



Expanding Access to Baccalaureate Education in Wisconsin

**Report
of the Joint UWS/WTCS
Committee on Baccalaureate Expansion**

to

Kevin P. Reilly
President
University of Wisconsin System

Daniel Clancy
President
Wisconsin Technical College System

January 2005



January 20, 2005

Kevin Reilly
President, University of Wisconsin System
Madison, WI

Daniel Clancy
President, Wisconsin Technical College System
Madison, WI

Dear Presidents Reilly and Clancy:

Wisconsin lags behind the nation and neighboring states in the percentage of adults with a baccalaureate or postgraduate degree. The costs to Wisconsin are real. Individuals who receive a baccalaureate degree will earn on average about one-third more than workers who did not finish college, and nearly twice as much as workers with only a high school diploma. Investing in efforts to expand access to baccalaureate education has the potential to provide Wisconsin's citizens with greater earning power. The future prosperity of our state depends on our ability to produce, retain, and attract a highly skilled, highly educated workforce. To do this, Wisconsin needs to create jobs that require higher levels of education and expand access to higher education to a broader cross-section of its population including working adults, students of color, and students from families with lower incomes.

For the last five years, the administrators, faculty, and staff from the University of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Technical College Systems have been working closely together to expand opportunities for credit transfer and joint programming. In March 2004, the governing boards of the two Systems appointed a joint UWS/WTCS Committee on Baccalaureate Expansion (COBE). The charge to COBE was to identify additional cost-effective and collaborative strategies to expand the pool of baccalaureate degree holders in Wisconsin.

We are pleased to submit to you the Committee's final report. The Committee's recommendations, which were endorsed by both the UW Board of Regents and the WTCS Board, include thirteen strategies and a proposed implementation process. The recommended strategies focus on enhancing student success and educational quality. These strategies seek to expand access to diverse populations, provide market-driven solutions, and build the foundation for long-term commitment between the two Systems to increase access to educational opportunities. University and technical college administrators from each institution have expressed interest in pursuing one or more of these initiatives.

The committee believes that these strategies could play a significant role in increasing the number of baccalaureate degree holders in Wisconsin. We would like to recommend several initiatives for initial consideration. These include the development of new programmatic initiatives designed to provide greater access to baccalaureate education; an initiative designed to encourage former students to return and complete their baccalaureate degrees; and an initiative to provide working adults with greater access to information about opportunities to participate in higher education in Wisconsin. These priorities are in addition to the financial aid initiatives of both Systems already included in the state's 2005-07 Biennial Budget requests.

Finally, we would like to commend our fellow committee members for their participation. The committee meetings were well attended, and conducted in an open, frank, and professional manner. All members made important contributions and worked with a spirit of compromise and goodwill. We thank you for the opportunity to lead this effort, and remain available to assist you in taking the next steps to seek additional resources and begin implementation of the Committee's recommendations.

Sincerely,

Charles Pruitt, Co-chair,
Committee on Baccalaureate Expansion

Brent Smith, Co-chair,
Committee on Baccalaureate Expansion

Executive Summary

Wisconsin's economy is in transition. Global economic trends will continue to drive a long-term shift from an industrial to a knowledge-based economy. Economic viability in this new economy will depend on how well and how quickly we can put what we know to work. To successfully make the transition to a knowledge-based economy, Wisconsin's workforce must have the education and skills needed for the jobs of the future.

Participation in higher education provides a strong academic foundation, more in-depth knowledge of a specific field of study, and the kinds of skills valued in the workplace of the new economy—critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork, and lifelong learning. But in 2000, Wisconsin ranked only 30th among the states in the percentage of the adult population with a baccalaureate degree and continues to lag far behind our neighboring states of Minnesota and Illinois. Just to match the national average, Wisconsin would need to add more than 72,000 additional college graduates to its population. Wisconsin's higher education institutions are positioned to meet this challenge.

As part of an ongoing process to improve access to higher education and increase the number of baccalaureate degree graduates in Wisconsin, the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents and the Wisconsin Technical College System Board appointed a joint Committee on Baccalaureate Expansion in March 2004. The Committee's membership included representatives from both governing boards, senior administrators, faculty, and students.

The Committee's charge was to examine the number and nature of baccalaureate degree holders in Wisconsin as compared with other states, determine why Wisconsin is lagging behind, and recommend cost effective and collaborative strategies to provide access and opportunities to expand the number of baccalaureate degree completers in the state.

The Committee placed a priority on identifying innovative ways to expand access to higher education that would lead to greater opportunities to complete a baccalaureate degree in Wisconsin. In developing its recommendations, the need to ensure student success and educational quality guided the Committee's deliberations. As a focus for its efforts, the Committee targeted three populations that are under-represented in higher education in Wisconsin: working-age adults, students from lower income families, and students of color.

The Committee formulated thirteen specific proposals. These include strategies to develop new or expand access to existing degree completion options; promote student retention and graduation through increased outreach and financial aid; and encourage efforts to increase awareness and availability of new and existing opportunities to access higher education.

The Committee recognizes that Wisconsin's public higher education systems must address the needs of the state for a better-educated workforce. Producing graduates and promoting lifelong education are among the fundamental purposes of higher education. Without simultaneously pursuing efforts to increase opportunities for meaningful employment, however, Wisconsin risks losing even more baccalaureate degree holders to more attractive job markets in other states and failing to attract additional graduates from outside the state. Only by acting in partnership with state and local government, business and industry, labor, and groups like the Wisconsin Technology Council can our state's higher education systems help Wisconsin make the transition to the knowledge-based economy of the 21st century.

