded from 1,553 in 1991-92 to 3,380 in 2005-06.

Over the last year, the leadership of the WTCS and the UWS have worked together to address credit transfer issues and further expand transfer opportunities for WTCS students as outlined in the 2003 UWS/WTCS Plan for Enhancing Credit Transfer and Expanding the Number of Baccalaureate Degree Holders in Wisconsin (see Appendix A). System staff, appointed by Presidents Dan Clancy and Kevin Reilly continues to work collaboratively to guide the implementation steps identified in the plan and ensure broad-based support and involvement among faculty, staff, and administrative leaders.

Transfer of Occupational/Technical Courses - Part I of the Joint UWS/WTCS Plan concerned the transfer of occupational/technical courses from WTCS associate degree career and technical programs. In adopting Part I, the UW Board of Regents committed itself to adopting a transfer policy that would permit UWS institutions to evaluate WTCS occupational and technical courses for the awarding of transfer credit on the same basis as similar occupational and technical courses offered at any other regionally or nationally accredited institution. Priority implementation is targeted on

current articulation agreements and institutions having the highest level of transfer activity. As courses are approved for transfer, the information is documented on the computerized Transfer Information System (TIS).

General Education - Part II of the Joint UWS/WTCS Plan directly addressed the number of general education credits that would transfer from the WTCS to the UWS from 15 to 30. This has led to the development of a number of 1+1 agreements between the WTCS and UWS. Most recently, Mid-State Technical College and the UW Marathon County signed an agreement; this follows other agreements at Fox Valley Technical College and Northcentral Technical College.

Degree Completion Program Agreements - Part III of the Joint UWS/WTCS Plan committed the WTCS and UWS to continue the development of 2+2 degree completion programs. In traditional undergraduate programs in the UWS, students typically spend much of the first two years completing academic foundation courses. Then, in the second two years of a four-year program, undergraduates take specialized courses in a major field. In contrast, technical college applied associate degree students complete between 36 and 47 credits in specialized courses in career and technical fields and between 21 and 30 credits of general studies courses over the two years leading to their degree. Degree completion programs recognize the specialized skills and knowledge that graduates of applied associate degree programs have already acquired and provide higher level courses in the major field and additional academic foundation courses to round out the student's baccalaureate education. The most recent program was approved at UW-Green Bay. The Bachelor of Applied Studies (B.A.S.) in Interdisciplinary Studies is designed for graduates of any Wisconsin Technical College applied associate degree (A.A.S.) to earn a liberal education baccalaureate degree at the UW-Green Bay. The B.A.S. offers a curriculum of liberal learning as a complement to a technical college education. The degree program is based on the principle that learning grounded in liberal studies enables students to develop perspectives and competencies that are beneficial to them in any work or community environment.

Articulation Agreements - Closely related to degree completion programs, articulation agreements cover specific program-to-program transfer between WTCS and UWS institutions. The WTCS and UWS have nearly 500 individual articulation agreements which match course work completed in a specific WTCS program at a specific technical college, to a related major at a specific UWS institution. In April 2007, statewide articulation agreements were signed between the UWS and the WTCS in the area of Early Childhood Education. These statewide agreements make available a statewide curriculum that will ultimately provide credit transfer for WTCS students interested in pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education and/or Elementary Education.

Credit Transfer Contract - Part IV of the Joint UWS/WTCS Plan committed the two systems to develop a written contract to specify how the courses transfer to the specific UWS majors at each UWS institution. This transfer contract includes information about transferability of occupational/technical courses, general studies courses, additional requirements for degree completion programs and other kinds of program-to-program articulation agreements and is included in the computerized Transfer Information System.

Transfer of WTCS Liberal Arts Degree Graduates - Part V of the Joint UWS/WTCS Plan allowed the UWS to accept up to 72 credits for graduates of the WTCS liberal arts programs at Madison, Milwaukee, and Nicolet Area Technical Colleges. Recently, an additional WTCS liberal arts program was approved by the WTCS State Board and the UW Board of Regents at Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC). This degree program differs from the existing liberal arts programs at

Madison, Milwaukee and Nicolet Area Technical Colleges in that the program will be delivered collaboratively between CVTC and the UWS institutions utilizing courses and resources from both systems. The degree program will consist of a curriculum of CVTC courses in disciplines currently offered as part of its applied associate degree programs with the remaining one-third of the courses offered by UWS institutions through a variety of existing course options. The program is scheduled to begin the fall of 2007.

Expansion of Baccalaureate Degree Holders in Wisconsin - Part VI of the Joint UWS/WTCS Plan sought to address the state's need to increase the number of adults in Wisconsin who have completed a baccalaureate degree. To this end, the UWS and the WTCS created a broad-based committee to explore additional options for expanding the number of baccalaureate degree holders in Wisconsin. Currently, seven projects are currently underway which address the goals of the Committee on Baccalaureate Education or COBE (see Appendix B).

