

Collaboration with UW-Manitowoc, UW-Sheboygan offers increased access to four-year degree

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<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/1197/uw-oshkosh-uw-manitowoc-uw-sheboygan-collaboration-offers-increased-access-to-four-year-degree/>

Manitowoc and Sheboygan County residents will have a new opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree. In an agreement with the University of Wisconsin-Manitowoc and the University of Wisconsin-Sheboygan, the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh will offer a Bachelor of Liberal Studies (BLS) degree at both campuses. UW-Manitowoc dean and CEO Daniel Campagna, UW-Sheboygan dean and CEO Al Hardersen and UW Oshkosh Assistant Vice Chancellor Martin Tadlock signed the pact on Sept. 5.

The collaboration offers UW-Manitowoc and UW-Sheboygan students the opportunity to earn credits toward both their associate and bachelor's degree simultaneously. With an emphasis in Organizational Administration, UW Oshkosh's BLS program is designed specifically to serve adult nontraditional students and is delivered on UW-Manitowoc's and UW-Sheboygan's campuses and online. UW-Manitowoc and UW-Sheboygan will each deliver courses onsite and make them available to the students on the other campus through compressed video.

According to Hardersen, "This new degree will allow Sheboygan County residents to earn a four-year college degree and, as a result, gain the confidence and competitive edge to succeed in a wide range of careers. This agreement lays a foundation for adults who seek to advance their careers to do so within the UW System by joining UW-Manitowoc, UW Oshkosh and UW-Sheboygan. The tuition charged at UW-Sheboygan offers an affordable access to higher education with quality instruction. UW Oshkosh has already demonstrated a commitment to the adults in the Sheboygan County area through existing bachelor's degree collaborations available on the UW-Sheboygan campus in elementary education and Nursing at the bachelor's level, as well as the master's degree in education-curriculum and instruction."

The third-largest university in the UW System, UW Oshkosh is reaching out to make its educational programs more accessible across the state. Adult learners often cannot attend classes on the traditional university schedule. With online and distance-learning, students need not make drastic sacrifices in scheduling their work and family lives — nor in the quality of the education they receive.

According to findings released in 2006 by the Wisconsin Committee on Baccalaureate Expansion (COBE), the state is well below the national average in the number of four-year college graduates. In order to make up the difference the UW System will need to graduate 72,000 additional students with bachelor degrees by 2010.

"Area employers want employees with strong communication skills, effective problem-solving and critical-thinking abilities, and agility when it comes to change and continuous improvement," said Charles Hill, director of The Center For New Learning at UW Oshkosh. "Adult learners, whose lives are already filled with work and family responsibilities, face obstacles traditional students do not. This program helps them overcome some of those obstacles."

Applications are now being accepted to the Bachelor of Liberal Studies program at UW-Manitowoc and UW-Sheboygan. For more information on this program or to talk to an advisor, please contact Sarah Smith. at (800) INFO-UWO or smiths@uwosh.edu.

The Center For New Learning at UW Oshkosh administers seven programs that offer adult nontraditional students certificate or bachelor degree opportunities. For more information on The Center For New Learning, visit www.uwosh.edu/newlearning.