Joint UWS/WTCS Committee on Baccalaureate Expansion Recommended Strategies	
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.

BACKGROUND

Wisconsin has long relied on its highly skilled workforce as the engine of its economy. Early in the state's history, Wisconsin's policymakers recognized the important role that education and training play in ensuring the vitality of our state. From the establishment of the University of Wisconsin in 1848 and the technical college system in 1911, the State of Wisconsin has invested in higher education and research to nurture and support its economy with a highly productive workforce.

Now, Wisconsin's economy is in transition. Global trends in trade policy and changes in the competitive advantage of the state's industrial base will continue to drive a long-term shift away from lower paying manufacturing jobs. Employment in construction, tourism, retail trade, and agriculture will continue to provide jobs for state residents. But increased employment in health care, biotechnology and medical research, business and professional services, and high value manufacturing has the potential to drive the state's economy toward greater prosperity.

These changes are part of a longer-term trend toward a new economy based on the application of science, mathematics, reasoning, and emerging technologies in the workplace. While the use of machines to replace human labor characterized the industrial era, economic viability in this new knowledge-based economy will depend on how well and how quickly we can put what we know to work.

How well Wisconsin's colleges and universities can adapt to meet these changing needs in the workplace will play a significant role in determining the long-term economic prosperity and vitality of the state.

"In a knowledge-based economy Wisconsin's ability to compete will increasingly depend on its ability to produce and retain a highly skilled, highly educated work-force that can fill positions in high-tech businesses."

Source: *Vision 2020: A Model Wisconsin Economy*, Wisconsin Technology Council, 2002.

New investments are needed in the state's public higher education systems to fuel the transition to an economy built on the acquisition and application of knowledge as the driving force for new technologies, businesses, and industries.

These investments would support research and development of new products and technologies, encourage technology transfer from our universities and research labs to the market place, and encourage entrepreneurial efforts to create and sustain new business ventures. Equally important are new investments in higher education to provide greater access and opportunities for Wisconsin's residents to complete baccalaureate and postgraduate education.

For most workers, higher education translates into greater earnings in the labor market. The U.S. Census Bureau indicates that in 2000, individuals with a baccalaureate degree earned, on average, \$51,000 a year as compared to \$27,000 a year for those with a high school diploma. Census Bureau projections based on these data estimate that over their work-life, individuals who receive a baccalaureate degree will earn on average about one-third more than workers who did not finish college, and nearly twice as much as workers with only a high school diploma. The payoff for workers who complete postgraduate education is even greater.

Investing in efforts to expand access to baccalaureate education has the potential to provide Wisconsin's citizens with greater earning power. But it is also critical if Wisconsin is to develop and sustain the workforce needed in today's knowledge-based economy.

Producing additional baccalaureate degree graduates must be accompanied by the creation of more job opportunities to keep these graduates in Wisconsin and attract additional baccalaureate degree graduates to the state.

Key indicators of a successful shift to the new economy are the proportion of jobs requiring at least baccalaureate level education and the proportion of adults age 25 and over who are baccalaureate degree holders. Together, these measures give an indication of demand for higher education in the labor market and the ability of the state's workforce to meet that demand. Currently, Wisconsin lags behind the national average on both measures.

Currently, Wisconsin retains a relatively high proportion of its college graduates (about 82%), but fails to attract as high a proportion of new baccalaureate degree holders as do neighboring states such as Illinois and Minnesota. To increase educational attainment, the state needs to increase the relative attractiveness of Wisconsin, both to its own university graduates and to graduates from other states. Pursuing such a strategy would reduce both the number of additional undergraduates the state would have to serve and the required investment in additional capacity of the state's higher education systems.

With respect to demand, most occupations that require baccalaureate education or graduate or professional degrees are classified as "professional" or "management" occupations. Wisconsin, with its relatively high concentration of jobs in manufacturing, as compared to other states, ranks substantially below the national average in the percentage of workers employed in professional and management occupations. Similarly, with respect to supply, Wisconsin ranks no higher than 30th in the percentage of its population 25 and older with a baccalaureate or higher-level degree.

Comparison of State Rankings for the Demand and Supply of Workers with Baccalaureate Degrees

	Demand	Supply
	Jobs Requiring BA/BS or Higher Degree	Population 25 and older with BA/BS or Higher Degree
	National Rankings	
Illinois	15 th	16 th
Indiana	45 th	44 th
Iowa	35 th	39 th
Michigan	31 st	35 th
Minnesota	10 th	11 th
Wisconsin	36th	30th

Source: U.S. Census. 2000.

To put this in perspective, in 2002-03, Wisconsin's public and private colleges and universities produced approximately 29,000 baccalaureate degree graduates. Just to match the national average in terms of the percentage of adults with at least a baccalaureate degree, Wisconsin would need to add more than 72,000 additional baccalaureate degree holders to its population. Meeting this goal by producing more baccalaureate degree graduates over a ten-year period would translate into about a 20% increase in the annual number of baccalaureate degree graduates from Wisconsin's colleges and universities.

