



Executive Summary

University of Wisconsin System Application for Restructuring of UW Colleges and UW-Extension

As part of the UW System restructuring process, UW System submitted a request (called a change of control and structure application) to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). HLC is the regional body that accredits all UW System institutions. Implementation of the proposed restructuring plan is pending HLC approval. The Executive Summary below is a synopsis of the complete application, which totaled approximately 1,500 pages.

It is important to note that the restructuring process is an internal reorganization of UW campuses. We are committed to making the transition as smooth as possible for faculty and staff, and students should not experience any adverse effects as a result of this project. In fact, students will reap additional benefits of more course offerings and enhanced access to UW institutions as result of this project.

RESTRUCTURING OVERVIEW

The University of Wisconsin System is comprised of 13 four-year universities, 13 freshman-sophomore UW Colleges, and the statewide UW-Extension. Over the last several years, UW Colleges has faced enrollment and financial challenges brought on by Wisconsin's changing demographics. This restructuring plan will ensure that Wisconsin's institutions of higher learning can serve the needs of the state for years to come. This restructuring will make college more affordable, credits more transferable, and classes more available. It will also ensure that the two-year campuses stay open as an option for our students.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

- Expand access to higher education by offering more courses at the two-year campuses, including eventually offering upper-level courses
- Maintain affordability by continuing existing tuition levels post-integration for courses currently offered at the two-year institutions
- Identify and reduce barriers to transferring credits within the UW System
- Further standardize and regionalize administrative operations and services to more efficiently use resources
- Leverage resources and shared talent at our institutions to get more students into and through the educational pipeline successfully, better aligning our universities to meet Wisconsin's projected workforce needs

PROPOSED CHANGES

Each of UW Colleges' 13 two-year campuses will be joined with a UW four-year comprehensive or research institution as a branch campus. As approved by the UW System Board of Regents:

- UW-Barron County will be joined with UW-Eau Claire
- UW-Manitowoc, UW-Marinette and UW-Sheboygan will be joined with UW-Green Bay
- UW-Washington County and UW-Waukesha will be joined with UW-Milwaukee
- UW-Fond du Lac and UW-Fox Valley will be joined with UW-Oshkosh

- UW-Baraboo/Sauk County and UW-Richland will be joined with UW-Platteville
- UW-Marathon County and UW-Marshfield/Wood County will be joined with UW-Stevens Point
- UW-Rock County will be joined with UW-Whitewater

UW-Extension will be integrated with UW-Madison and UW System Administration in order to more fully recognize and develop Extension's statewide role. This includes a reorganization of UW Extension's four divisions:

- Cooperative Extension
 - Connects the people of Wisconsin with local leaders, lawmakers, families, scientists, and communities to address the needs of Wisconsin's people, plants, and animals, in both urban and rural areas of the state
 - Will be joined with UW-Madison to take better advantage of its close faculty ties to UW-Madison
- Division of Business and Entrepreneurship (DBE)
 - Supports entrepreneurs, businesses, researchers, and economic development professionals by providing technical assistance, consulting, training, economic data and analysis, seed funding, resources, and other services
 - Will be joined with UW System Administration
- Division of Broadcasting and Media Innovation (BAMI)
 - Educates, informs, and entertains the citizens of Wisconsin through public radio and public television
 - Will be joined with UW System Administration
- Division of Continuing Education, Outreach, and E- Learning (CEOEL)
 - Manages funding for continuing and professional program development
 - Will be joined with UW System Administration

PROJECT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

The restructuring project is sponsored by UW System President Ray Cross and is advised by a Steering Committee that is made up of representatives from UW System Administration, UW Colleges and UW-Extension, as well as each of the other UW institutions. Shared governance is integral to this process, and the Steering Committee includes faculty, staff, and student representatives from each governance group. The Steering Committee helps oversee the planning and implementation of the project and is chaired by UW System Vice President for Administration Rob Cramer.

Regional restructuring teams have been chosen by the Chancellor of each four-year receiving institution. Regional teams translate current processes, norms, and cultures into a new context; coordinate with and report to the Steering Committee at key milestones and deliverables; represent the project on campuses; and have a chair who is a primary point of contact for the region.

Functional teams plan for functions that have system-wide impact; identify common and consistent solutions that cross regions; and review regional team recommendations. The functional teams are:

- Athletics
- Finance
- Financial Aid
- Higher Learning Commission (HLC)
- Human Resources
- Student Recruitment
- Student Visas

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the proposed restructuring will take place in two phases.