WTCS/UWS Annual Transfer Report – In addition to addressing the component of the plan, both systems annually monitor and report on the students who transfer credits from the WTCS to the UWS or from the UWS to the WTCS. In addition, as part of the previous efforts to improve articulation and credit transfer agreements, a separate report explores more broadly the flow of students moving between the two postsecondary systems, regardless of the actual transfer of credit. The WTCS Transfer Report can be found at http://www.wtcsystem.edu/initiatives/credit_transfer/index.htm

Transfer Information System (TIS) - The WTCS and the UWS provide all students, faculty, and counselors with a single source to consult about what courses will transfer from technical colleges to UWS institutions and how course work completed at a technical college applies towards the completion of any specific major at a UWS institution. The Transfer Information System, or TIS, provides students in the WTCS and the UWS with on-line access to information about the transfer of credit within and between the two postsecondary systems. TIS contacts from both systems are linked for exchange of information and the overall smooth operation of the transfer system. Leadership from both Systems continues to collaborate on this important transfer tool. The TIS website can be found at: <http://www.uwsa.edu/tis/index.htm>

In summary, the Joint UWS/WTCS Plan began implementation in Fall 2004 for many of the changes described above. The work of enhancing transfer opportunities for WTCS students did not end then, but is part of an ongoing process to promote seamless education and lifelong learning. While the magnitude of this undertaking is challenging, WTCS and UW leadership, faculty, and staff continue to work together to develop new and innovative ways to meet the educational needs of Wisconsin.

**UWS/WTCS Plan for Enhancing Credit Transfer
and Expanding the Number of Baccalaureate Degree Holders in Wisconsin
Fall 2003**

Part I: Transfer of Occupational/Technical Courses

A new policy will be established that will enable UW institutions to transfer WTCS occupational/technical courses on a course-by-course basis. These courses will be reviewed by UW faculty at each UWS institution, and will transfer if they are found to be comparable or equivalent to UW courses at each institution. These courses will be officially posted on the Transfer Information System (TIS).

Part II: Transfer of WTCS General Education Core Courses

Subject to review and approval by the faculties at each UWS institution, a list of WTCS general education core courses will be established that will transfer and apply to UW institutions. WTCS students in applied associate degree programs will be able to transfer up to 30 credits from these courses, and apply them toward general education and/or other degree requirements at UW institutions. The manner in which they apply will depend upon the student's major and the general education and program requirements of the particular UW institution.

Part III: Degree Completion Program Agreements

The two Systems will continue to develop "2+2" degree completion programs where WTCS students will be able to transfer additional courses toward a UW four-year degree. WTCS students selecting these programs will receive a written program agreement that will specify the courses that will transfer, how they will apply, and what additional requirements will be needed for graduation.

Part IV: Credit Transfer Contract

WTCS students will be able to check and confirm how their courses will transfer towards a UW degree by referencing the Transfer Information System (TIS). The TIS printed report will serve as a written credit transfer contract for students who successfully complete the courses.

Part V: Transfer of WTCS Liberal Arts Degree Graduates

Students who graduate from WTCS liberal arts (college parallel) programs at MATC-Madison, MATC-Milwaukee and Nicolet with an associate of arts or sciences degree specifically aligned with the UW associate degree will be able to transfer up to 72 credits and have their university-wide general education requirements satisfied at any UW institution, subject to review and approval by the faculties at each UWS institution.

Part VI: Expansion of Baccalaureate Degree Holders in Wisconsin

A broad-based committee will be created to explore additional options for expanding the number of baccalaureate degree holders in Wisconsin in collaborative and cost-effective ways.

| Joint UWS/WTCS Committee on Baccalaureate Expansion Recommended Strategies | |
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| Topic | Strategy |
| A. Baccalaureate of Applied Science or General Studies for Career Advancement | Develop degree completion programs targeted to working adult students who hold an associate degree and who are in need of a baccalaureate degree to assist in their career progression. |
| B. Baccalaureate Degree Completion Programs in Fields with High Student and Labor Market Demand | Develop new baccalaureate degree completion programs in areas of high student or labor market demand (<i>e.g.</i> , Business, Nursing, Early Childhood, and Special Education). |
| C. Baccalaureate Degree Programs Available at WTCS Institutions and UW Colleges | Offer baccalaureate degree programs at WTCS institutions and the UW Colleges taught by faculty from UW four-year institutions. |
| D. Career-focused Pre-major Associate of Science Degree Programs | Develop career-focused pre-major associate of science degree programs at WTCS liberal arts colleges. |
| E. Collaborative Degree Programs | Develop collaborative WTCS associate of applied science degree programs with UWS two-year (1+1) and four-year institutions (1+3). |
| F. Financial Aid Assistance for Students from Lower Income Families | Advocate for the removal of financial barriers that prevent or inhibit students from lower income families from earning a college degree through the UWS and WTCS. |
| G. Graduation Completion Project | Identify and contact students who have dropped out of college after completing a substantial portion of their baccalaureate degree programs, and facilitate their return to complete their degree. |
| H. Comprehensive Gateway to Higher Education Opportunities in Wisconsin | Develop statewide communication and outreach strategies to provide students, parents, and employers with information about educational opportunities in Wisconsin. |
| I. Credit for Non-Traditional Learning Experiences | Develop a coordinated process to assess and award college credit to students for learning gained through their work, military service, and other educationally-related experiences. |
| J. On-line and Other Alternative Delivery Options | Explore systemwide and statewide approaches to developing, coordinating, and promoting on-line learning and other delivery alternatives to residential, on-campus degree programs. |
| K. Pre-College Programs | Assess, enhance and promote pre-college programs offered by UWS and WTCS institutions to encourage underserved populations to aspire to and prepare for admission to and success in college. |
| L. Early Assessment and Intervention Programs to Promote College Readiness | Develop and implement early assessment and intervention programs to encourage high school students to assess and enhance their preparation for postsecondary education. |
| M. Expanded Academic and Career Advising Initiatives | Expand academic and career advising programs and services, such as those focused on helping students make successful transitions within and between postsecondary institutions, to support and encourage retention and degree completion. |