Vision 2020: A Model Economy for Wisconsin, commissioned by the Wisconsin Technology Council, provides a blueprint for organizational strategies that, if implemented, would increase the demand for more highly educated workers in Wisconsin. The Technology Council's

recommendations include promoting better relationships between state government and the business community, creating centers of applied research to encourage technology transfer and industrial modernization, and encouraging greater regional and industry cooperation and collaboration to foster economic development.

Additional policies to attract and retain baccalaureate degree holders would include efforts to sustain Wisconsin's high rankings on quality-of-life factors, nurture the state's favorable business climate, and provide increased access to venture capital for entrepreneurs.

Wisconsin's continued ability to compete successfully in the regional, national, and global marketplace will depend on our ability to mobilize our technical colleges, public university system, and private colleges and universities to both foster the creation of jobs in the knowledge economy and increase the educational attainment of our workforce.

Wisconsin's higher education systems cannot do this work alone or in isolation.

Wisconsin's economy is in transition....How well Wisconsin's colleges and universities can adapt to meet these changing needs in the workplace will play a significant role in determining the long-term economic prosperity and vitality of the state.

Producing baccalaureate degree graduates and promoting lifelong education are among the fundamental purposes of higher education. However, without increasing the opportunities for meaningful employment the state risks losing even more graduates to more attractive job markets and failing to attract additional graduates from outside the state.

Only by acting in partnership with state and local government, business and industry, labor, and groups like the Wisconsin Technology Council can our state's higher education systems help Wisconsin make the transition to the knowledge-based economy of the 21st century.

PROCESS

As part of an ongoing process to improve access to baccalaureate degree education in Wisconsin, the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents and the Wisconsin Technical College System Board appointed a joint Committee on Baccalaureate Expansion in March 2004. The Committee's membership included representatives from both governing boards, senior administrators, faculty, and students.

The Committee's charge was to examine the number and nature of baccalaureate degree holders in Wisconsin as compared with other states, determine why Wisconsin is lagging behind, and recommend cost effective and collaborative strategies to provide access and opportunities to expand the number of baccalaureate degree completers in the state. A complete list of Committee members and staff appears at the end of this report.

The Committee met six times between April and November 2004. In the course of these meetings, the Committee examined data on degree production in Wisconsin versus other states and reviewed strategies used in other states to enhance degree production. The Committee also solicited ideas from the state's higher education community, other interested parties, and the public on possible strategies to expand access to new or existing degree programs and increase undergraduate retention and graduation. At its final meeting, the Committee identified specific strategies for the two Systems to pursue and identified a process for implementing these recommendations.

Throughout its deliberations, the Committee was guided by a set of principles that established the vision and focus of its work and a framework for its

recommendations. These principles include the following:

- **Enhance student success:**
The preparation and success of students must be the primary focus, irrespective of the specific initiatives the Committee recommends to increase the number of baccalaureate degree holders in Wisconsin.
- **Focus on quality:**
The quality of the state's postsecondary educational programs and the educational enterprise as a whole must be maintained or enhanced as the state's higher education systems seek to increase the number of baccalaureate degree holders in Wisconsin.
- **Multifaceted approach:**
Increasing the number of baccalaureate degree holders in Wisconsin requires a multifaceted approach. This approach includes experimenting with new kinds of educational programs and degrees as well as exploring new ways to structure the state's educational institutions, deliver instruction, communicate with prospective students, parents, and employers, and provide access and encourage retention and graduation for working adults, students from lower income families, and persons of color.
- **Market-driven solutions:**
Labor market demand and student need should inform efforts to create additional opportunities to complete a baccalaureate degree. These efforts should foster and encourage the state's workforce to seek further education and training over the course of their careers and for personal enrichment.

- **Supply and demand:**

Increasing the number of baccalaureate degree holders in Wisconsin through educational initiatives must be accompanied by efforts to create meaningful employment opportunities that will keep baccalaureate degree holders in, and attract baccalaureate degree graduates to, Wisconsin.

- **Long-term commitment:**

The development of strategies and an implementation process are just the first steps. The state's two public postsecondary systems have made a long-term commitment to oversee and monitor implementation of the recommendations, evaluate these alternative approaches to increasing student access, retention, and completion of baccalaureate degree programs, and promote widespread adoption of successful strategies.

- **Securing additional resources:**

The ability to appropriately pilot or implement the recommended initiatives, and subsequently expand the successful initiatives to attract and

graduate a significant number of additional students, will require sufficient new financial and human resources.

- **Assessing progress:**

Any initiatives selected for pilots or implementation should include an assessment component to gauge their impact on increasing the number of baccalaureate degree holders in Wisconsin.

These guiding principles should leave no doubt that the Committee is steadfast in its commitments to meet the educational needs of students, incumbent workers, the state's employers, and the people of Wisconsin. At the same time, the two Systems are also committed to sustaining and enhancing the educational quality and world-class reputations that distinguish the University of Wisconsin System and the Wisconsin Technical College System.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As the Committee met and examined the issues and proposed strategies, it became clear that increasing the number of baccalaureate degree graduates in Wisconsin is not simply a matter of increasing the number of students admitted to our colleges and universities as undergraduates. Equally, if not more important, are efforts to increase retention and graduation for all students and to make our university offerings more accessible to working adults, students from lower income families, and students of color.