- a) Phase 1 (Year 1): July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019
- b) Phase 2 (Year 2): July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020

During Phase 1, the two-year branch campuses will continue to function largely as they do now, while preparing to internally integrate centralized administrative functions, such as IT, HR, and procurement with UW System services. Student support services, such as admissions and financial aid processing, will continue to be administered by the two-year campuses.

In Phase 2, the receiving four-year institutions will undertake operational planning and centralized services will be integrated into the two-year campuses.

See Table 13. Restructuring Project Overview for Phase 1 to Phase 2

PROGRAM CONTINUITY

Current student services, including advising, counseling, and other instructional and student support resources will continue to be available on the branch campuses. Faculty currently appointed at the branch campuses are expected to continue in their positions. Budget allocations made to the receiving institutions will cover instructional staffing and student support services at the levels appropriate for the expected enrollments in academic year 2018-19.

UW Colleges and UW System Administration made two-year employment commitments to the majority of regional and central employees to promote continuity during the restructuring. UW System Administration will budget funding for these positions during Phase 1 and into Phase 2 where the decision was made to allocate associated budgets to receiving institutions. This is intended to smooth the restructuring process and retain critical employees, while providing them with time to be employed by four-year institutions where possible.

REALLOCATING FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Plans for reallocation of financial resources were made based on current planning assumptions. Several principles were adhered to in reallocating current resources:

- All funding allocated to the individual UW College in fiscal year 2017/18 will be fully transferred to the receiving institution in Phase 1.
- Funding allocated to the four UW College administrative regions (North, Northeast, Southeast, Southwest) in fiscal year 2017/18 will be proportionately transferred to the receiving institutions.
- Funding for services and programs that are currently supported by the receiving institutions will be allocated based on employee headcount, student headcount, and student FTE, or an equal 1/13th share. UW System and UW College staff reviewed each service or program to determine the appropriate metric for reallocation.
- Funding for services or programs that will be supported centrally, or are planned to be supported centrally in the future by UW System Administration, have a “hold back” designation and funding will be retained at UWSA. Examples of central services include human resources, information technology, veterans’ services, and risk management.

Several service areas and budgets are being transferred to UW System Administration in order to continue the shared service model of UW Colleges in academic year 2018-19 and to expand it further. Budgets and associated staffing allocated within the budgets at the campus level are being transferred to the receiving campuses as part of Phase 1. Regional and central budgets and services were reviewed with an emphasis on 2020FWD and the CORE initiative.

UW COLLEGES MISSION/ALIGNMENT WITH RECEIVING INSTITUTIONS

The missions of UW Colleges and all other UW institutions are informed by the UW System tradition of the [Wisconsin Idea](#). The receiving institutions are embracing future opportunities to increase access for new communities added to their service areas

as well as the opportunity to provide an even greater array of educational programs. In general, the mission statements already articulate the main concepts found in the existing UW Colleges' mission:

The University of Wisconsin Colleges is a multi-campus institution committed to high quality educational programs, preparing students for success at the baccalaureate level of education, providing the first two years of a liberal arts general education that is accessible and affordable, providing a single baccalaureate degree that meets local and individual needs, and advancing the Wisconsin Idea by bringing the resources of the University to the people of the state and the communities that provide and support its campuses.

See Table 14. General Overview of how the receiving institutions align with this mission

OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

COURSE OFFERINGS

A key opportunity for expanding access, and reducing cost and time to degree, is the addition of online courses for general education at the four-year campuses. This will also expand the online course array for students across the state. The addition of a branch campuses will also provide additional venues to offer four-year degree programs. This enhances access to more educational programs for people across the state, especially in the smaller communities where branch campuses are located.

Students at the branch campuses will have greater access to academic learning support and other student support services through an affiliation with a four-year institution. Advising at the branch campus will help ease the transfer of students across institutions within the System. The continuation of reduced tuition for branch campus courses will continue to provide an affordable associate degree or general education program for more students in Wisconsin. Barriers to transfer will be removed because students will take courses that more readily transfer as a part of a degree pathway.

High schools students will be able to take advantage of dual enrollment offerings to gain college credits while reducing the time and credits to degree once they are enrolled at a UW institution.

