

## **Chancellor's statement from Teaching and Learning Summit**

**by Chancellor Richard H. Wells - Thursday, October 30, 2008**

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/1417/chancellors-statement-from-teaching-and-learning-summit/>

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh is a public, comprehensive institution of higher education. We take pride holding ourselves accountable for providing the public with access to affordable educational excellence. As a public university, we are expected to play a central role in expanding the state's (and the nation's) human capital and in boosting our competitive advantage in today's global marketplace. We believe that our commitment to access, affordability and accountability must be anchored in an equally strong commitment to educational excellence. We meet this expectation, in part, by providing a rigorous and well-rounded preparation for our graduates in a variety of fields, including K-12 teachers. Our first priority is providing students with the broad knowledge and transferable skills, and the strong sense of values, ethics, and civic engagement that prepares them for socially valued work and for civic leadership in our society.

The Provost and Vice Chancellor and I charged the Liberal Education Reform Team (LERT) in May 2007 with presenting a framework for student learning outcomes adapted from the Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) initiative of the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U). LERT led a campus-wide process that resulted in the adoption by the Faculty Senate and approval by the Senate of Academic Staff of a set of UW Oshkosh Student Learning Outcomes last spring.

The Student Learning Outcomes describe in general terms the forms of learning and accomplishment that contemporary students need from college for life, work and citizenship. They represent the very high expectations for knowledge and skills held by educators and employers in the 21st century. They provide a new framework to guide students' progress and curricular alignment. But they do not indicate what we mean by them. That understanding will emerge from serious discussions and debates of what we mean by the learning outcomes. Through those discussions, we will articulate our expectations for student performance. Once we articulate our understanding and our expectations of the student learning outcomes, we can share and reinforce them throughout the student learning experience—in the classroom, in residence halls, and in extra-curricular activities. This is the vision we have of reforming liberal education at UW Oshkosh, and I fully support the initiative because it will raise the level of student performance and the quality of student learning, and it will raise retention and graduation rates.

I am pleased that UW Oshkosh is a "partner" institution in the AAC&U Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) initiative, which is producing a set of meta-rubrics that LERT will use as a springboard to initiate discussions on campus of our understanding of our student learning outcomes. In the process, LERT will provide the AAC&U with feedback on their meta rubrics, which will influence the development of rubrics for the student learning outcomes at the national level.

As a campus, we should all be especially proud that we were one of the first universities in the nation to launch the LEAP initiative back in 2005-06 when we devoted three issues of the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Magazine to a series about the value and importance of a liberal education and linked it to the American Council on Education's Solutions for Our Future initiative.

As we enter our fourth year, it is a huge point of pride that our Faculty Senate, the members of LERT and the Liberal Education Resource Group (LERG), campus leaders and the Provost's Summit for Teaching and Learning are continuing to keep us on the forefront of the national movement to reform liberal education in the United States. The UW Oshkosh administration fully supports them and all members of the campus and community who are working to enhance student learning outcomes. That is what matters most in the end.

For the full schedule of events, visit

[www.uwosh.edu/grants/documents/CSt%20Summit%20Schedule1.doc](http://www.uwosh.edu/grants/documents/CSt%20Summit%20Schedule1.doc).