TARGET POPULATIONS

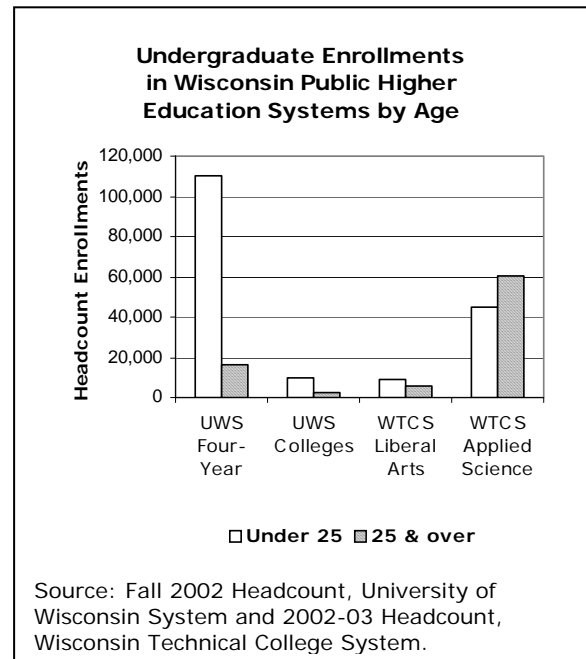
In developing its recommendations, the Committee placed a priority on identifying innovative and cost effective ways to expand access to baccalaureate education and increased degree production in the state. As part of this process, the Committee identified three target populations that are under-represented in higher education in Wisconsin.

WORKING ADULTS

With 16 technical colleges in the Wisconsin Technical College System, 13 four-year campuses, 13 two-year campuses, and a statewide Extension program in the University of Wisconsin System, and numerous private colleges, Wisconsin offers a relatively high degree of geographic access to higher education opportunities for traditional college-age students. Currently, however, the state offers limited opportunities in our public universities for adults to complete a baccalaureate degree while continuing to work.

Working adults in Wisconsin are more likely to be enrolled in technical college programs leading to an associate degree in applied science than in a university two-year or four-year institution. As a result, Wisconsin ranks 9th among the

states in the percentage of adults who have completed an associate degree, but only 30th in the percentage of those age 25 and older who have completed a baccalaureate degree.



Over the last five years, the University of Wisconsin System and the Wisconsin Technical College System have reduced barriers to credit transfer for technical college students seeking to enroll in baccalaureate degree programs. The two Systems continue to collaborate on the development and implementation of policies and procedures that will increase the number of credits that technical college students can apply towards completion of a baccalaureate degree at a University of Wisconsin System institution. However, designing institutions to meet the needs of working adults goes beyond implementation of changes to credit transfer policies and procedures. Many of the strategies proposed by the Committee attempt to address the special needs of this population.

Providing baccalaureate education to working adults most often means meeting the needs of place-bound students. These non-traditional college students usually have family and work-related responsibilities as well as strong ties to their home communities.

Working adults typically need education that is affordable and relevant to their goals for personal growth and development. They frequently need educational opportunities that can help them advance in their career or prepare for another. They also need opportunities for higher education that they can access at a time, place, and pace that fits within their busy schedules. Finally, they often need to be able to access critical student services such as registration, advising, billing, bookstores, and libraries either remotely or outside normal business hours.

Distance education offerings over the Internet have the potential to provide both an increased range of programming and greater flexibility in scheduling for working adults. However, not all non-traditional students find learning through distance education equally rewarding or appropriate for their learning style. For some, a better alternative may be an increase in the number of upper-level classes taught at the campuses of the technical colleges and University of Wisconsin Colleges by faculty from four-year institutions.

Similarly, to successfully increase the number of working adults who complete baccalaureate degree programs, the state's higher education institutions must examine both the range of programs and kinds of degrees that are available to place-bound adults as well as alternative ways these programs can be delivered.

Working adults who are seeking career advancement through higher education need opportunities to earn degrees that

employers will recognize and value. As a result, the Committee placed a strong value on market research and involvement of employers and potential students in the development of new or expanded baccalaureate degree offerings.

LOWER INCOME STUDENTS

Recent studies conducted by the University of Wisconsin System indicate that family income is a key variable in determining who applies to and enrolls at a University of Wisconsin institution. These studies demonstrate that students from lower income families are increasingly under-represented in the state's public baccalaureate education institutions.

Over the decade from 1992 to 2002, for example, the percentage of freshmen reporting family incomes in the lowest quintile (less than \$30,000) fell by nearly one-fourth, from 14.5% to 11.0%. At the same time, the percentage of freshmen reporting family incomes in the state's top quintile (greater than \$87,000) rose by nearly one-fifth.

Access to the UW System By Wisconsin Income Quartile between 1992 and 2002		
	Percentage of New Freshmen by Family Income	
Wisconsin Family Income Quintile	1992	2002
Low (< \$30,000)	14.5%	11.0%
Low-Medium (\$30,00-\$45,00)	21.8%	18.3%
Medium (\$45,000-\$61,000)	25.2%	24.5%
Medium-High (\$61,000-\$87,000)	21.0%	25.4%
High (> \$87,000)	17.5%	20.7%

Source: "Access to Higher Education by Income in Wisconsin," UW System, 2003.