GREATER ACCESS

The addition of branch campus faculty to the four-year institutions will bring more disciplinary expertise to academic departments by enhancing the current offerings, expanding research collaborations across the institutions, and giving students greater access to more faculty and staff members for career guidance, advising, and undergraduate research opportunities.

Students at branch campuses will have the opportunity to engage with faculty who teach in upper division courses as four-year degree programs are offered at branch campuses in the future.

Through the addition of branch campuses, institutions will expand access to more diverse populations. In turn, students at the four-year institutions will have more opportunities to engage in community-based learning or internships in locations beyond their main campus.

SEAMLESS TRANSFER

Throughout both phases of the restructuring process, the UW System will expand its transfer initiatives to ensure its transfer process is seamless, smooth, and easily navigable for all students during their educational journey. In addition, UW System faculty and staff will identify degree pathways that eliminate barriers to transfer and reduce time and credits to degree for all students.

As branch campuses are integrated with four-year comprehensive and research institutions, the UW System will be able to advance its 2020FWD strategic plan goals associated with improving transfer for students within the UW System: enacting

transfer policies and processes that serve the best interest of students. Through 2020FWD, the UW System seeks to ensure its transfer processes foster educational attainment, accommodate student mobility, and provide equal treatment of transfer and continuing education students.

GOVERNANCE

The four-year institutional statements welcome the addition of branch campus faculty and staff and recognize the value they will add to diversifying perspectives for ongoing curriculum and policy initiatives.

The governance structures at the four-year institutions will change as a result of restructuring. For some of the four-year institutions, faculty and staff from the branch campus will be integrated into existing governance structures, such as senates and university-wide committees.

Other governance configurations at four-year institutions will reflect a distinct governance structure for faculty and staff at the branch campus to focus on branch campus issues. These structures will resemble a separate college model at the branch campus, which will have its own committee and governance bodies that link to policies, practices, and procedures at the main institution.

OVERSIGHT

For all UW receiving institutions, faculty members are charged with oversight of the curriculum and assessment of student learning on the branch campuses as outlined in descriptions of governance committees. Faculty from the branch campus will serve on governance groups that have oversight for the development, evaluation, and approval of the curriculum, as well as program review. Policies and processes associated with these major areas of responsibility will be linked to those at the receiving university.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Each of the institutions involved in the restructuring have described how they will maintain academic integrity in their institution statements. Provost Offices are responsible for the oversight of academic policies and procedures related to students and enrollment; these policies and procedures are detailed in each institution's respective academic bulletins for undergraduate and graduate levels.

PERSONNEL POLICIES

All of the personnel at the branch campuses and the four-year institutions will be guided by the following policies:

- Provost Offices are primarily responsible for campus policy regarding ethical behavior of employees, as outlined in State and System Policy and the institution's Faculty and Staff Handbook;
- Open Meetings Law (Sec. 19.81, Wis. Stats.) and the Wisconsin Public Records Law (Sec. 19.31 Wis. Stats.) guide the transparency of decision making;
- At the campus level, shared governance guarantees transparency of decision making and the right of all constituents to have a voice in the administration and leadership of the University as stated in official faculty documents, such as a Faculty Constitution;
- At the System level, the Board of Regents has created a Code of Ethics to guide UW System employees, UW System policy also includes Chapter 8 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code, and drawing from the UW System Code of Ethics,

each institution's faculty and academic staff handbook provides policies that guide the ethical behavior and decision-making of faculty and staff;

- Finally, in accordance with UW System policy, each UW institution also requires an institutional ethics committee.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Since 2015, the UW System Office of Policy Analysis and Research has provided a system wide Accountability Dashboard to publicly share information on several key performance indicators for each UW institution focusing on access, program and completion, cost and efficiencies, undergraduate experiences, faculty and staff, and economic development. The dashboard is available to the public via a [web portal](#).

GOVERNING BOARD

The Board of Regents (BOR) of the University of Wisconsin System consists of 18 members, 16 of whom are appointed by the governor, subject to confirmation by the Senate. The BOR is responsible for policies governing the UW System, planning to meet future state needs for collegiate education, setting admission standards and policies, reviewing and approving university budgets, and establishing the regulatory framework within which individual units are allowed to operate with as great a degree of autonomy as possible. The BOR is knowledgeable of the operations, mission, curriculum and program array, and strategic initiatives of each UW institution. Board committees provide Regents with opportunities to gain understanding of the UW institutions and their campus policies and approve of their proposals. See <https://www.wisconsin.edu/regents> for additional information.