

# Increasing Bachelor's Degrees Working Group Report Current and Future Strategies

## INTRODUCTION

This summary includes a brief, general overview and a series of recommendations and action plans **proposed** by the Increasing Bachelor's Degrees Working Group. In addition, in-depth reports from the UW Colleges (Appendix A) and UW-Extension (Appendix B) are included as institution-specific responses to the charge presented by the Integrated Steering Committee.

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## OVERVIEW

Nationwide, the State of Wisconsin ranks thirtieth in the number of residents who hold baccalaureate degrees, lagging significantly behind Illinois and Minnesota (WI, 17.7%; MN, 21.9%; IL, 21.1%). At the same time, however, Wisconsin has a higher than average percentage of residents with associate degrees, ranking ninth nationally. Wisconsin's public and private colleges and universities produce approximately 29,000 degreed graduates annually. To match the national average, Wisconsin would need to add more than 72,000 additional baccalaureate degree holders to its population. Over a 10-year period, this would translate to a 20% increase in the annual number of baccalaureate degree graduates.

**Given** the strong connection in the New Economy between education and annual income, Wisconsin will not be able to improve its economy and maintain the quality of life for Wisconsin residents unless we can increase the number of baccalaureate degree holders in Wisconsin, thus supporting economic development, enhancing social capital, and improving the earning power of Wisconsin's citizens.

Although the University of Wisconsin Colleges and the University of Wisconsin Extension have distinct and unique missions and structures, they are similar in that they both provide statewide access to their respective programs. The combined capacity of these two institutions provides the State of Wisconsin with the opportunity to reach traditional, nontraditional, place- or situation-bound, underprepared, and minority students who desire a baccalaureate degree but are unable to access traditional higher education programs.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Identify/Locate Potential Students

- a. **Three studies have been completed that provide demographic information regarding potential markets for the UW Colleges and UW-Extension.**
- b. **Work with comprehensive campuses that have identified niche audiences for specialized degrees.**

- c. **UW Colleges can provide complete lists of all students who earned associate degrees through the Colleges.** Comprehensive institutions can provide lists of students who earned credits but did not complete baccalaureate degrees.

## 2. Recruit/Advise/Prior Learning Assessment

- a. **UW-Extension and UW Colleges should lead an aggressive, statewide informational campaign to stimulate awareness and promote interest in higher education.** Students will have access to information and advising at the 13 campuses of the University of Wisconsin Colleges, the UW Colleges Central Office, and Cooperative Extension offices in all 72 counties. UW Colleges adult student advisers and designated contacts in Cooperative Extension will work together to actively recruit and advise potential students. Each student will receive a degree audit report and advising on access to available courses needed to complete a degree.
- b. **UW Help and UW Colleges Online will continue to provide toll-free phone advising, e-mail advising, the Help Online Web site, and electronic application for admission.** UW Help call center will be proactively engaged in recruiting potential students. The DistanceLearning.wisconsin.edu Web site will provide information on UW System distance learning course offerings.
- c. **The UW System needs to move into the mainstream of use of prior learning assessment (PLA)** that meets or exceeds the five Council on Adult and Experiential Learning standards and is consistent with the practices of the UW Extended Degree programs (UW-Green Bay, UW-Platteville, UW-Superior).

## 3. Enroll/Support Students

- a. **The UW Colleges will continue to employ a liberal admission criterion,** enrolling students from all quartiles of the high school market. Both the UW Colleges and UW-Extension have experience serving returning adult students in traditional and nontraditional settings.
- b. **The full range of academic support services will continue to be available both face-to-face and online through the UW Colleges and UW-Extension.**
- c. **UW Colleges and UW-Extension personnel will work collaboratively to assist students in the following categories:**
  - Students who need to complete an associate degree
  - Students with an associate degree who need to complete a bachelor's degree
  - Students who need to complete general education core courses to earn a bachelor's degree

## 4. Develop Programs/AA&S/BA/BS

- a. **Enhance the ability of students** to access the UW Colleges AA&S degree and general education core courses by increasing their awareness of multiple pathways and providing increased access to advising at approximately 100 locations across the state.
- b. **Expand the number of accessible baccalaureate degrees available statewide:**

- Support those degrees already available statewide through UW campuses.
  - Support degree programs that will begin online development with Legislative funding from the Committee on Baccalaureate Expansion (COBE), beginning July 2006.
  - Support degree programs that will begin online development with UW-Extension funding from the Outreach and E-Learning Special Program Development Initiative (SPDI) beginning January 2006.
- c. **The UW Colleges, as a degree-granting institution, will put into place a 2+1+1 model.** This would be facilitated in two ways: by the UW Colleges offering select junior-level courses and by increasing the number and array of UW baccalaureate collaborative programs on UW campuses.
- d. **Additional UW-Colleges 2+1+1 and 2+2 models,** in collaboration with UW-Extension's capacity to identify new degree needs and facilitate multicampus collaborations, could contribute significantly to the goal of increasing the number of baccalaureate degrees in the next five years.

## 5. Delivery

- a. **The UW Colleges and UW-Extension will play a leadership role in the development of alternative delivery formats.** In addition to the traditional face-to-face instruction, strong interest by surveyed adults indicates increasing acceptability of alternative delivery formats including Internet, video, WisLine Web, hybrid (blend of face-to-face and distance learning), and correspondence. Both institutions are noted for the quality of instructional design and strong focus on student learning in all modes of delivery.
- b. **The UW Colleges and UW-Extension will play a leadership role in the development of accelerated and convenient schedule structures.** While research indicates quality of curriculum and quality of faculty are the price of entry into the marketplace, research also indicates that accelerated and convenient schedules are key in market differentiation. Initially, given the range of students and their disparate backgrounds, noncohort models may be advised, but as new degree sequences are identified and implemented, cohorts may be a student-friendly alternative.
- c. **The UW Colleges and UW-Extension will take into account learning styles of generational market segments** such as different preferences, attitudes, values, and marketplace behaviors when developing new delivery modes.

## 6. Assessment

- a. In addition to existing assessment practices, **UW Colleges will engage students in long-term longitudinal studies** to ensure that the education is relevant and applicable to their respective needs and goals.
- b. Longitudinal studies will also enable **the UW Colleges and UW-Extension to measure the increase in baccalaureate degrees** awarded on an annual basis, as well as the relative position in regional and national markets.
- c. On a regular basis, **studies by the UW Colleges and UW-Extension will be conducted to identify emerging and unmet needs.**

## ACTION PLANS

The Increasing Bachelor's Degree Access Working Group has identified the following action plans to accomplish the recommendations put forth. These action plans represent a baseline of activities, but must be understood and implemented in a rapidly changing environment.

### 1. Identify/Locate Potential Students

#### 1a Three studies have been completed to provide demographic information regarding potential markets for the UW Colleges and UW-Extension.

**Actions:** Two major surveys of adult learners and their educational needs have been conducted. Reports on each are available.

UW System Market Research Survey. UW-Extension through Outreach and E-Learning commissioned UW System Market Research to conduct a statewide assessment of adult learners. The purpose of the research is to understand the current adult education marketplace across Wisconsin and gather more information about attitudes and interests of adult learners. UW-Extension is particularly interested in comparing and contrasting the data on the basis of generational cohorts. The population was segmented by age:

- Generation Y (18-25)
- Generation X (26-39)
- Baby Boomers (40-58)
- Matures (59+)

This report provides a descriptive overview of the participation of adult learners in credit and noncredit educational activities and information about attitudes and behaviors that may impact educational needs in the future.

The data from this report will be used to develop course programming and marketing plans to promote adult learning activities. Because the purpose of this project is quite broad, it will address a number of research questions.

- Current rate of participation in adult learning activities
- Attitudes toward educational activities
- Attitudes and behavior toward technology and online learning
- Learning styles
- Paying for courses
- Media habits (to aid in marketing planning)

LERN Survey. The Learning Resources Network (LERN) has conducted a national review using several research tools. LERN has presented a concise but valuable set of recommendations stemming from the research on the implications for course programming and market plans, which is the desired end use of the research.

- Data was gathered from recent comprehensive surveys that have addressed one or more relevant questions. These studies come from organizations that regularly and thoroughly conduct comprehensive surveys and studies, such as the National Center for Education Statistics. We are aware of several reputable studies that are specific to continuing education and have proven to be both comprehensive and statistically validated.

- Conduct a search for additional surveys and studies that may be relevant. Our lead researcher has considerable expertise in online research and is able to obtain information not readily accessible to others in the field.

**Timeline:** Summer 2005 – Surveys conducted, data analyzed  
Fall 2005 – Dissemination of data

**Budget:** \$75,000

**UW Colleges Surveys** The UW Colleges conducted a research project to explore baccalaureate degree issues in spring/summer 2005. The strategy was to implement a multiphase research study in Wisconsin to determine the unmet need for baccalaureate degrees among individuals (supply) as well as the unmet need of companies looking for employees with such degrees (demand). Research was conducted among three target audience groups.

1. Current UW Colleges students

This study sought to quantify overall demand for baccalaureate degrees by current UWC students. An online survey of 12,500 UWC students at all 13 campuses and UWC Online was conducted using the Web-based research tool Zoomerang. The results shed light on preferences of students by age and for types of degrees.

2. Prospective students (traditional and nontraditional)

Because of the closing of the UWS Market Research Unit, an independent outside professional research firm conducted in-depth primary market research by telephone in each of the UW Colleges campus communities to determine overall demand for baccalaureate degrees. Respondents who already held a bachelor's degree or higher were screened out. The results are broken down so each campus can see the preferences of its community. The results were also compiled into an aggregate picture for the UW Colleges. The results shed light on preferences for type of degree and likelihood of enrolling, among other findings.

3. Employers

Given budget parameters, it was not feasible to do primary research among employers in Wisconsin. Instead, secondary data from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, among many other sources, was used to examine the supply of baccalaureate degrees and the demand for such degrees by Wisconsin business and industry. The results also shed light on areas where there is anticipated job growth.

The results of the overall study, on file in the UW Colleges Central Marketing office, will allow the UW Colleges to work with the UW four-year schools to craft baccalaureate degree completion programs in various fields and to prioritize by needs of specific geographic areas.