**Average Cost of Education
Compared to Total Need-based Financial Assistance
(2002-03)**

	Wisconsin Independent Colleges and Universities	Tribal Colleges	UW System	WTC System
Average Total Cost	\$21,554	\$7,886	\$10,911	\$9,404
Average Family Contribution	\$7,674	\$625	\$3,670	\$2,631
Percent of Total Cost	35.6%	7.90%	33.6%	30.0%
Average Need-Based Assistance	\$9,232	\$5,236	\$5,290	\$3,393
Percent of Total Cost	42.8%	66.4%	48.5%	36.1%
Average Unmet Need	\$4,648	\$2,025	\$1,951	\$3,380
Percent of Total Cost	21.6%	25.7%	17.9%	35.9%

Source: Wisconsin Higher Educational Aids Board Report #04-03, 2/27/04.

Affordability is not simply an issue for University of Wisconsin students. Significant numbers of Wisconsin Technical College System students have limited financial resources. In 2002-03, 32,700 technical college students enrolled in postsecondary education courses and programs were classified as economically disadvantaged. In this same year, one-third of the technical college students who applied for financial aid were not expected to contribute to their educational costs under federal ability-to-pay calculations. In contrast, only 13% of the students attending Wisconsin independent colleges and universities and 12% of University of Wisconsin students were not expected to contribute to their educational costs under federal ability-to-pay calculations.

These studies echo national trends in college and university enrollments. Financial aid policy, particularly need-based grant aid, aims to equalize educational opportunities across all income levels. Despite federal and state investments in student financial aid, students from lower income families across the nation increasingly are facing financial barriers created by recent changes in tuition and financial aid policies, strategies, and funding levels.

Over the last decade, Wisconsin has moved from a policy of relatively low tuition for its public higher education systems, to one of moderate tuition as compared to neighboring states. These policies were intended to require families who could afford to pay more of the cost of attending college to shoulder a greater proportion of the cost. However, federal and state commitments to financial aid have not kept pace with the increased burden that now falls on students from lower income families.

When the federal and state financial aid programs were created in the mid-1960s, much of the aid available to students was provided in the form of grants. Now, for nearly all students, grants cover a much smaller proportion of the total cost of attending a university or technical college and loans make up the bulk of student financial aid packages. Not only is the gap between the cost of attendance and what students and their families can afford to pay increasing, but also the amount of debt students can expect to incur is rising.

At the federal level, the Pell Grant program created in 1973 was intended to make college more affordable for lower income students. Since the 1980s,

however, increases in funding for Pell Grants has lagged behind increases both in tuition and the number of eligible applicants. As a result, the value of a Pell Grant in 2005 is about one-half as much as it was in 1980 when adjusted for inflation.

In addition, the most recent national data indicate that Wisconsin students from lower income families have less access to a college education than in the U.S. as a whole. Between 1992 and 2001, the percentage of college students in Wisconsin receiving Pell Grants fell from 26% to 21%. Nationally, the percentage of college students receiving Pell Grants increased from 28% to 30% over the same time period.

Most financial aid available to students in Wisconsin comes from federal programs such as the Pell Grant and Stafford Loan programs. These programs are governed by provisions of the Higher Education Act. The Committee urges Wisconsin's higher education leaders to advocate for increased funding for these programs and continued eligibility for Pell Grants for lower income students.

At the same time, the Committee recognizes the insufficiency of existing funding for state financial aid programs. The Committee has included as one of its recommendations specific support for increased General Purpose Revenue (GPR) funding for financial aid programs as submitted by the University of Wisconsin and Wisconsin Technical College Systems as part of the state's 2005-07 Biennial Budget process. In addition, Committee recommendations for the development of a comprehensive gateway to higher education opportunities in Wisconsin and support for pre-college programs both assume that the provision of information about the financial rewards associated with higher education, costs of college attendance, and financial aid would be included as major components of these initiatives.

STUDENTS OF COLOR

The demographics of Wisconsin are changing. U.S. Census Bureau forecasts indicate that between 2005 and 2025, the percentage of people of color in Wisconsin's population will increase by more than one-third, from 12.4% to 16.9%. Over this same time period, the percentage of people of color of traditional college age (age 18-24) in Wisconsin's population is projected to increase even faster, growing from 15.2% to 21.7%. Similarly, the percentage of school age children of color is expected to increase from 18.1% to 24.4%.

Despite their increased presence in the state's population, students of color continue to be under-represented in higher education in Wisconsin when compared to their proportion of the state's traditional college-age population. Within the University of Wisconsin System, students of color made up 8.5% of the undergraduate population in 2003-04. In the Wisconsin Technical College System, students of color in liberal arts and associate degree programs constituted 12.1% of total headcount enrollments.

As the Committee noted in its deliberations, postsecondary education provides the surest path to economic self-sufficiency and prosperity in the U.S. Unfortunately, for too many youth of color in Wisconsin and across the nation, a college education remains out of reach. The increasing cost of higher education and the declining proportion of costs covered by need-based grants interact to restrict access to baccalaureate education.

However, the problem is not entirely financial. Many youth of color leave high school, with or without a diploma, not having completed the classes they need for further education and career success. Data compiled by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education indicated that in 2002, Wisconsin ranked 47th among the states with only 64.4% of young adults of color age 18-24 holding a

high school credential. Similarly, Wisconsin ranked 46th in the nation with only 16% of young adults of color enrolled in college compared to 32.1% of similar age whites.

Reversing this situation will require partnerships among all of the state's higher education institutions, K-12 schools, business, labor, parents, communities, and other local and statewide organizations. As *Plan 2008*, the diversity initiative of the University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents indicates, Wisconsin must develop a more effective pipeline to higher education for students of color by reaching children and their parents at an early age.

