

Enrollment strong: Economy not slowing students as new year begins

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<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/20588/enrollment-strong-economy-not-slowing-students-as-new-year-begins/>

For many, it is still an uphill climb in a challenging economy. But the conditions are not deterring students from seeking out the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh as a source of academic and career-boosting energy on their way to the top of the mountain.

Fall 2012-13 enrollment at UW Oshkosh is projected to be at the fall 2011 official total of 13,513 students during the new academic year. Classes begin on Sept. 4. Official enrollment totals for the fall semester at UW Oshkosh will not be known until November when registration numbers are final.

“Our stable and strong enrollment numbers are, in large part, the result of a tremendously dedicated and talented community of students, staff and faculty,” UW Oshkosh Chancellor Richard Wells said.

“Their daily pursuit of academic excellence in the classroom and in the communities, agencies and businesses where we collaboratively learn and serve continues to magnetize our campus to new students,” Wells said. “They come from all backgrounds, experiences and places, each one with educational goals that, when realized, will propel them and enrich our state’s prosperity.”

State universities and colleges have begun to weather a long-projected downward trend in the number of high school graduates and potential UW System enrollees. But Wells said UW Oshkosh’s strong and stable enrollment is an indication of the hard work students, staff and faculty are doing to keep higher education at the state’s third-largest institution affordable and of high quality.

Among the other 2012-13 enrollment strides projected are a more than 10 percent increase in the number of new students of color at UW Oshkosh and indications that the “average credit load” for students has also slightly increased.

“It is an encouraging sign that, while many students are making deep sacrifices to sustain jobs and help confront rising costs all around us, they nevertheless remain committed to pursuing and completing degrees at UW Oshkosh,” Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Lane Earns said.

“Our students’ focus and determination is also a source of deep pride for our faculty and staff,” Earns said. “Our campus community has made many sacrifices. Yet, every day, thousands of students -- unwavering in their commitment to continuing their educational quest toward a degree, a fulfilling career and lifelong learning through UW Oshkosh -- validate the incredible work of so many.”

The University, itself, is unwavering in pursuit of its goal to reach nearly 13,900 students by the 2015-16 academic year.

That target remains one key [UW System Growth Agenda goal](#) – an important component of the package of strategic initiatives designed to push all institutions to produce more and better prepared graduates, enhance student civic engagement and close student achievement gaps.

Meanwhile, the UW Oshkosh campus community is preparing for another year of major milestones ahead, of few of which include:

- Dedication of [Horizon Village](#) on Friday, Sept. 21, UW Oshkosh's new state-of-the-art, \$34 million, 340-bed residence hall, built to meet U.S. Green Building Council standards. Horizon, funded by students and replacing Nelson, Breese and Clemans Halls, incorporates a green roof, geothermal heating systems and specialized bicycle storage, to name just a few of its sustainable features. It's the first new residence hall on campus in about 40 years.
- The mid-October groundbreaking of the new \$12 million [Alumni Conference and Welcome Center](#), another sustainable and state-of-the-art hub for UW Oshkosh. This new "front door" to the campus, paid for with private funds and situated on the Fox River near the intersection of Pearl Avenue and Wisconsin Street, will serve as a new home for the University's tens of thousands of alumni, their events, meetings, banquets and other gatherings. The facility will enhance UW Oshkosh's reputation as a first-rate host for academic and community conferencing.
- Continued progress in development of the [University Studies Program \(USP\)](#), UW Oshkosh's novel redesign of general education for all students, set to launch in fall 2013. The USP will set students out on three "Quests," or phases of their general education experience over their first two years at the University. Each is centered on "signature questions" and engaging courses that challenge students to explore sustainability, intercultural knowledge and civic engagement. Students will benefit from smaller learning communities, peer and alumni mentors and an unparalleled opportunity to break out of the classroom and participate in high-impact, campus and community betterment projects.
- The rededication of a renovated Kolf Sports Center, tentatively planned for February. With installation of new, modern bleachers and a new field house floor rounding out years of upgrades to this regional sports complex, the University is excited to pause and acknowledge the incredible epicenter of community, K-12 and campus academic, athletic and American political events it has served as for four decades. Thousands of people from throughout the region and state have received diplomas, earned medals, trophies and championships and celebrated major life accomplishments in Kolf over its lifetime.

Those are just a few of the benchmark moments for UW Oshkosh in 2012-13.

"Every academic year brings new opportunities to celebrate the growth, accomplishments and experiences of our campus and our students," UW Oshkosh Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Petra Roter said. "There will be more examples than I can count of high-impact research, passionate civic engagement, community service by students faculty and staff and inspirational examples of leadership and teamwork. Each adds a new chapter to this institution's legacy of excellence and opportunity."

Learn more:

- [Investing in Wisconsin's Future: UW Oshkosh Growth Agenda Accountability Report, 2011-12](#)
- [UW Oshkosh Today](#)