**Timeline:** Summer and fall, 2005

**Budget:** TBD

**1b Work with comprehensive campuses that have identified niche audiences** for specialized degrees.

**Actions:**

1. Work with UW Campuses to gather and disseminate information on surveys that have identified niche audiences.
2. Where possible implement actions outlined in 4b, items 1-4 to support development of programs to meet the needs of the niche audiences.
3. Develop specific marketing campaigns to increase awareness of available programs designed to meet the needs of the niche audiences.

**Timeline:** Ongoing

**Budget:** See 4b, Items 1-4

**1c UW Colleges can provide complete lists of all students who earned associate degrees through the Colleges.** Comprehensive institutions can provide lists of students who earned credits but did not complete baccalaureate degrees.

**Actions:**

1. UW Colleges will provide to the committee lists of associate degree holders who have not transferred to another UW institution. These lists can go back five years. HELP will verify these lists with the comprehensive institutions to eliminate those students who have enrolled in additional courses or completed a baccalaureate degree at their campus.
2. UW HELP will contact each comprehensive institution for lists of students who did not complete degrees.
3. These lists will be cross-referenced to eliminate duplication or confirm continuation of studies.
4. The lists will be given to UW HELP advisers to contact proactively, as recommended in action plans 2b to Recruit/Advise/Prior Learning Assessment.

**Timeline:** Spring 2006 – Request to colleges and comprehensives

Summer 2006 – Lists submitted

Fall 2006 – Lists verified and passed on to HELP advisers

**Budget:** \$10,000

## **2. Recruit/Advise/Prior Learning Assessment**

**2a UW-Extension and UW Colleges should lead an aggressive, statewide informational campaign to stimulate awareness and promote interest in higher education.** Students will have access to information and advising at the 13 campuses of the University of Wisconsin Colleges, the UW Colleges Central Office, and Cooperative Extension offices in all 72 counties. UW Colleges adult student advisers and designated contacts in Cooperative Extension will work together to actively recruit and advise potential students. Each student will receive a degree audit report and advising on access to available courses needed to complete a degree.

**Actions:**

UW-Extension will identify individuals in each county location to serve in providing initial information on available options.

1. UW Colleges adult advisers and UW HELP advisers will train and support the Cooperative Extension personnel in using print and online resources, including TIS, Majors Mania Database, Distancelearning.wisconsin.edu, and UW Colleges Online.
2. County staff will apprise UW Colleges and UW HELP of expressed needs, and schedule follow-up sessions with HELP or adult advisers.
3. Once initial contact has been made at the county level, a regular adviser will be assigned to each prospective student to continue working with the student until enrollment—at which point a program-based adviser will take over.

**Timeline:** Fall 2005 – Build online training resources  
 Spring 2006 – Identify county staff  
 Adult and HELP advisers will train staff  
 Fall 2006 – Fully operational advising network in place

**Budget:** \$500,000 initial investment; \$450,000 annually

**2b UW Help and UW Colleges Online will continue to provide toll-free phone advising, e-mail advising, the Help Online Web site, and electronic application for admission.** UW Help call center will be proactively engaged in recruiting potential students. The DistanceLearning.wisconsin.edu Web site will provide information on UW System distance learning course offerings.

**Actions:**

1. UW HELP will contact each comprehensive institution for lists of students who did not complete degrees. HELP advisers will attempt phone and/or e-mail contact with students to discuss degree completion options. UW Colleges will provide lists of associate degree holders who have not transferred to another UW institution for HELP advisers to contact.
2. UW HELP will maintain publicly accessible and comprehensive information in a database on:
  - Student interactions
  - Degrees and delivery methods
  - Policies and procedures
3. UW HELP will work with UW Colleges and other UW institutions to identify incentives for reenrolling students, e.g., registration priority, residency waivers, or special funding. UW Colleges and UW HELP will organize college fairs that specifically target nontraditional students.

**Timeline:** Fall 2005 – Distancelearning.wisconsin.edu operational  
 Majors Mania database under revision  
 TIS and UW Colleges Online fully operational  
 Identify partners for innovative, nontraditional college fair locations, e.g., Workforce Development, government departments (Labor, Commerce, Tourism), corporations  
 Establish procedures to have ongoing follow-up between advisers and college fair contacts  
 Continue translation of materials into Spanish and Hmong  
 Proactively contact students from submitted lists

**Budget:** TBD

**2c The UW System needs to move into the mainstream of use of prior learning assessment (PLA)** that meets or exceeds the five Council on Adult and Experiential

Learning standards and is consistent with the practices of the UW Extended Degree programs (UW-Green Bay, UW-Platteville, UW-Superior).

**Actions:** At present there is no oversight across the UW System of nontraditional or prior learning. As specified by the Council on Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), five standards apply in formally recognizing college credit:

1. Credit should be awarded only for learning, and not for experience.
2. College credit should be awarded only for college-level learning.
3. Credit should be awarded only for learning that has a balance, appropriate to the subject, between theory and practical application.
4. The determination of competence levels and of credit awards must be made by appropriate subject matter and academic experts.
5. Credit should be appropriate to the academic context in which it is accepted.

The ways to evaluate nontraditional learning to consider awarding college credit can be grouped under four methods. All these methods should be considered for use within the UW System:

1. Formal accredited academic learning – transcript credit
2. Formal nonacademic learning – armed forces training (American Council on Education), licenses and certificates, courses from non-accredited schools and colleges, training on the job
3. Informal learning assessed through standardized assessment – standardized college-level examinations (CLEP, GRE, DANTES, AP, etc.)
4. Informal learning through work experience, volunteer work, community participation, and self-study

#### **Recommendations from the UW Delegation to the CAEL Conference**

1. The UW System needs to move into the mainstream of use of prior learning assessment. As a key component of COBE (Strategy 1), prior learning assessment (PLA) can assist many learners in meeting their BA degree goals.
2. All the PLA methods listed above should be used in the UW System.
3. The UW System should develop an academically sound and coherent process for the review and awarding of credit for nontraditional (a.k.a. prior or experiential) learning.
4. The UW System should develop a set of guidelines that result in consistent policies across the System for awarding and transferring credit between UW campuses, without interfering with the autonomy of campuses in making institutional decisions about the types of methods for review and awarding of credit, institutional management, and funding.
5. UW campuses should have substantial latitude in developing institutional policies and procedures for assessing prior learning. Campuses are encouraged to follow good practices as defined by NCA and CAEL.
6. The UW System Senior Vice President should appoint a System-wide committee to take leadership for developing System-wide guidelines. Membership should be composed of representatives from relevant campus offices: Admissions, Registrars, Career Counseling, and Outreach, for example. The UW-Extension Dean of Outreach and E-Learning (OEL) should chair the committee. OEL should be assigned statewide responsibility for coordination of prior learning assessment initiatives in the UW System, with the committee serving in a continuing advisory capacity.
7. The committee should be formed as soon as possible by the Dean of Outreach and E-Learning, and make a first report to the UW System Senior Vice President using a timeline that is consistent with the development of other COBE initiatives.

8. The committee should seek a representative from CAEL to act as an adviser to the committee and UW System.

**Leadership:** System-wide Committee on Prior Learning Assessment

**Budget:** TBD

### **3. Enroll/Support Students**

**3a The UW Colleges will continue to employ a liberal admission criterion,** enrolling students from all quartiles of the high school market. Both the UW Colleges and UW-Extension have experience serving returning adult students in traditional and nontraditional settings.

**Actions:** Over the next two years, three actions are anticipated:

1. Offices of Student Services in the UW Colleges were successful in establishing funding for adult student advisers through the UW System budget and will emphasize advising for returning adults.
  - Does not require additional budget in the initial stages, but would have need for additional positions in the future.
2. The UW Colleges will create a task force of assistant deans for student services, adult student advisers, faculty, and department chairs to develop a set of standards for assigning experiential learning for returning adult students. The task force would use existing models and standards to create the new set of standards.
  - The task force of 8 to 10 members would be appointed by the end of Spring 2006.
  - The work of the task force would occur in the spring and summer of 2006, with a mixture of face-to-face and telecommunication-based meetings.
  - A methodology for assessing experiential learning would be in use by Spring 2007.
3. The UW Colleges/UW-Extension would hire an Experiential Learning Coordinator to handle the level of need anticipated by the number of adult learners attracted to the UW Colleges/UW-Extension Statewide Bachelor's Completion Program. The coordinator would be responsible for assessing all experiential learning credit to ensure that all UW Colleges students are treated promptly and uniformly with regard to credit for experience.
  - To meet the goals of the previous action, the coordinator would be hired in fall 2006 or as soon as deemed necessary by the Chancellor.

**Timeline:** Ongoing

**Budget:** \$1,000 to \$1,500 – Cost to support the task force  
\$42,000 plus benefits – Cost to support the academic staff position

**3b The full range of academic support services will continue to be available both face-to-face and online through the UW Colleges and UW-Extension.**

**Actions:**

1. The 13 campus Offices of Student Services in the UW Colleges will continue with full advising as they have in the past, utilizing face-to-face and online contact with students as appropriate. They recently have successfully completed an assessment model and are continually working to improve their full range of services.

2. UW Colleges Online continues to grow and has a full-time Assistant Director for Online Student Services. Full online orientation and Engaging Students in the First Year (**ESFY**) online are both in development.
3. UW-Extension includes UW HELP and other initial advising services at UWLI, both of which work to support their partnering institutions' academic support services.
4. UW-Extension will expand, through the UW HELP office, these support offerings to all county offices by means of the plans developed by this subcommittee (detailed elsewhere in this report).

**Timeline:** Ongoing

**Budget:** Does not require additional budget, but the UW Colleges Offices of Student Services personnel may need additional positions in the future.