This effort must include closing the achievement gap in our K-12 schools between white youth and students of color and increasing the college readiness of all students through enrollment and completion of more rigorous course work in high school. It should also include greater efforts to provide students of color and their parents with more information about the costs and benefits of higher education as well as the range of opportunities and financial aids available.

Many students of color are the first in their family to attend an institution of higher education. The Committee has included as one of its recommended strategies, a review and reinvigoration of pre-college programs. Preliminary research has shown that these pre-college programs provide students of color with invaluable hands-on information about university and technical college campuses that can lead to higher levels of college readiness, attendance, and persistence to graduation.

The Committee has also included in its recommendations strategies that would benefit all youth, but show particular promise for improving the education pipeline for students of color. These include support for increased financial aid,

"At the beginning of the 21st century, preparing underserved students to succeed in college and other postsecondary programs is a necessity for all, not just an option for some....If the United States is to remain competitive in a global economy, and to attain the goal of being a truly integrated society, we must ensure that all young people are able to achieve at the postsecondary level."

Source: *A Shared Agenda: A Leadership Challenge to Improve College Access and Success*, Pathways to College Network.

the proposed development of a comprehensive gateway to higher education opportunities in Wisconsin, and the development and implementation of early assessment and intervention programs for high school students to promote greater college readiness.

Wisconsin's technical colleges provide a pathway for many students of color to enroll in college courses or programs. Between 1999 and 2003, enrollments by students of color increased by more than 50% in technical college liberal arts and associate degree applied science courses. These technical college students of color provide a potential pool of transfer students to the University of Wisconsin institutions. Committee recommendations include support for expanded academic and career advising programs and services to assist students who are transferring from one system of higher education to another and to promote graduation and retention.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

The emphasis on designing strategies that would expand access to baccalaureate education to working adults, students from lower income families, and students of color led the Committee to propose a set of thirteen strategies. These strategies include recommendations to develop new or expand access to existing degree completion options, promote efforts to improve retention and graduation through

increased outreach and financial aid, and encourage efforts to increase awareness and availability of new and existing postsecondary educational opportunities.

Some of the recommended strategies proposed by the Committee build on the substantial efforts undertaken during the last decade to increase credit transfer opportunities for students transferring into and within the University of Wisconsin System. Implementation of these strategies will provide increased recognition of the value of the prior educational experiences of transfer students. It will also decrease the time, effort, and cost to these students to complete a baccalaureate degree at a University of Wisconsin institution. In addition, implementation of these new degree options and delivery methods will increase the numbers of students moving more seamlessly into baccalaureate degree programs at University of Wisconsin institutions.

The Committee recognizes that any one strategy alone is unlikely to produce a significant number of additional baccalaureate degree holders, but that a combination of these strategies implemented over time may have significant results. While some of these initiatives can be implemented at the individual campus level, others better lend themselves to a systemwide or statewide approach. The recommended strategies of the Committee include:

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. This type of degree would be structured on the "inverted major" or "upside-down degree" concept, that builds on the content of the associate degree and allows the student to complete general education requirements

and capstone major requirements at the baccalaureate institution. These programs might lead to a baccalaureate degree in applied science or general studies, or a major in applied science or general studies within an existing baccalaureate degree program.

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 (*e.g.*, Business, Nursing, Early Childhood, and Special Education). These programs, often referred to as 2+2, would provide opportunities for students with an applied associate degree to transfer most or all of their credits toward a baccalaureate degree program in a related programmatic area. Transfer students, if attending full time, would be able to complete a baccalaureate degree after approximately two more years of study. The degree completion program would build on both the general education and occupational content areas of the associate of applied science degree program. Consideration would also be given to expanding existing 2+2 or similar type programs that continue to have high student and labor market demand.

C. Baccalaureate Degree Programs Available at WTCS Institutions and UW Colleges

Offer baccalaureate degree programs at Wisconsin Technical College System institutions and the University of Wisconsin Colleges taught by faculty from University of Wisconsin four-year institutions. These programs provide opportunities to students who are unable, or would prefer to continue their education at another campus due to family, job, or other related constraints. These programs could be offered on-line, in-residence or a combination of the two. University of Wisconsin baccalaureate

institutions could utilize their existing faculty and the facilities and services available at the state's two-year institutions to deliver these programs.

D. Career-focused Pre-major Associate of Science Degree Programs

Develop career-focused pre-major associate of science degree programs at Wisconsin Technical College System liberal arts colleges. These programs should be aligned with specific majors and degree programs at University of Wisconsin institutions (*e.g.*, Business, Chemistry, Biology). These programs could build upon existing transfer and articulation agreements between the two Systems and would provide students with a recognized academic credential that could assist the student in gaining entry-level employment as well as preparing for further postsecondary education. Programs would enable Wisconsin Technical College System students to complete general education requirements and prerequisites for a career-oriented major offered through University of Wisconsin institutions using existing curricula from Wisconsin Technical College System programs.

E. Collaborative Degree Programs

Develop collaborative Wisconsin Technical College System associate of applied science degree programs with University of Wisconsin System two-year (1+1) and four-year institutions (1+3). The front end of the program would have Wisconsin technical colleges providing 30 credits of instruction that would partially satisfy general education and other degree requirements upon transfer to a University of Wisconsin College or baccalaureate institution.

