

An Overview of the Wisconsin Technical College System

The Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) provides education to individuals in programs with specific occupational orientation below the baccalaureate level, including associate degrees, training of apprentices, and adult education below the professional level. The principal purposes, as defined by state statute, are to provide:

- a) occupational education and training and retraining programs, including the training of apprentices; and
- b) customized training and technical assistance to business and industry to foster economic development and the expansion of employment opportunities.

Additional purposes include:

- a) providing educational opportunities for high school age students;
- b) providing college transfer, community services, self-enrichment activities, and basic skills education; and
- c) providing education and services addressing barriers to participation in technical education created by stereotyping and discrimination.

The Wisconsin Technical College System consists of sixteen technical college districts, each responsible for providing educational programs and services through the operation of technical colleges. Fifty campuses and numerous outreach centers operated by the technical colleges make up Wisconsin's technical education delivery system responsible for meeting the needs, interests, and abilities of students and the needs of the labor market.

Each year the WTCS serves approximately 400,000 state residents. Students may enroll in over 300 programs leading to employment in areas such as agriculture, business, health sciences, information technology, manufacturing or public safety and security. Technical colleges offer two-year programs leading to an associate degree, one- and two-year technical diplomas, short-term diplomas, certificates, and related instruction for apprentices. The first two years of instruction in liberal arts leading to a baccalaureate degree are also offered at Chippewa Valley Technical College, Madison Area Technical College, Milwaukee Area Technical College, Nicolet Area Technical College and Waukesha County Technical College. In addition, each technical college district provides basic literacy instruction through Adult Basic Education programs, high school completion or equivalency programs, and instruction in English as a Second Language.

Wisconsin Technical College System Board

The WTCS Board is comprised of thirteen members. Three members serve *ex officio*: the State Superintendent of Public Instruction; the Secretary of the Department of Workforce Development; and the President, or by designation, another member of the University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents. The Governor appoints ten members to staggered six-year terms: one employer of labor, one employee who does not have the power to employ or

discharge; one engaged in farming as a principal occupation; and six additional members from the public at large. In addition, the Governor appoints one student to a two-year term.

The WTCS Board establishes policy direction for Technical College programs across the state. The WTCS Board has statutory authorization to determine the organization, plans, scope, and development of technical colleges; to appoint a president; to approve qualifications of educational personnel and courses of study; and to approve district proposals for facilities development and land acquisition. In addition, the WTCS Board establishes procedures and criteria for determining course credit, tuition, state aid, and uniform accounting for financial programs and other data required of the Technical College districts.

District Boards

Districts have distinct demographic, geographic, and economic characteristics. Consequently, local educational programming is tailored to meet unique local needs.

District boards have statutory authority to levy property taxes, provide for facilities and equipment, contract for instructional services, and appoint a district president who serves as chief executive officer for the district. The district president is responsible for local administration, including setting academic and grading standards, hiring instructional and other staff, and providing auxiliary services and budget management.

Each district is governed by an appointed board composed of nine members who serve three-year staggered terms. District boards consist of two employers, two employees, three additional members, a school district administrator as defined in s. 115.001(8), Stats., and one elected official who holds a state or local office as defined in s. 5.02, Stats., except for the office of party committeeman or party committeewoman.



2013-14 Statistics

In 2013-14, 326,544 individuals¹ enrolled in Wisconsin's technical colleges, including:

- 153,578 in Applied Associate Degree, technical diploma, or apprenticeship related instruction programs and courses;
- 143,943 students in vocational-adult courses;
- 51,902 in basic education and remedial courses;
- 15,339 in community services courses; and
- 25,391 in collegiate transfer courses.

In addition, of the 326,544 individuals enrolled in 2013-14:

- 60,241 were academically disadvantaged;
- 78,760 were economically disadvantaged;
- 10,981 had limited English proficiency; and
- 16,400 students had a disability.

Students of color accounted for 18.6% of all enrollees, while female students accounted for approximately 49.5% of total enrollments.

The median age of postsecondary students and collegiate transfer students was 26.0 years, and 40.0 years for continuing education students.

In 2013-14, WTCS students enrolled in one of the more than 300 programs offered in Agriculture, Business, Marketing, Family and Consumer Education, Service, Health, Industrial, Technical, and General Education. An advisory committee provides oversight to each full-time occupational program.

Colleges provide education and economic development services to a broad range of customers, including technical assistance to business and industry, and coordinate curricula with other systems.

Wisconsin's technical colleges employ about 5,000 full-time equivalent faculty members.

In 2013-14, projected *total* statewide expenditures – including operational costs, debt service, and auxiliary and public service functions – equaled \$1.5 billion. Major sources of districts' *operational* revenues, projected to total \$1.1 billion in 2013-14, included:

Local property taxes	\$613.6 million
Tuition and fees	\$265.8 million
State aid	\$111.6 million
Institutional ²	\$50.7 million
Federal	\$47.8 million

There are 50 technical college campuses throughout the 16 WTCS districts. Offerings are also made available in many additional convenient locations throughout the state, such as secondary schools, municipal buildings, and private buildings.

¹ This is unduplicated enrollment. The total reported for program categories exceeds the unduplicated total because students often enroll in more than one program.

² Revenues generated by district operations, such as contracts for services, interest, and sales.