**3c UW Colleges and UW-Extension personnel will work collaboratively to assist students in the following categories:**

1. **Students who need to complete an associate degree**
  - UW Colleges students who have started but not completed an associate degree will be identified by a review of Colleges student records.
  - Individual Colleges campuses will consult with their regional WTCS campuses to identify WTCS students who need to complete an associate degree.
  - 1+1 programs will be developed between Colleges campuses, using existing agreements between Colleges campuses and WTCS campuses as models.
  - WTCS campuses with no Colleges campus in their region will be allocated to a Colleges campus to develop a 1+1 relationship.
  - County Extension personnel and Colleges staff and faculty will be trained to advise students to completion of the associate degree from the Colleges pool of students or from a WTCS pool.
  - In response to other recommendations being made by the Increasing Bachelor's Degrees Working Group, alternative delivery mechanisms will be developed to support all types of students (traditional, nontraditional, place- or situation-bound, underprepared, and minority students).
  - Colleges Student Services staff and identified Extension staff in selected county offices will be trained to advise applicant students on the most efficacious programs to complete the associate degree and to move on to the bachelor's degree.

**Timeline:** Begin in 2006 and complete in 2008.

**Budget:** \$40,000

2. **Students with an associate degree who need to complete a bachelor's degree**

- UW Colleges and UW-Extension will engage in a campaign to make associate degree graduates aware of the possibilities for completing a bachelor's degree.
- Appropriate UW Colleges and UW-Extension staff will advise interested students to help them find the best bachelor's degree program for their circumstances.
- UW Colleges will undertake to identify graduates who have not gone on to a bachelor's degree and make them aware of the variety of educational delivery

systems available. Begin in 2006 and complete 2007 with continuous follow-up.

**3. Students who need to complete general education core courses to earn a bachelor's degree**

- Materials describing how students can complete core course to fulfill the general education requirements for the associate degree will be developed.
- Appropriate UW Colleges and UW-Extension staff will be trained in advising students who need core courses.
- Alternative delivery of core courses will be created to meet the needs of these students.

**Timeline:** Develop materials in 2006 and train advisory staff in 2006 and 2007.

**Budget:** \$40,000

Promotion, course development, and implementation of these action plans can be carried out in combination with the action plans for other recommendations, thereby sharing costs.

**4. Program/AA&S/BA/BS**

**4a Enhance the ability of students** to access the UW Colleges AA&S Degree and general education core courses by increasing their awareness of multiple pathways and providing increased access to advising at approximately 100 locations across the state.

**Actions:**

1. Implement statewide marketing campaign aimed at prospective adult students and human resource personnel.
2. Add information to the UW Colleges Web site that explains "multiple pathways": online, face-to-face, Cooperative Extension advising, HELP, 13 UW Colleges adult advisers/locations, etc., for prospective students. (See Recruit/Advise, 2a).

**Timeline:** Ongoing

**Budget:** \$300,000 to \$500,000

**4b The UW Colleges, as a degree-granting institution, will put into place in a 2+1+1 model.** This would be facilitated in two ways: by the UW Colleges offering select junior-level courses and by increasing the number and array of UW baccalaureate collaborative programs on UW campuses.

**Actions:** Over the next two years, three actions are anticipated:

1. Support those degrees already available statewide through UW campuses.
2. Support degree programs that will begin online development with UW-Extension funding from the Outreach and E-Learning Special Program Development Initiative (SPDI), beginning January, 2006.
3. Support degree programs that will begin online development with Legislative funding from the Committee on Baccalaureate Expansion (COBE), beginning July, 2006.
4. UW Colleges deans and directors will continue to work with their baccalaureate colleagues to extend existing degree completion collaborations to additional UW Colleges campuses and to develop new collaborations in other curricular areas. Extending existing degree completion collaborations would ensure that any UW Colleges student would be afforded the opportunity to work on a degree regardless

of location and to take advantage of our single-institution geographically dispersed structure.

5. The UW Colleges, in collaboration with UW baccalaureate partners, will identify UW Colleges faculty who can teach junior/senior level courses for existing collaborative degrees either on campus or via distance education modes. In the future, the partners would identify joint faculty positions.
6. The UW Colleges would consolidate its collaborative program efforts under a Collaborative Degree Coordinator. Currently, each UW Colleges campus works out collaborative arrangements with UW baccalaureate campuses. A Collaborative Degree Coordinator would work toward providing more efficient and effective coverage of program offerings for students regardless of their location.

**Timeline:** 4b. 1 Ongoing  
4b. 2 January, 2006 implementation  
4b. 3 July, 2006 implementation initial degree completions  
4b. 4 Ongoing  
4b. 5 Planning would begin in academic year 2006–2007, with the potential for limited implementation in Fall 2006. It is anticipated that there would be substantial growth in the program beginning in 2006–2007.  
4b. 6 The position would be filled in Fall 2006 by a current UW Colleges employee being provided 50% reassignment from other duties. In the next two years, it is anticipated that it would become a full-time position.

**Budget:** 4b. 1 TBD  
4b. 2 \$500,00 COBE funds included in UW System Budget  
4b. 3 \$500,000 Year 1; \$1,000,000 year 2; \$1,500,000 year 3  
4b. 4 The cost is substantial in terms of time commitment, and grant funding is being explored.  
4b. 5 The costs would include hiring of instructional academic staff to teach some UW Colleges courses and, in the future, the costs of new faculty, beginning at \$45,000, plus benefits.  
4b. 6 A current staff member would be reassigned and funds would be needed for “backfilling” that position.

**4c Additional UW-Colleges 2+1+1 and 2+2 models**, in collaboration with UW-Extension’s capacity to identify new degree needs and facilitate multicampus collaborations, could contribute significantly to the goal of increasing the number of baccalaureate degrees in the next five years.

The integration of the UW Colleges and UW-Extension will increase community involvement, bring new information into the planning process, and create new partnerships among faculty and staff. All of this will enhance the learning process for students, thereby increasing their motivation to complete baccalaureate degrees.

**Actions:**

1. Expansion of community partner base to enhance identification of new degree needs and educational programs. UW-Extension and UW Colleges will bring their community partners from county government, local community organizations, county- and campus-based faculty/academic staff on campuses and in county Extension offices, and their county-based Community Partner Advisory Groups into the process of identifying new degree needs and creating new multicampus partnerships.

2. Statewide program planning effort. Cooperative Extension plans to conduct a statewide program planning effort in 2007 involving community partners in an advisory capacity. This process will result in identification of major issues facing Wisconsin residents and the development of educational efforts to meet these issues. The resulting information will be shared with UW Colleges to enhance the quality of education provided to students and to develop new methods of reaching students interested in attaining baccalaureate degrees.
3. Development of a communication network that pools the research, teaching, and outreach abilities of faculty and staff. Extension faculty and staff would be connected to their UW Colleges colleagues for purposes of creating and expanding teaching and research projects. Furthermore, biology professors at UW Colleges might work with Animal Science or Genetics professors at UW-Madison, involving students at all levels.

**Timeline:** Statewide program planning process 2007-2008.

Input from statewide Community Partner Advisory Groups will be shared annually.

A communication network will be established that links UW-Extension faculty with UW Colleges faculty with efforts developed to provide collegial interactions.

**Budget:** TBD

## 5. Delivery

**5a The UW Colleges and UW-Extension will play a leadership role in the development of alternative delivery formats.** In addition to the traditional face-to-face instruction, strong interest by surveyed adults indicates increasing acceptability of alternative delivery formats including Internet, video, WisLine Web, hybrid (blend of face-to-face and distance learning), and correspondence. Both institutions are noted for the quality of instructional design and strong focus on student learning in all modes of delivery.

### **Actions:**

UW Colleges and UW-Extension will combine the powerful distance learning expertise of both institutions to meet the adult education needs of the State of Wisconsin by doing the following:

1. UW-Extension and the UW Colleges will work together to support new and innovative methods of delivering baccalaureate education. We will combine UW-Extension's expertise in lifelong learning and advanced technology with the innovative instruction and experienced alternate degree delivery of faculty in the UW Colleges. An example of this effort was funded this year through a UW-Extension Cross-Divisional Grant awarded to Wisconsin Public Television and UW-Baraboo/Sauk County to test the ease of use and learning efficacy of the new datacasting technology in the delivery of management, engineering, economics, and Spanish courses. This cutting edge technology allows WPT to turn televisions and home computers into vast libraries of media-rich information.
2. To increase the number of baccalaureate degrees offered through distance learning, UW-Extension recently initiated a Strategic Program Development Initiative Grant to UW institutions to develop three to five programs each year for the next three years. UW-Extension will work with the UW Colleges and other UW institutions to develop and deliver these new programs to adults in the state and beyond.

3. The UW Colleges will continue to work with UW-Extension to support and expand the large number of UW Colleges and other UW Institution hybrid courses already being delivered through WisLine Web, compressed video and computer-based training.
4. The UW Colleges and UW-Extension will work together and with other UW institutions to expand and modify current delivery modes to include shortened course time periods, flexible study options, cohort-based instruction, and other models to enroll students in higher education who might not otherwise be able to begin or continue with work their degrees.
5. Discussion is under way exploring a partnership with UW Colleges, UW-Madison, and UW-Extension to expand distance learning opportunities through Independent Learning.
6. UW-Extension is working with the UW Colleges and other UW institutions to develop online faculty training for Internet-delivered instruction that will serve as a systemwide resource to support the expansion of the number of courses available in this format. This effort is being funded by a UW-Extension Cross-Divisional Grant to UW Learning Innovations and Cooperative Extension to develop systemwide online training.

**Timeline:** Ongoing

**Budget:** TBD

**5b The UW Colleges and UW-Extension will play a leadership role in the development of accelerated and convenient schedule structures.** While research indicates quality of curriculum and quality of faculty are the price of entry into the marketplace, research also indicates that accelerated and convenient schedules are key in market differentiation. Initially, given the range of students and their disparate backgrounds, noncohort models may be advised, but as new degree sequences are identified and implemented, cohorts may be a student-friendly alternative.

**Actions:**

1. Review data from survey on learner preferences
2. Conduct brief research study on successful models of accelerated and convenient schedules
3. Convene meeting of Colleges department chairs, governance leadership, and experienced continuing education representatives to discuss findings from data and research study
4. Create new models for course schedules and delivery
5. Identify courses to be offered in alternative formats
6. Support curriculum redevelopment with faculty release time
7. Begin marketing for summer and fall semester alternative-format courses
8. Begin offering alternative-format courses

**Timeline:** Spring 2006 – Action Items 1–4  
 Fall 2006 – Action Items 5–7  
 Spring 2007– Action Item 8

**Budget:** \$100,000 for faculty support: \$5,000 faculty support per course × 20 courses  
 Marketing: \$50,000 initial; \$25,000 annually thereafter

**5c The UW Colleges and UW-Extension will take into account learning styles of generational market segments** such as different preferences, attitudes, values, and marketplace behaviors when developing new delivery modes.