In the 1+1 programs, the University of Wisconsin Colleges would provide the remaining credits enabling students to complete their associate degree. In the 1+3 programs, the University of

Wisconsin baccalaureate institution would provide the remaining credits that would be required for a baccalaureate degree.

These programs could build on existing transfer and articulation agreements and could provide opportunities for technical college students to jointly enroll with the University of Wisconsin institution to take full advantage of advising, financial aid and other collaborative services.

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 University of Wisconsin and Wisconsin Technical College Systems. Recognizing the critical importance of providing access for and retention of these students, both Systems have made providing increased financial aid a high priority in their 2005-07 Biennial Budget proposals. In addition, the two Systems should undertake long term planning efforts to address the financial needs of this population (*e.g.*, loan forgiveness programs, increased funding for Pell Grants, raising caps on grants, or reconsidering the formulas used to allocate state financial aid funds).

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. Campuses would offer these students special advising opportunities, financial incentives, special scheduling, priority registration, and other accommodations to encourage their return to college. This project could be done on a campus-by-campus basis, or through a coordinated regional or statewide effort involving all higher education sectors. This initiative also has the potential to improve college success for all students by identifying and

remediating policies that currently impede student retention and graduation.

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. This might include the development of a statewide portal with one-stop-shop access to information about all sectors of higher education including on-campus program offerings and schedules, distance education courses and programs, financial aid opportunities, and special opportunities for working adults.

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. This could be accomplished through testing, development of student portfolios, and other methods of demonstrating learning competencies. These efforts may involve the enhancement of existing campus-based opportunities or the establishment of systemwide approaches. This effort would build on the experiences of individual programs and campuses within the University of Wisconsin System, the Wisconsin Technical College System, and private colleges and universities in Wisconsin in evaluating, validating, and awarding credit for prior learning.

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. These delivery options would be targeted to working adult students who are unable to take advantage of traditional learning

opportunities. The development and offering of these alternative courses and programs would be a coordinated effort among the institutions to avoid duplication and unnecessary cost. The initiative might include the development of a systemwide or statewide gateway of on-line and other non-traditional courses and programs offered by higher education institutions in Wisconsin.

K. Pre-College Programs

Assess, enhance and promote pre-college programs offered by University of Wisconsin and Wisconsin Technical College System institutions to encourage underserved populations to aspire to and prepare for admission to and success in college. These programs provide an important mechanism to reach elementary, middle, and high school students and their parents to provide information about postsecondary options and ways of financing higher education. This effort should include the development of a statewide gateway of pre-college programs offered by all higher education institutions in Wisconsin.

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. This could include the development of instruments that students could use to assess early on their skill levels in math, reading, and writing, and then complete additional high school coursework that would enhance their academic skills before entering college.

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. Research has shown that advising is a key factor in student retention and success in college. Enhancing advising could be done by increasing the number and quality of advisors, effective use of advising technology, and by establishing means to provide students with direct contact with faculty, such as faculty mentoring programs.

IMPLEMENTATION

In the course of its deliberations, the Committee identified a number of indicators that point to important changes in how the two Systems are meeting the educational needs of the state. These include increased:

- Collaboration between the University of Wisconsin System and the Wisconsin Technical College System at all levels, including the governing boards, system staff, college administrators, and faculty;
- Interest and engagement of the University of Wisconsin and Wisconsin Technical College Systems in nurturing and supporting a vibrant economy for Wisconsin; and
- Awareness and support for collaborative efforts already occurring at the colleges and universities within and between the two Systems.

Implementation of the Committee's recommendations should build on these collaborative efforts to better meet the needs of students, employers, and the state as a whole. Active involvement of faculty, in particular, will be critical to sustaining growth in degree completion opportunities through collaboration across the two Systems.

During the development of the recommendations, the Committee asked the University of Wisconsin System and

Wisconsin Technical College System institutions to indicate their current involvement or potential interest in pursuing one or more of the proposed strategies. Based upon this information, the Committee concluded that several of the initiatives could commence during the 2005-07 biennium. These strategies focus on developing new degree completion options or expanding access to existing programs and promoting efforts to improve retention and graduation through increased outreach and financial aid.

Other proposed strategies will require preliminary work by faculty and staff to evaluate and update existing efforts so that when resources become available, these strategies could more readily be implemented in the future. Still others will require additional work by faculty and administrators from the University of Wisconsin System and the Wisconsin Technical College System to build support and understanding of ways the strategies can best be implemented.

The Committee recommends that, as part of the implementation process, institutions set up pilot projects to determine the viability of some of the initiatives before investing significant resources in their full development. This pilot activity would also provide needed information about the numbers of students who could be served and at what cost.

The Committee further recommends the creation of a joint University of Wisconsin System/Wisconsin Technical College System committee to oversee the implementation of these recommended strategies. The charge to this committee would be to:

- Develop a timeline for implementation of the recommended strategies;
- Coordinate and oversee the development of pilots or implementation projects;

- Organize collaborative efforts to identify barriers or additional work needed to support the implementation of recommended strategies needing further study;
- Plan for the evaluation and implementation of the other initiatives; and
- Identify and pursue funding opportunities from public and private sources.

