UW Colleges Restructuring Background

January 22, 2018

This document provides a general overview of the UW Colleges restructuring initiative, as well as answers to specific questions below.

- More information about the project is available online at [www.wisconsin.edu/uw-restructure](http://www.wisconsin.edu/uw-restructure)
- Sign up for project updates at [https://www.wisconsin.edu/uw-restructure/site-updates](https://www.wisconsin.edu/uw-restructure/site-updates)

**Purpose of the Restructuring**

1. Our goal is to expand access and provide more educational opportunities for more students.
   - We want to bring **more classes on-site** to the two-year campuses, including eventually offering upper-level courses.
   - Post-integration, we will **maintain existing tuition levels** for classes currently offered at the two-year institutions to keep them affordable for students and families. Our two-year campuses are critical access points for students, particularly those at greater risk of not being able to afford college: first generation, low income, and rural students.
   - Students will still be able to transfer between all UW System institutions if they meet the institution’s requirements, just as they can today.

2. We want to leverage the resources and shared talent of our institutions at a time when overall enrollments at UW Colleges are declining. This is impacted by Wisconsin’s demographic challenges of a declining birth rate and demand for a more educated workforce.
   - By 2040 in Wisconsin, nearly 95% of total population growth in Wisconsin will be age 65 and older, while those of working age 18-64 will increase only about 1%.
   - Our labor force growth will be essentially flat, while the demand for an educated labor force is growing exponentially. For example, according to the *Institute for the Future*, it is estimated that 85% of the technology jobs that will exist in 2030 have not been invented yet.
   - We must plan for the future now to get more students through the educational pipeline to help meet Wisconsin’s needs. We must do this by improving access to higher education and keeping it affordable for students and families.

3. The restructuring will help ensure the future viability and sustainability of all our campuses.
   - The restructuring will allow the UW System to better address current and projected enrollment and financial challenges at the two-year institutions, while maintaining the important UW presence in local communities.
   - Business and community leaders stress the important economic and cultural role UW institutions play in their regions.
   - Leverage resources and shared talent at our institutions to get more students into and through the educational pipeline.

**Admissions**

- Students should continue to apply to the campus they wish to attend. If a student wants to attend a two-year campus, he/she should apply to that campus and not the four-year institution it will be associated with in the future.
- UW Colleges campuses and UW Colleges Online are accepting applications now.
- Post-integration, tuition will remain the same at the two-year campuses for classes currently offered. The long-term goal is to expand the educational opportunities available to students.
Athletics

- Athletic programs at two-year institutions will be maintained during the restructuring of UW Colleges within National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) and Title IX guidelines.
- The UW System will work with the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletics Conference (WIAC) and the NCAA to determine the structure of student athletics at the comprehensive and integrated campuses.

Collaborative Programs

- Continue successful collaborative partnerships and programs, regardless of whether a UW institution and a two-year campus are affiliated post-integration. We will continue to encourage and build upon innovative programs that enable student success.

Financial Aid

- Apply for financial aid by completing the FAFSA form with the UW Colleges code – 003897
- UW Colleges will award financial aid. No changes are expected in the financial aid packages currently processed and awarded.

Transfer

- Students will still be able to transfer between all UW System institutions, just as they can today, (they must still meet the institution’s requirements). One of the major goals of this proposal is to make transferring credits easier within the UW System.
- The transfer process remains the same – students must apply for transfer to any campus.
  - Students will not be automatically enrolled with the associated four-year comprehensive or research institution. Students will continue to decide which campuses they would like to apply to attend.
- The guaranteed transfer programs will continue to be honored from the two-year campus to the main campus.