**Actions:**

1. Include in the research programs recommended in 5a and other recommendations questions to determine potential learners' values, preferences, attitudes, and marketplace behaviors.
2. Establish a committee or use existing curriculum governance structures to initiate development and monitor the use of delivery modes that respond to what is learned in the survey research undertaken as part of recommendation 5a.
3. Provide training and incentives to faculty in the use of teaching modalities appropriate to the preferences and characteristics of the students in their classes.
4. Using existing mechanisms, develop continuing assessment practices to determine the consequences of developing teaching modalities responsive to student value, characteristics, attitudes, and marketplace behaviors.

**Timeline:** 2005–2006 academic year – Complete the research on student attitudes, values, characteristics, and marketplace behaviors.  
Summer 2006 – Assess survey results  
Fall 2006 – Develop course that responds to the research results  
Spring 2006 – At a pilot level, begin offering the newly developed course

**Budget:** \$75,000 – Research program, combined with 5a  
\$80,000 – Support to faculty and support staff in development of courses taught using new modalities: \$3,000 per course; monitoring and assessment activities \$1,000 per course (a continuing expense)

**6. Assessment**

**6a** In addition to existing assessment practices, **UW Colleges will engage students in long-term longitudinal studies** to ensure that the education is relevant and applicable to their respective needs and goals.

In the spirit of the UW Colleges mission as a transfer institution, every attempt is made to ensure that the general education credits and/or the AA&S degree students earn is both relevant to and applicable in their upper-level education. The results from the data on our transfer students' performance and degree completion are excellent, as detailed in the appendix to this subcommittee's report.

To assess relevance and applicability, the UW Colleges Institutional Research Office already tracks any UWC students who transfer within the UW System for success rates in terms of:

- Transfer destination
- Persistence, in particular retention to a second year following transfer
- GPA: Cumulative GPA for each term beyond transfer, not including credits earned at the UW Colleges
- Degree completion: Do students actually complete a baccalaureate degree?
- Baccalaureate major

When students transfer elsewhere, they are nearly impossible to track and study beyond the use of individual surveys. The UW Colleges has attempted such surveys in the past, but the rate of return was so low that it was cost prohibitive and provided inadequate information. Hence this practice was discontinued.

**Actions:**

Within the next year, this topic will be revisited within Academic Affairs to discuss both need and means by which to conduct more efficient and accurate long-term studies.

Consideration would be focused on:

1. Creative ways to stay in contact with UWC alumni who transfer out of the UW System
2. Strategies to obtain additional information on those who transfer within the UW System

**Timeline:** TBD

**Budget:** TBD

**6b** Longitudinal studies will also enable **the UW Colleges and UW-Extension to measure the increase in baccalaureate degrees** awarded on an annual basis, as well as the relative position in regional and national markets.

**Actions:**

1. Assign responsibility for longitudinal surveys to an existing office or add staff that will have continuing responsibility for survey work. Beyond longitudinal surveying, this office or person should be responsible for all of the data-gathering and survey activities found in the Increasing Bachelor's Degrees Work Group action plans.
2. **Coordinate research with other research efforts of UW System and state agencies. Whenever possible, researchers for the UW Colleges and UW-Extension should strive to increase effectiveness by collaborating with other research projects.**
3. Provide regular updates and workshop opportunities for faculty, staff, and other interested parties to understand the results and implications of completed research.
4. Develop mechanisms to deliver research results to the leadership of the Colleges and Extension in a form that facilitates decision making in a timely fashion.
5. Deliver research results to marketing personnel in a form that is usable and is supported by data acquired in a broader review of research literature.

**Timeline:** 2005/2005 Academic Year – Assign longitudinal research responsibilities to an existing office or hire a new position for research  
Over a 5- to 10-year span – Create a plan to direct survey research effort  
2006 – Begin assessment and dissemination of existing research data

**Budget:** \$50,000 plus benefits – Support survey research in an existing office or hire a specialist for a new position  
\$45,000 – Support for continuing survey research on an annual basis  
\$30,000 – In-service and public opportunities to share the results of the research program

**6c** On a regular basis, **studies by the UW Colleges and UW-Extension will be conducted to identify emerging and unmet needs.**

**Actions:**

1. UW-Extension and UW Colleges will routinely survey prospective and enrolled adult students to determine their needs related to education and employment. Through the student database that will be developed to recruit adult students (described in 2b), we will have the ability to study how effective efforts are to recruit and retain adult students in the UW System and what unmet needs should be addressed.

2. The UW Colleges and UW-Extension will continue the research on state and national trends in adult education that was completed this year through three extensive surveys as described in 1a. Research included:
  - Current rate of participation in adult learning activities
  - Attitudes toward educational activities
  - Attitudes and behavior toward technology and online learning
  - Learning styles
  - Paying for courses
  - Media habits
  - Comparing and contrasting data on the basis of generational cohorts
3. UW-Extension and the UW Colleges will play a leadership role in creating a body of knowledge about the needs of adult students in Wisconsin and sharing that information with UW institutions to support adult student recruitment, retention, and graduation.
4. UW-Extension and the UW Colleges will work with the Department of Workforce Development and other state agencies to ensure that our efforts to increase the number of adults with baccalaureate degrees enhance and support the economic initiatives in Wisconsin to **thrive in the New Economy**.

**Timeline:** Fall 2006

**Budget:** TBD

## Appendix A

### **Increasing Bachelor's Degrees Working Group Report UW Colleges Current and Future Strategies For Increasing Bachelor's Degrees**

The UW Colleges serves more than 12,000 students statewide with more than 400 faculty and instructional academic staff. The institution enrolls high school students from all quartiles, and has the most extensive history among UW System institutions of serving returning adult students in traditional and non-traditional settings. As an accessible and affordable multi-campus institution that prepares students for the baccalaureate degree by providing the first two years of liberal arts general education courses, the UW Colleges has an excellent track record. Students who begin in the UW Colleges and transfer to UW System baccalaureate granting institutions have higher second year retention rates after transfer and higher graduation rates than students transferring from any other type of post secondary institution in the state (public and private, technical or liberal arts). Students who transfer with a UW Colleges Associate's degree have the highest five-year graduation rate of all transfer students to UW System baccalaureate granting institutions. The UW Colleges has developed a number of distance learning opportunities for its students and leads the UW System by offering its Associate of Arts and Science Degree entirely online. The UW Colleges accomplishes all of this in a succinct and self-sufficient manner. Per student cost of freshman/sophomore undergraduate education for the UW Colleges is the lowest of all UW System institutions.

The UW Colleges is well positioned to provide access to baccalaureate programs for diverse audiences using a variety of delivery systems. With increased resources, the UW Colleges could immediately put into action a 2+1+1 model that would begin to contribute significantly to the goal of increasing the number of baccalaureate degrees in the next five years. The 2+1+1 program is defined as a student obtaining an Associate of Arts and Sciences degree with the UW Colleges followed by an additional year of baccalaureate study also delivered by the UW Colleges. This would be facilitated in two ways: by the UW Colleges offering select junior level courses and by existing UW baccalaureate collaborative programs (and others to be negotiated) on UW Colleges campuses. These courses would be delivered in a number of new formats and timeframes. The final year of baccalaureate study could be done with any UW baccalaureate campus.

The potential for success of this bachelor's degree program would be based on:

- the quality of our faculty and staff, their commitment to teaching and their experience working with traditional and non-traditional students of varying academic backgrounds and skills;
- the success of our Associate's degree students upon transfer;
- the Guaranteed Transfer Program with UW System baccalaureate institutions;
- the Collaborative Agreement with UW System baccalaureate institutions and other Wisconsin post secondary institutions;
- the continued expansion of UWC Online and our Non-Online Distance Education programs;

the large number of faculty with experience offering quality programs using a variety of delivery methods including hybrid courses;  
the ongoing experimentation by faculty and staff with a variety of new technologies for course delivery;  
the number of faculty who have taught in accelerated learning or shortened semester formats; and  
the demonstrated commitment of the institution's administrative, faculty and staff leadership to providing quality education in ways that increase access to the UW for the state's citizens.

**Objective 1:** Identify existing capacity at UW Colleges & UW-Extension including programs, staff, faculty, delivery and support services (as they relate to baccalaureate completion)

### **UW Colleges Campus Delivery and Distance Education Delivery Information**

#### *Programs:*

The UW Colleges provides transferable liberal arts general education courses that supply the foundation for any baccalaureate degree offered in the UW System.

The UW Colleges offers pre-professional courses that are required for various professional degrees awarded at any UW System baccalaureate granting institution and private colleges and universities.

The UW Colleges has many collaborative baccalaureate degree programs and certifications with universities in Wisconsin. The UW Colleges also has collaborative programs with institutions in the Wisconsin Technical College System and with area high schools. These collaborative programs are listed in Appendices 1 and 2.

The Guaranteed Transfer Program (GTP) enables students to begin their education as freshmen at the UW Colleges and be guaranteed admission to a UW System institution as juniors provided they meet GTP requirements. They transfer with the same rights and privileges as those who begin their education at the baccalaureate institution.

In 2001, in collaboration with a UW-Milwaukee grant project, the UW Colleges launched hybrid courses as an additional delivery method. Successfully integrating traditional face-to-face classroom time with an online component in Blackboard courseware, the UW Colleges aimed its first hybrid development at the demanding schedules of non-traditional students. Carefully growing this program with an instructional technologist, and utilizing newer courseware, Desire to Learn (D2L0, over 50 courses are now fully hybrid. By Spring 2005, instructors in over 500 courses throughout the 13 campuses were using D2L in some capacity to enhance traditional teaching methods; over 400 of these courses were face-to-face, and the rest were fully online (UWC Online) or hybrid.