The Committee fully realizes that implementation of its recommendations will require funding. In some instances, reallocation of existing resources may be

sufficient to fund initial piloting and program design work. For other recommendations, such as the financial aid initiative and other strategies to support student success, the University of Wisconsin System and the Wisconsin Technical College System are seeking additional state funding in their 2005-07 Biennial Budget requests. Fully implementing any of these strategies at levels that would have a significant impact on student access, retention, and baccalaureate degree completion, will require the infusion of additional funds from the state and other potential sources.

PROJECTIONS

Predicting the actual number of additional baccalaureate degree holders that any of the Committee's recommended strategies might yield is difficult at this time. The Committee hopes that by implementing pilot projects across a broad range of alternative strategies and institutions, more can be learned about the potential yield, costs, and challenges associated with implementing these strategies.

Preliminary estimates by Committee staff indicate that strategies that would increase the number of students enrolling in the University of Wisconsin System to complete a baccalaureate degree could, over time, help to close the gap in educational attainment bringing Wisconsin closer to the national average. Wisconsin would need to produce about 72,000 more baccalaureate degree graduates just to equal the national average for the percentage of baccalaureate degree holders in the state's population age 25 and over in 2000.

As the table describing these projections indicates, to close 10% of the gap by graduating 7,200 more baccalaureate degree holders over a ten-year period, the University of Wisconsin System would need to enroll an additional 2,220 upper division students each year. Similarly, to close 50% of the gap, the University of Wisconsin System would need to enroll an additional 11,100 upper division students each year for ten years.

The added costs of serving these additional University of Wisconsin System students would need to be funded through a combination of tuition and state General Purpose Revenue (GPR) funding. At

current levels, the GPR support needed to serve each additional student is about \$4,200 a year. The estimated annual increase in GPR support needed by the UW System just to close 10% of the gap in educational attainment would be about \$9.3 million.

Percentage of Gap between Wisconsin and U.S. Average	Additional Annual Upper Division Enrollments Required	Total Additional Graduates Expected (after 10 years)
10%	2,220	7,200
25%	5,550	18,000
50%	11,100	36,000

Source: University of Wisconsin System, Office of Policy Analysis and Research, October 2004.

These projections further assume that there is sufficient demand for the initiatives recommended in this report. While Wisconsin ranks 30th among the states in the percentage of its population who hold a bachelor's or higher-level degree, as indicated earlier, the state ranks 9th in the percentage of its population who have completed an associate degree. This group of associate degree holders provide a potential market for a number of the recommended initiatives. Data gathered from pilot implementations of the Committee's recommended strategies could provide additional market research needed to identify sources of demand for specific strategies.

CONCLUSION

Wisconsin has begun to make the transition to a new knowledge-based economy, but continues to lag behind the nation as a whole and neighboring states in the demand and supply of workers with baccalaureate education. Taking steps to encourage the transition to a knowledge economy would benefit individuals and the state as a whole.

Education pays—the greater the educational attainment of an individual, the greater the expected earnings over a lifetime. Those with a baccalaureate degree can expect to earn, on average, \$51,000 a year compared to \$27,000 a year for those with a high school diploma. Over their lifetime, baccalaureate degree holders can expect to earn on average about twice as much as those with only a high school diploma.

By pursuing strategies to increase both the demand and supply of individuals with a baccalaureate degree, the resulting increase in Wisconsin's per capita income would also increase the overall prosperity of the state.

Over the last five years, the University of Wisconsin System and the Wisconsin Technical College System have reduced barriers to credit transfer for technical college students seeking to enroll in baccalaureate degree programs. Now, the Systems are positioned to implement a

The Committee's education-based initiatives must be connected to job creation initiatives to help Wisconsin move toward a knowledge-based economy that requires and rewards a higher level of educational attainment.

combination of approaches to expand access to higher education opportunities that could significantly increase the number of baccalaureate degree graduates in Wisconsin.

Increasing the number of baccalaureate degree holders, however, is only part of the solution. Closing the gap in educational attainment in Wisconsin must be a joint effort of the state's higher education systems, business and industry, labor, state and local government, and others. Producing additional baccalaureate degree graduates must be accompanied with the creation of more job opportunities to keep these graduates in Wisconsin and attract additional baccalaureate degree graduates to the state. The Committee's education-based initiatives must be connected to job creation initiatives to help Wisconsin move toward a knowledge-based economy that requires and rewards a higher level of educational attainment. Together, these efforts will lead to greater economic vitality for Wisconsin.

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UW/WTCS Joint Committee on Baccalaureate Expansion Committee Roster

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Eileen Connolly-Keesler UW System Regent	Mary Quinnette Cuene WTCS Board Member
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Margaret Cleek Interim Chancellor UW Colleges	Deborah Mahaffey Vice President Wisconsin Technical College System
Robert Sedlak Provost & Vice Chancellor UW-Stout	Lori Weyers Vice President Northeast Wisconsin Technical College
Erika Sander Associate Professor UW-Milwaukee	Mary Alsteens Faculty Moraine Park Technical College
Guillermo Cuatle UW Student UW-Milwaukee	Craig Stark WTCS Student Chippewa Valley Technical College

Committee Staff

Frank Goldberg Associate Vice President UW System	Janet Washbon Assistant Vice President Wisconsin Technical College System
Larry Rubin Assistant Vice President UW System	Gabrielle Banick Education Director Wisconsin Technical College System
Sharon Wilhelm Interim Associate Vice President UW System	
Gail Bergman Acting Director, Office of Policy Analysis and Research UW System	