

## **Professor partners with city to survey residents**

**by Amanda Munger - Tuesday, March 09, 2010**

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/2557/professor-partners-with-city-to-survey-residents/>

Karl Nollenberger has found a way for his students to get real-world experience while saving the city of Oshkosh some money.

Nollenberger, an assistant professor in the Masters of Public Administration department at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, has partnered with the city of Oshkosh to survey city residents about services and budget issues.

The survey asks respondents to rate the quality and importance of services being offered by the city and where they would enforce budget cuts or spend extra money. The results will be used to help Oshkosh set priorities for the future.

“It provides insight for the policy makers on the feelings of the citizens in a statistically significant survey,” Nollenberger said.

Nollenberger contacted Oshkosh City Manager Mark Rohloff last year after reading an article about how the existing city surveys were statistically insignificant. Nollenberger made the new surveys a project for his Public Policy Analysis course for the past two years.

“The project is a great experience for our master’s level students, who need these kinds of tools,” he said.

Since most of his graduate students are working professionals in the government and non-profit area, Nollenberger said the ability to conduct a survey and complete the statistical analysis is an important skill.

This is the second time Nollenberger has done the survey, and he said Oshkosh is saving money by partnering with the University. The survey cost Oshkosh only \$750 last year.

“Last year, I was down in Iowa City, and there was an editorial in the paper criticizing the city for spending \$15,000 on a citizen survey,” he said. “I showed it to Mark Rohloff and told him what a great deal he was getting.”

The survey was mailed to 1,500 randomly chosen citizens and is available online at [www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/citizens\\_survey.aspx](http://www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/citizens_survey.aspx).