All 13 UW Colleges campuses actively participate in the long-standing non-online DE program that utilizes WisLine Web (WLW), Compressed Video (CV), and Computer Based Training (CBT). Scheduled and administratively coordinated in the central Distance Education office, the non-online DE program offers an alternative to traditional delivery methods for those students needing courses not offered on a smaller campus or in a given semester for any number of reasons. The next anticipated step is the student participating in a WisLine Web class from home.

#### *Staff:*

- Each of the 13 UW Colleges campuses has an assistant dean for student services and support staff that are specialists in advising students on transferring and preparing for any of a wide array of baccalaureate programs.
- Each of the 13 UW Colleges campuses has a full-time returning adult and non-traditional student advisor who is a specialist in advising non-traditional students on

various methods of attaining a baccalaureate degree. Once they have obtained an Associate's degree, many of these students continue their study in the collaborative degree programs offered by UW baccalaureate campuses at UW Colleges sites.

- Each UW Colleges campus has a full-time Instructional Technology Staff (ITS) member who is responsible for supporting the non-online distance education courses that are delivered and received at his/her respective campus.

#### *Faculty:*

The degree qualifications for becoming a member of the UW Colleges faculty is identical to that of a baccalaureate campus, with 80 percent of the faculty holding terminal degrees and continuing with research in their field of specialization or in teaching and learning. UW Colleges faculty are qualified to teach upper-level (junior/senior) courses. (See Appendix 3.)

A number of UW Colleges faculty have taught/are teaching courses in collaborative degree programs offered on UW Colleges campuses.

Many UW Colleges faculty have been full-time members of the faculty or taught as visiting or adjunct instructors at baccalaureate universities.

#### *Support Services:*

Each of the 13 UW Colleges has two distance education rooms; many have three. The rooms provide:

- compressed video delivery and
- WisLine Web delivery

Each UW Colleges campus has full-time Instructional Technology Staff (ITS) who are responsible for providing all necessary support services to students and faculty in any distance education course delivered and received including collaborative degree programs. This support service has been functioning for seven years.

The UW Colleges instructional technology work-study program offers a group of UW Colleges students training to deliver instructional technology services. There is a minimum of one student per campus who is fully trained to work in the support of the distance education programs at the UW Colleges.

The UW Colleges has a partnership with MBS-Direct for the purchase of books for all distance education courses.

### **UW Colleges Online**

#### *Programs:*

In April 2001 UW Colleges Online received full accreditation, noted as a model for online education, to offer the identical Associate of Arts and Science degree as the UW Colleges 13 campuses. Students can earn the entire degree online (identified as "degree seeking ONL") or they can earn credits online to supplement their on-campus curriculum within the UW System or elsewhere.

Special UW Colleges Senate appointed/approved UW Colleges Online counterparts are in place to parallel campus structures and committees as needed.

The Guaranteed Transfer Program, along with all other UW Colleges privileges, rights, responsibilities, policies and procedures, apply to UW Colleges Online students just as to all UW Colleges campus students.

UW Colleges Online participates in several unique online degree completion collaborations. Those already in place (or in pilot stages) include: BSN LINC (Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree completion program for those outside of the state of WI, run through University of Wisconsin-Green Bay), CNP (Collaborative Nursing Program for Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree completion within the state of Wisconsin, consisting of a collaboration among five University of Wisconsin baccalaureate campuses), University of Wisconsin-Platteville in partnership with

University of Wisconsin-Learning Innovations, Wisconsin CESA 10 (Cooperative Educational Service Agency number 10, consisting of nearly 40 northwestern Wisconsin High Schools), University of Wisconsin-Superior, University of Wisconsin-Stout, Viterbo College, and Capella. Those in development stages include: University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and business contacts. Details of each can be found in Appendix 2.

*Staff:*

UW Colleges Online functions as a 14<sup>th</sup> campus:

- The Director of Distance Education is responsible for all planning, staffing and administrative management of UW Colleges Online (and of all non-online DE including compressed video (CV), WisLine Web (WLW), and computer based training courses (CBT) throughout the UW Colleges 13 campuses).
- The Assistant Director for Student Services is dedicated entirely to academic advising and student financial aid for all UWC "degree-seeking Online" students.
- The Distance Education Coordinator is responsible for all payroll, scheduling, business office functions, campus interactions, enrollment management and a host of other administrative responsibilities.
- The Student Services Specialist is responsible for student services support, all UWC Online and non-online DE textbooks including interactions with all faculty and the online bookstore, and other administrative responsibilities.
- The Lead Instructional Designer is responsible for all UWC Online course development, revisions, maintenance and training.
- The Information Processing Consultant provides tech support and course support for DE as needed.
- An online librarian who makes sure every UW Colleges ONL student is properly eligible and enrolled in all available UW library services (some technical set up) and serves as the direct library contact for every student in a UW Colleges ONL class.
- LTE support is hired as needed.

*Faculty:*

In a deliberate effort to stay true to the quality of the UW Colleges degree offerings, UW Colleges Online courses are taught by the same instructors who teach on the 13 campuses. Currently there is only one adjunct instructor who does not have another UW Colleges campus affiliation (with departmental approval).

*Support Services:*

- UWC Online Helpdesk provides phone and online technical, course and D2L support for all instructors and students.
- UWC Online offers full Student Financial Aid, Veterans Administration and financial services utilizing central and campus business office support.
- UWC Online students are offered online counterparts of on-campus services including: placement testing, disability services, all aspects of advising, orientation, student ID cards, full library services, math and writing labs, Strong Interest Inventory®, transcript requests, appeals, links to career websites and transfer sites, etc. The Online First Year Experience Seminar is currently in development.
- UWC Online partners with MBS-Direct for all textbooks.

**Objective 2: Identify both socio/economic/geographic location and degree interests of Wisconsin population groups currently not served by existing UWS institutions**

The UW Colleges has studies underway to address this objective. The first of the studies has been completed.

Data collected by the UW Colleges in a voluntary online survey in the spring semester 2005 addresses geographic location and degree interests of Wisconsin population groups. Nearly 90% of the 3,100 UW Colleges students who responded to this survey indicated that they planned to seek a Bachelor's degree and 70% indicated that, if it were offered in their area of interest by the UW Colleges, they would stay at their current UW Colleges campus. These students were about equally divided between those with less than 30 credits and those with 30 or more credits. Two-thirds of the respondents were 21 years of age or younger and planned to obtain an Associate's degree with the UW Colleges. These students preferred to have a Bachelor's curriculum delivered in the same mode as their Associate degree courses – students in face-to-face classes in that manner and online students in that delivery mode.

See data from UW Colleges study when it becomes available in August.

See data from UW-Extension's statewide study.

Wisconsin residents hold more Associate's degrees than the residents of the four contiguous states, but hold fewer baccalaureate degrees. The UW Colleges believe that Associate's degree holders are just one of three important audiences that it could target for baccalaureate programming.

Current Associate's degree holders: Because the UW Colleges are geographically located to serve Associate's degree holders who are place- and economically-bound to their current location, collaborative programs offered at UW Colleges campuses are one very efficient way to increase Bachelor's degree holders in Wisconsin. Also, the students who hold a UW Colleges Associate's degree have completed approximately 50% of the required coursework for a baccalaureate degree and can transfer seamlessly into baccalaureate degree programs offered by UW System campuses. We know students who transfer with a UW Colleges Associate's degree have had an excellent retention and graduation rate.

A second audience is adults who have completed some college coursework but have not continued for a wide range of work- and family-related reasons. The UW Colleges Associate's degree offered at 13 campuses across the state and online is the logical first step for this group. In addition, the UW Colleges have in place a number of delivery systems that are attractive to these adult learners who balance work, family and study.

A third underserved population for baccalaureate programming is recent high school graduates. In comparison to neighboring states, Wisconsin ranks low in the percent of high school graduates who enroll immediately in colleges (e.g., High School Entrance into Higher Education Rate in 2000: WI (57.2%), MN (63.9%), IA (64.5%) yet it ranks highest in the percent of undergraduate students participating in public higher education (e.g., WI (80.8%), MN (66.1%), IA (74.9%). With increased resources, the UW Colleges, which has the best track record for providing efficient access to public higher education and transferring students who graduate with a Bachelor's degree, would be able to increase WI Bachelor's degree holders by providing an Associate's degree that transfers seamlessly into any number of baccalaureate granting programs.

**Objective 3:** Develop new delivery models that take advantage of innovative uses of technology including but not limited to: on-line learning, digital television, flexible scheduling of time and place and other non-traditional formats.

- Given the extant programming and infrastructure of the UW Colleges, the first task is to increase the use of or better utilize alternative delivery methods already have in place and/or at the pilot stage with UW-Extension. These include:
  - Hybrid: The UW-Colleges developed hybrid courses initially to meet the scheduling needs of non-traditional students, but it is clear that hybrid courses

- offer other advantages for instructors and students in multiple scenarios. Hence, this successful program is now positioned to expand to meet Distance Education and other institutional needs.
- Accelerated Learning/Shortened Semester Course Offerings: The UW Colleges campuses summer sessions deliver courses in three, four, six and eight week units; UWC Online summer session is an eight week program. In the Winterim, UW Colleges courses are delivered in three-week units. There are several shortened semester sessions in DE with CBT and on campuses (e.g., an eight week alcohol and drug course; several six and eight week physical education and computer science courses). Therefore, many UW Colleges faculty have experience teaching courses in a variety of timeframes, including those that allow the adult learners a tighter window to complete courses in a manner that is conducive to their current personal and professional life schedules.
  - Independent Learning: Discussion is underway exploring a partnership of UW Colleges, UW-Madison, and UW-Extension for UW Independent Learning. Representation from all three institutions serve on the Strategic Planning for Independent Learning Working Group and a formal recommendation is expected at the end of summer 2005.
  - Non-online Distance Education: The UW Colleges is in the process of identifying new methodologies to pilot a non-online Distance Education course to students in the entire state of Wisconsin. This new technology would enable the student to have a “virtual” class with other students and the professor at an established time at least one day a week. Non-online distance education would allow students another avenue of interaction with their classmates as well as the professor.
  - Data Casting: The UW Colleges in conjunction with UW-Extension is currently participating in a Cross-Divisional grant testing data casting technology for use in an educational environment. Data casting technology uses the unutilized broadcast bandwidth belonging to Wisconsin Public Television. During the 2005-2006 academic year two courses, second semester Spanish and Engineering Economics, will use the data casting technology. Large data, video, and music files will be broadcast to the students via the data casting technology to either a computer on their campus or at their home, depending upon their course. This data will be delivered at the appropriate time during the course much in the same manner that data is given to students in a face-to-face class. The data that is broadcast is so large in file size that a student would not typically be able to receive this data in an ordinary online or distance education course. Data to be broadcast include, but are not limited to, music, video clips, movies, data files and large pdf files.
  - New or modified delivery modes that could be considered include:
    - Flexible Study Options Approach: The State University of New York’s Empire State College (ESC) flexible study option combines many of the delivery modes currently in use in the UW Colleges. ESC offers associate and bachelor degree programs by combining on campus, online courses, independent study, internships and small group seminars. In addition, like the UW Colleges adult and returning student advisors, ESC offers students the opportunity to work with locally-based mentors who advise the student on how to complete his/her degree program. ESC offers mentoring at 35 sites throughout the state and students can borrow books from any of the SUNY campuses. Like the UW Colleges, ESC students can register and order books online. This model also includes partnering between the ESC and other campuses in the SUNY system in a manner that parallels the variety of current collaborative programs the UW Colleges have with UWS institutions as well as WTCS and private colleges and universities. ESC

- students can begin at any of five periods during the year while the UWC students have four entry points in a year.
- Cohort Approach: A key characteristic of the cohort approach is that students begin the same degree or degree completion at the same time and continue through it together as a group. A key component of many cohort programs is study groups that meet for a specified number of hours each week in an educational setting. Often programs begin when the required number of students has enrolled rather than on a pre-established date; courses are often delivered in six or eight week sessions with students taking one course at a time. The cohort model has most often been used with face-to-face delivery, but there are a number of online cohort programs. Some recent Associate's degree recipients of the UWC Online completed their degrees following many of the cohort principles, but in a standard academic calendar. Like cohort approaches, UWC Online courses use peer discussion (academic) and peer help (FAQ's, how do I do; do you understand; where do I find) as important elements of the course.
  - Structured Curriculum Approach: A number of cohort based degree programs for adult learners specify that each cohort take a prescribed sequence of courses with no choices. When students register they are registered for all of the courses leading to a degree. As the cohorts move through the sequence together, students can tell from day one which course comes when and what each course will be. Students who fail a course or step out have to be inserted into another cohort, or in some cases, are permitted to take two courses in overlapping periods to allow them to catch up with their cohort.
  - Creating greater synergy between the lifelong learning expertise of UW-Extension and the degree delivery experience of the UW Colleges and their combined expertise in working with adult learners could significantly increase the percentage of Wisconsin citizens enrolled in Bachelor's degree programs. By providing flexible extended study Bachelor's degree programs delivered in more traditional and experimental (though tested) formats, the combined efforts could enroll students in higher education who might not otherwise been able to begin their UW studies and those who have dropped out either before or after completing the Associate's degree.

**Objective 4:** Build on existing high touch and high tech strengths of UW Colleges and UW-Extension to develop models for advising and supporting the educational needs of the identified students.

- The UW Colleges have advising systems, dependent upon trained student services staff and faculty, which provide multiple advising contacts per semester. The result is a highly individualized program for each of the UW Colleges students. This degree advising scheme would continue with the advent of more collaborative offerings and baccalaureate programs on our campuses.
- The UW Colleges distance educational technologies would provide another avenue of advising and recruiting of students into baccalaureate programs offered by baccalaureate campuses. The students could meet and be advised by baccalaureate campus advisors utilizing the existing distance education technologies. These facilities could also be used in conjunction with our traditional classrooms to provide spaces for baccalaureate programming.
- UW Colleges Online currently utilizes technology for personalized student advising and support. In addition to personal phone conversation, advising is conducted fully online, placement testing and academic planning have been fully automated, and a dedicated Help Desk with tracking and escalating software is in place. As mentioned, disability services, orientations, library services, math and writing labs, catalogs, policies and procedures, and other services are all fully online. All aspects of UWC

Online advising are led by the Assistant Director for Student Services who has nearly 30 years of advising experience, 20 of which are within the UW System.

- Many of our campus adult student advisors have also developed outreach programming for adult learners seeking Associate degrees and baccalaureate completion programs. For example, UW-Barron County's adult student advisors have created "Return to Learn" programming for collaborative degree programs with four UW System baccalaureate institutions. This programming could be duplicated throughout the UW Colleges to reach a majority of Wisconsin counties.
- The UW Colleges could work in conjunction with UW-Extension county offices to provide associate and baccalaureate degree information. The UW Colleges adult advisors could work hand-in-hand with the UW-Extension county office staff in all 72 counties in Wisconsin, theoretically reaching every citizen in Wisconsin.

**Objective 5: Examine existing alliances which help meet the needs of underserved degree seekers. These include other UWS institutions, WTCS, and K-12 schools. Identify areas where new alliances are needed and develop strategies to create them.**

- One model that currently meets the needs of underserved degree seekers is the UW Colleges/UW-Milwaukee Collaborative Degree Programs in Organizational Administration, Information Resources and Communication. This model could be further developed to include more if not a majority of the current collaborative degree programs offered at individual UW Colleges campuses as well as an online component through UWC Online. Strategic alliances and partnerships have already been made with individual campuses and could be extended to all 13 campuses and UWC Online.
- Another model that offers strong potential for meeting the needs of the underserved population and could be extended to all 13 campuses is the UW-Fox Valley/Fox Valley Technical Colleges 1+1 Associate of Arts and Science degree program. This collaboration enables students enrolled in technical programs at FVTC regional centers to complete a UW Colleges Associate's degree. Students will be provided a minimum of 30 credits of the UW Colleges liberal arts general education curriculum from across the disciplines and the UW Colleges will accept up to 30 credits of coursework from the FCTC general education program in transfer as established and articulated in the UWS Transfer Information System. This provides the student easy access to a baccalaureate degree program while giving them the tools and expertise to work in a highly specialized field while attaining their degree.
- The UW Colleges work with local area high schools through the Youth Options Program (YPO) to provide college programming to high school juniors and seniors. Some of these students graduate from high school with enough credits to begin the second semester of their freshman year and in some cases the first semester of their sophomore year in college. Expanding on the Youth Options model, UWC Online partnered with CESA 10 to offer online general education credits to nearly 40 high schools in northwestern Wisconsin. This pilot is already enrolling students for the fall 2005 semester. Placement testing is available to these high school students either online or face-to-face at UW-Barron County.
- Many UW Colleges campuses work with local area high schools to provide summer programming for low-income and at-risk high school and middle school students.
- The UW Colleges has a rich history of offering developmental/remedial courses for students who have low-entry scores in mathematics and English. These courses target students who struggled in high school and returning adult students who have been away from education. UW Colleges Online offers developmental geometry and algebra, and will launch developmental English in 2005-2006.

UW Colleges campuses and UWC Online administer the full range of Student Financial Aid (SFA) programs and many provide targeted scholarship money to returning adult students.

## Appendix B

### **Increasing Bachelor's Degrees Working Group Report UW-Extension Current and Future Strategies For Increasing Bachelor's Degrees**

#### **Increasing Baccalaureate Degrees Working Group Report**

***Objective 1:** Identify existing capacity at UW Colleges and UW-Extension including programs, staff, faculty, delivery and support services (as they relate to baccalaureate completion)*

**UW-Extension programs and services relevant to our effort to increase baccalaureate degree completion in Wisconsin.**

#### **Division of Outreach and E-Learning**

##### **Systemwide Continuing Education Coordination**

The Division of Outreach and E-Learning Extension provides leadership for statewide continuing education, systemwide online learning, and labor education expertise.

##### **Major Programs and Units**

- Continuing Education, credit and non-credit outreach at the 26 UW campuses
- School for Workers
- UW-Learning Innovations
- Higher Education Location Program (HELP)

By action of the UW Regents, the CEE Dean's Office bears the responsibility for leading the systemwide planning and coordination effort of the continuing education function throughout Extension. The Dean's Office works in partnership with the deans and directors of continuing education at each of the UW System institutions to ensure the sound fiscal management of programs that support lifelong learning.

By working closely with the Continuing Education Extension Committee (CEEC), comprised of the continuing education deans and directors at the UW institutions, the Dean's office of the strives to:

- Develop system-wide plans that indicate areas of need and priority
- Focus program efforts
- Build consensus on issues
- Coordinate extension programs carried out by the UW-Institutions
- Provide system-wide leadership with a planning framework and process
- Link the statewide long range plan with the annual and strategic plans of the UW institutions
- Provide accountability for the expenditures and outcomes of the UW System Extension function
- Provide for the collection and reporting of relevant data

Outreach and E-Learning Extension reallocates resources annually in a priority framework, defined by the strategic plan it develops every five years. The division and the Continuing Education Extension Committee (CEEC), which is comprised of continuing education deans and directors from each UW institution, agree on the shared vision and directions that will

enable each campus to develop specific five-year plans aligned with the statewide strategic plan. While allowing for planning to occur at the institutional level, the statewide plan serves as the overarching direction for programs, services, and partnerships. Outreach and E-Learning's commitment to lifelong learning is based on the belief that our clients can best meet the challenges of success today if they have opportunities for learning throughout their lifespan. On an annual basis, Outreach and E-Learning Extension uses an interactive process in the development of the interinstitutional budgets to initiate, define, and discuss changes to ongoing programs or to meet emerging needs.

The University of Wisconsin-Extension's Division of Outreach and E-Learning Extension provides continuing education programs, services, and support to the 26 UW campuses and a wide variety of corporate and non-profit partners. In conjunction with the 13 two-year and 13 four-year UW campuses, Outreach and E-Learning is a lifelong learning partner for more than 200,000 people each year, from the 72 counties across Wisconsin, all 50 states, and 73 countries around the world. Each institution/campus with its select mission, as well as array of program and degree entitlements, offers educational programs and services to meet constituent need.

### **Extension's Actions and Leadership Roles - Recommended to the Colleges/Extension Integration Steering Committee Related to Baccalaureate Completion**

- Identify and get Extension Project Coordinator on board.
- Complete analysis of newest surveys of adult learners. Discover as much as possible about the potential adult learner market interested in an undergraduate degree. Provide extensive dissemination of the survey information.
- Analyze relevant UWS, WTCS and other State and Federal databases to identify likely degree candidates.
- Partner with UW Institutions applying for COBE funds and also other interested UW institutions to assist in launching "in demand" and highly accessible Baccalaureate Completion programs.
- Facilitate development of new baccalaureate degree completion programs in areas of high student or labor market demand. Assist online production of degree programs of particular importance to the state's economic development. Support campuses in enhancing distance delivered courses.
- Create the Wisconsin Office of Returning Adult Students (ORAS), a partnership of the Colleges and Extension using campus-based Adult Learner Offices and Cooperative Extension County offices. Train advisors.
- 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.
- Do market analyses, develop, and implement statewide marketing plans targeting - priority learner segments identified in COBE funded grants, offered by other interested UW institutions, and selected workforce populations.

- Provide authoritative information about the distance education courses and programs offered by the institutions of the University of Wisconsin System using the Extension developed DistanceLearning.Wisconsin web site.
- Provide to potential adult degree candidates extensive trained advising. Assist people in organizing their personalized post-secondary educational portfolio. Identify “best fit” institutions and degrees, and connect learners to degree-granting campuses.

## **UW Learning Innovations**

UW Learning Innovations is comprised of six units that support numerous UW System programs, services, student service technology initiatives, including 200 online courses generating 4,000 enrollments and 350 Independent Learning courses generating 3,000 enrollments.

Since its formation by the University Of Wisconsin System Board Of Regents in October 1997, UW Learning Innovations (UW-LI) has worked in concert with the 15 UW institutions to develop full degree and certificate programs online. As the University of Wisconsin’s e-learning consultation utility, UW-LI combines the University’s 108 year tradition of teaching at a distance with our expertise in instructional design and Web technology. UW-LI offers anywhere, anytime learning through interactive technology to ensure learner success. UW-LI’s academic partnerships with UW institutions are built upon a centralized service model, designed for cost-effectiveness. The campuses provide faculty expertise for course content and instruction, and UW-LI provides the expertise in course design, development, learner services, IT and marketing.

- **UW Independent Learning – 2 administrative staff (1 program director and 1 program assistant) plus faculty from UW-Madison and various UW System institutions.** (University Credit, High School, Noncredit)
  - UW Independent Learning (UWIL), in partnership with UW Learning Innovations and several UW Baccalaureate campuses, is the leading source for self-paced, non-classroom learning opportunities in the state. UWIL provides any time, any place access to over 300 UW-developed courses, aiming to accommodate students’ diverse learning styles, needs, and schedules. UWIL offers flexible and cost-effective quality courses for college credit, as well as non-credit courses for professional development or recertification. UWIL has been in existence since 1894 and has over 3,000 enrollments annually.
- **UW HELP – 6 staff:** 5 student service coordinators, 1 program assistant
  - UWS Electronic Applications for Admission (Over 100,000 annually)
  - UW HELP Online (800 page advising website)
  - Distancelearning. Wisconsin.edu website on UW System distance learning program and course offerings – including student information and advising (developed with ICS).
  - Toll-free/Email advising about UWS programs, policies and services
  - Publications for prospective students
  - Outreach to high schools
  - Conduct UW System annual statewide admission workshops for school counselors

- Administration and coordination of the UW System student service technology applications below.
- **Student/Partner Services – 12 staff:** 1 program manager, 5 student services specialists, 1 bookstore liaison, 4 registration staff, 1 tech support manager.
  - Educational Support Services – Call Center for seamless student support
  - Student Recruitment Services
  - Help Desk Support
  - Registration Services
  - Seamless web access for students and LI partners to student and program information
  - Partnership with MBS-Direct (online book vendor) for purchase of books for Independent Learning and online partner programs.
- **Information Technology – 8 staff:** 1 program manager, 5 programmer/analysts, 2 network and server support.
  - Network Services for 50 LI staff
  - Application Development Services for the following applications:
    - UWS Electronic Applications for Admission
    - UWS Majors and Other Academic Programs Database
    - UWS Precollege Program Directory
    - Learner Relationship Management System (LRMS)
      - Online Catalog Registration System
      - LRMS Partner View to student information
      - Recruitment/Contact Management
      - CRM
- **Communications – 4 staff;** 1 Program Manager, 1 graphic artist, 1 Web developer, 1 Web marketing expert.
  - Provide expertise to and collaboration with UW-LI partner initiatives in marketing and student recruitment.
  - Graphic and web design services
  - Market research
  - Web marketing expertise (coming soon)
- **Course Production and Development – 11 staff:** 1 program manager, 5 instructional designers, 5 editors
  - Project and resource management of services to UW System partners and external client training and contract services.
    - Content design
    - Production
    - Editing
    - Site administration of Desire to Learn
    - Toll-free/email course support for faculty during the design, implementation and on-going functions of course delivery
    - Faculty training (face-to-face and online)
    - Analysis and consulting services on needs assessment, evaluation, planning and review
- **Office of Returning Adult Students**

As part of the upcoming Committee on Baccalaureate Expansion (COBE) initiative that has been funded in the State budget, UW HELP as part of UW Learning Innovations is

proposing to build on existing UW System advising and student service technology support services to create a Wisconsin Office of Returning Adult Students (ORAS), whose mission is to help students who have dropped out complete a degree. ORAS's goal will be to increase our state's baccalaureate and associate degree holders and, as a result, improve Wisconsin's graduation rates, which lag in comparison with those of other states. This office will be created as a partnership among the WTCS, UW System, and the Department of Workforce Development (DWD). ORAS will do the following to accomplish its mission: create an independent united front for public higher education in Wisconsin, provide professional advising via toll-free phone and e-mail, create and maintain a statewide database to track student interactions with ORAS, work with colleges and universities to maintain contact with students who have dropped out, and work closely with DWD to promote degree programs of particular importance to the state's economic development. This combined effort will aggressively seek out these students and offer them the best of our statewide public higher education resources to further the State of Wisconsin's economic initiatives.

## **Division of Broadcasting and Media Innovations (BAMI)**

### **Instructional Communications Systems**

Instructional Communications Systems, an academic support unit within the University of Wisconsin-Extension Broadcasting and Media Innovations unit, has been a leader in interactive distance learning since 1965. ICS provides electronic communication and distance education services to University of Wisconsin institutions, state governmental agencies, and other educational, governmental and nonprofit organizations.

Instructional Communications Systems (ICS) has been serving the teleconferencing and distance education needs of the University of Wisconsin System institutions and other public agencies since 1965. Today, a variety of state-of-the-art communication technologies managed and supported by ICS assists university faculty and staff, state and local government officials and staff, and many others to reach students, colleagues, and clients throughout Wisconsin and the world.

ICS has 38 staff members who manage the following technology services:

- WisLine, an international conference call service
- Satellite videoconference services
- Dialup and IP Interactive videoconferencing
- Full motion fiber optic videoconferencing
- Media production facilities
- Audio and Video streaming services, and
- WisLine Web, a Web conferencing service.

### **Wisconsin Public Television**

Like other UW-Extension programs, Wisconsin Public Television (WPT) is poised to support the delivery of distance education using new cutting edge technology. With our new digital signal, WPT can turn TVs and home computers into vast libraries of media-rich information. Using the capabilities of our new broadcast signal, we will enhance programs with additional information such as customized educational materials to teachers, students and life-long learners. This data -- video, audio, graphics and text -- can be embedded into the broadcast signal to be downloaded, stored and viewed later. UW-Extension recently awarded a Cross

Divisional grant to Wisconsin Public Television which will support the establishment of national datacasting standards by working with UW-Baraboo/Sauk County faculty and staff to test the ease of use and learning efficacy of datacast course packages in non-profit management, engineering economics, and Spanish.

### **Division of Cooperative Extension**

Cooperative Extension is a division of UW-Extension that works in partnership with county, state, federal and tribal governments; community organizations, businesses, and industry. Through its 72 county-based Cooperative Extension offices, Wisconsin residents get quick, convenient access to information provided by approximately 550 faculty/staff. In 2003, over 1.3 million educational contacts were made through Cooperative Extension county offices. Cooperative Extension's statewide county-based network of offices enjoys its reputation as being accessible and responsive to all residents. Cooperative Extension works with people of all ages providing informal, non-credit learning experiences. In addition, over 300 campus-based faculty/staff support the work of their county-based colleagues by creating educational materials and conducting research based upon needs identified by Wisconsin residents.

County Cooperative Extension offices pride themselves in listening and responding to the needs of Wisconsin residents. Statewide program planning is conducted in every county to include the range of perspectives, expertise and values of all residents. Input is sought from the broad spectrum of members of the community by systematically involving people from diverse racial/ethnic groups, ages, abilities, and interests.

After identifying the major concerns in the counties, Cooperative Extension plans its educational efforts around these issues. This program planning process is a continuous one of situational analysis, priority setting, and implementation. Evaluation is done at every step. Major areas of emphasis for Cooperative Extension programs are community, natural resource and economic development, agriculture, youth development, and family life and nutrition education.

County-based faculty and staff are uniquely positioned to join with UW Colleges campus-based faculty and staff to provide face-to-face advising and educational resources to prospective adult students in Wisconsin.

***Objective 2:*** *Identify both socio/economic/geographic location and degree interests of Wisconsin population groups currently not served by existing UWS institutions.*

Two major surveys of adult learners and their educational needs are being conducted.

- **Survey #1.** UW-Extension through Outreach and E-Learning has commissioned UW System Market Research to conduct a statewide assessment of adult learners. The purpose of doing research at this time is to understand the current adult education marketplace across Wisconsin and gather more information about attitudes and interests of adult learners. UW-Extension is particularly interested in comparing and contrasting the data based on generational cohorts. The population will be segmented based on age:
  - ▶ Generation Y (18-25)
  - ▶ Generation X (26-39)
  - ▶ Baby Boomers (40-58)
  - ▶ Matures (59+)

This report will provide a descriptive overview of the participation of adult learners in credit and non-credit educational activities and will also gather information about attitudes and behaviors that may impact educational needs in the future.

The data from this report will be used to develop course programming and marketing plans to promote adult learning activities. Because the purpose of this project is quite broad, it will address a number of research questions.

Current Rate of Participation in Adult Learning Activities

Attitudes Towards Educational Activities

Attitudes and Behavior Towards Technology and Online Learning

Learning Styles

Paying for Courses

Media Habits (to aid in marketing planning)

- **Survey #2.** The Learning Resources Network (LERN) will conduct a national review using several research tools. LERN will present a concise but valuable set of recommendations stemming from the research on the implications for course programming and market plans, which is the desired end result use of the research.

1. Data will be gathered from recent comprehensive surveys that have addressed one or more relevant questions. These studies come from organizations which regularly and thoroughly conduct comprehensive surveys and studies, such as the National Center for Education Statistics. We are aware of several reputable studies which are specific to continuing education and have proven to be both comprehensive and statistically validated.

2. Conduct a search for additional surveys and studies which may be relevant. Our lead researcher has considerable expertise in online research and is able to obtain information not readily accessible to others in the field.

3. A survey of the literature. There have been several important works done recently in this area. Our lead researcher has been monitoring these works, evaluating them, comparing them, and thus can provide you with the most reliable, confirmed and important results from the literature.

4. Utilizing our own base of studies, reports from other continuing education units, and years of analysis of surveys of continuing education audiences, we are able to provide unique data and information not available anywhere else that is critical in course and program development.

UW System Market Research and LERN will jointly present the results to any and all staff in a presentation lasting up to one day, at any location in the state of Wisconsin. By providing a verbal as well as written report, we hope to answer questions, identify needed staff training, and help continuing education leaders Statewide have a greater in-depth understanding of the conclusions.

- As part of the new Wisconsin Office of Returning Adult Students initiative, the intention of this office will be to collect demographic information for students who have stopped out of our UWS institutions and create a database that will be used for outreach and survey purposes to determine adult student educational program, delivery and support needs.

**Objective 3:** *Develop new delivery models that take advantage of innovative uses of technology including, but not limited to, online learning, digital television, flexible scheduling of time and place and other non-traditional formats.*

**DistanceLearning.Wisconsin** web site went live on May 16, 2005. It provides a point of access to authoritative information about the distance education courses and programs offered by the institutions of the University of Wisconsin System.

**Goals:**

- Matching students with courses, degree and certificate programs
- Using the excess capacity in some current distance education programs
- Cultivating interest in offering additional distance education programs
- Marketing UW distance education courses and programs
- Directing students to enrollment processes
- Providing student services information

**Potential audiences:**

- Full-time & Part-Time Students
- Traditional Students
- Returning Adult Students
- Continuing Education Students
- Second Degree Seekers
- Professional Licensure Students
- Pre-College Students
- Guidance Counselors
- University Advisors
- Wisconsin Residents
- Midwest Region
- National
- International

**UW System Credit for Prior Learning Initiative**

At present there is no oversight across the UW System of non-traditional or prior learning, which is specified by the Council on Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) as meeting five standards in order to be formally recognized with college credit –

1. Credit should be awarded only for learning, and not for experience.
2. College credit should be awarded only for college-level learning.
3. Credit should be awarded only for learning that has a balance, appropriate to the subject, between theory and practical application.
4. The determination of competence levels and of credit awards must be made by appropriate subject matter and academic experts.
5. Credit should be appropriate to the academic context in which it is accepted.

*There are numerous ways to evaluate non-traditional learning in order to consider awarding college credit and these can be grouped under four methods. All these methods should be considered for use within the UW system.*

1. Formal accredited academic learning – transcript credit.

2. Formal non-academic learning – armed forces training (American Council on Education); licenses and certificates; courses from non-accredited schools and colleges; training-on-the-job.
3. Informal learning assessed through standardized assessment – standardized college-level examinations (CLEP, GRE, DANTES, AP, etc.).
4. Informal learning assessed through non-standardized assessment – portfolios of evidence of experiential learning based on work experience, volunteer work, community participation and self study.

### **Recommendations from the UW Delegation to the CAEL Conference**

1. *The UW System needs to move into the mainstream of use of prior learning assessment. As a key component of COBE (Strategy I), prior learning assessment (PLA) can assist many learners in meeting their BA degree goals.*
2. *There are numerous ways to evaluate non-traditional learning in order to consider awarding college credit and these can be grouped under four methods. All these methods should be used within the UW System.*
3. *The UW System should develop an academically sound and coherent process for the review and awarding of credit for non-traditional (a.k.a. prior or experiential) learning.*
4. *The UW System should develop a set of guidelines that result in consistent policies across the System for awarding and transferring credit between UW campuses; without interfering with the autonomy of campuses in making institutional decisions about the types of methods for review and awarding of credit, institutional management, and funding.*
5. *UW campuses should have substantial latitude in developing institutional policies and procedures for assessing prior learning. Campuses are encouraged to follow good practices as defined by NCA and CAEL.*
6. *The UW System Senior Vice President should appoint a System-wide Committee to take leadership for developing system-wide guidelines. Membership should be composed of representatives from relevant campus offices - Admissions, Registrars, Career Counseling, and Outreach, for example. The UW-Extension Dean of Outreach and E-Learning (OEL) should chair the Committee. OEL should be assigned statewide responsibility for coordination of prior learning assessment initiatives in the UW System with the Committee serving in a continuing advisory capacity.*
7. *The Committee should be formed as soon as possible by the Dean of Outreach and E-Learning, make a first report to the UW System Senior Vice President using a timeline that is consistent with the development of other COBE initiatives.*
8. *The Committee should seek a representative from CAEL to act as an advisor to the Committee and UW System.*

**Objective 4:** *Build on existing high touch and high tech strengths of UW Colleges and UW-Extension to develop models for advising and supporting the educational needs of the identified students.*

### **Expansion of ORAS**

To enhance and expand the Wisconsin Office of Returning Adult Students initiative, we recommend the development of regionally-based county-level recruiting and advising services that will build on the expertise of existing professional faculty and staff from the UW Colleges, UWS baccalaureate institutions and Cooperative Extension. In support of this

recommendation, we propose the creation of a Wisconsin Office of Returning Adult Students (ORAS), whose primary mission is to assist students with completing their degrees. This office will be created as a partnership among WTCS, the UW System, and the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU).

ORAS's sole mission will be to increase the completion rate of Wisconsin residents, and it will be jointly funded by all partners. The outcome of this project will be an overall increase in the number of baccalaureate holders in the state, but most importantly the project will serve as a national model on how to increase lagging completion rates.

ORAS will accomplish this mission by doing the following:

- Present an independent united front for all institutions of higher education in Wisconsin
- Make available professional advisers via toll-free phone and e-mail to provide academic and career advising
- Create and maintain a statewide database to log student interactions with ORAS and institutions of higher education
- Create and maintain a publicly accessible, comprehensive database of degrees and their delivery methods for Wisconsin
- Create and maintain a comprehensive Web site of policies and procedures for all Wisconsin colleges and universities
- Work with the colleges and universities to contact those who dropped out to offer them educational opportunities in Wisconsin
- Offer incentives to students to return for their degree (e.g., give them registration priority, wave residency requirement)
- Organize nontraditional-student college fairs
- Work with two-year and technical colleges to identify graduates to solicit prospective baccalaureate seekers

### **Independent Learning**

New consortium between UW-Extension, UW Colleges and UW-Madison will be formed to support the expansion of this program as a key element of providing increased access to degree completion opportunities for adults.

**Objective 5:** Examine existing alliances which help meet the needs of under served degree seekers. These include other UWS institutions, WTCS, and K-12 schools. Identify areas where new alliances are needed and develop strategies to create them.

### **New Degree Programs**

In addition to the programs already outlined by the UW Colleges in their document:

The Division of Outreach and E-Learning is committed to working with the UW Colleges and other UW institutions, and the Wisconsin Technical College System to meet the COBE goal of "developing 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." One example of this is the current collaboration with UW-Oshkosh to put the newly entitled Fire and Emergency Response Management baccalaureate degree online. This program is an example of an upside down degree which builds on the WTCS associate degree in Fire Science.

### **ORAS**

The creation of the Wisconsin Office of Returning Adult Students will be a combined effort of the UW System and the Wisconsin Technical College System. This office will help identify and reach potential students with information and educational advising on programs developed to meet the unique needs of returning adult students. UW-Extension and the UW Colleges are positioned to play significant roles in the success of this initiative to the benefit of UW institutions.

***Objective 5:*** *Examine existing alliances which help meet the needs of under served degree seekers. These include other UWS institutions, WTCS, and K-12 schools. Identify areas where new alliances are needed and develop strategies to create them.*

First and foremost, the division of Outreach and E-Learning Extension has strong alliances with each of the UWS institutions through the Continuing Education Extension Council, which is comprised of the Deans and Directors of Continuing Education Extension at all of the UWS institutions. Funding is distributed through the division to the institutions in support of the outreach function. The division is currently in discussion with six institutions regarding baccalaureate degree programs that are either new or modifications of existing programs. Conversations with UW-Green Bay and UW-Oshkosh might provide opportunities to pilot a baccalaureate access initiative on a regional basis.

As resources become available, additional special initiative funding is made available in support of critical state needs. Two examples of special initiative funding are the Diversity Program Development Initiative (DPDI) and the Continuing EDvantage Grant Program. Of special note in this context is the DPDI program. DPDI funding supports institutional partnerships with community organizations to promote diversity and meet the needs of underserved populations. A list of initiatives funded and thirty-three community partners appears in Appendix X. While the division may not be able to build on all of these relationships, these community organizations represent a resource for both identifying and attracting potential students to degree programs. Furthermore, these community partners can provide valuable insights into unique cultural aspects that enhance marketing and support enrollment.

UW HELP has strong relationships with campus and program advisors, admissions officers and registrars that will be critical to making sure that information available to advisors is current and will provide valuable assistance in admissions and enrollment of potential degree candidates attracted through this new initiative. In addition, institutional registrars will be a key source of information on non-completers who will be contacted and made aware of potential degree completion opportunities. New alliances will be needed with a similar network within the WTCS.