



UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN
GREEN BAY

Chairman Kooyenga and Committee Members –

My name is Clifton Ganyard, and I am the Associate Provost for the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. I am here today to give informational testimony on Senate Bill 165.

UW-Green Bay and Northeast Wisconsin Technical College share a unique relationship. The relationship is enshrined by a co-written charter called Crossing the Bridge. This charter charges each institution to work collaboratively. We hold semi-annual meetings to track successes and collaborations in academic programs.

We now have ten agreements in a wide array of discipline between the two institutions, with more in development. And we have numerous agreements with other technical colleges, including Northcentral Technical College, Fox Valley Technical College, and Lakeshore Technical College. We hope to develop a similar relationship with the latter institution as we have with NWTC, a relationship that will be facilitated by the recent addition to UW-Green Bay of the Marinette, Manitowoc, and Sheboygan branch campuses.

To be sure this was not a simple task as decades of separation had sown seeds of distrust between the faculty of the two institutions. However, through the leadership of Chancellor Gary Miller and President Jeff Rafn, strong relationships are beginning to develop. So much so that both institutions ask counterparts to sit on search and screen committees for new hires, as has happened with NWTC's search for a New Vice President of Education and UWGB's search for a new Provost.

One of the great successes of this partnership is Turbocharge, a joint project between NWTC, UW-Green Bay, and the Green Bay Area Public School District to offer 15 college credits in high school to EVERY student at a Green Bay public school. These credits are accepted at both institutions.

Our relationship with NWTC has grown stronger over the past few years and has led to collaboration on numerous projects, such as helping high school teachers meet HLC faculty qualification requirements to teach College Credit in High School. Even more exciting is our collaboration in Marinette, in which we are trying to create a seamless experience for students, allowing them to move between the two institutions as they desire.

Northeast Wisconsin is proud of our strong relationship with NWTC, and community members in Manitowoc and Sheboygan are excited about the possibilities this type of close collaboration with Lakeshore Technical College may bring. We were able to execute this relationship because we are not constrained, and we have the freedom to experiment with new programs. As a result, we have been able to demonstrate to faculty the benefits of collaboration, rather than trying to force them into a relationship they may resent. This openness has generated a great deal of excitement and has led many faculty to begin developing new programs sharing the resources of both UW-Green Bay and NWTC.

Thank you for your time. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Testimony in favor of Substitute Senate Bill 165

Good afternoon committee members and thank you for your time today.

My name is Jonathan Feld and I serve as the Associate Vice President of Student Services at Milwaukee Area Technical College. I am joined today by Dr. Sadique Isahaku, Dean of the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences at MATC.

I am extremely pleased that the Senate Committee on Universities, Technical Colleges, Children and Families is taking up for consideration the substitute amendment for SB165. I strongly urge the committee to pass the substitute amendment as another important step in making it easier for technical college students and graduates to transfer credits into programs of study in the University of Wisconsin System institutions.

For over 100 years, Wisconsin's Technical Colleges, a system of colleges unmatched by any other in the US, have affordably educated citizens for the highly technical careers that continue to keep the state's economic engine running. Employers count on technical college graduates to be ready to perform complex and critical roles the moment that they complete technical diplomas and associate degrees. As careers become even more complex and diverse, education building beyond technical training becomes even more necessary.

Each year, more than 3,700 Milwaukee Area Technical College students transfer to universities with between 35% and 45% of those choosing University of Wisconsin institutions and more than 1000 students transferring to the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee alone.

Approximately 20% of students come to MATC with the goal of transferring into a university directly following graduation. Many more will seek to transfer credits after working for several years in an effort to advanced careers by pursuing a Bachelor's Degree.

It is essential that students and incumbent employees be encouraged to continue their education at the appropriate time in their career. Furthermore, it is essential that this continued education be easily accessed and be structured such that time to completion is as streamlined as possible. Wisconsin needs this level of access to continued education and this bill is a strong step toward making that possible.

Wisconsin citizens need a public education structure that ensures that when seeking a bachelor's degree after completing a technical college associate degree, entering the university of choice will mean entering at a junior status. All previously-earned credits need to seamlessly apply to the next level bachelors degree requirements and not simply be utilized as general electives...if at all. This amendment moves the state closer to that reality.

Clear pathways to higher education for all Wisconsinites are a win-win for students, employers and the state economy. I, and Milwaukee Area Technical College, urge the committee to act favorably on the substitute amendment to SB165.

Thank you

May 2, 2019

To: Senator Dale Kooyenga

Subject: MPTC Input to the Members of the Senate, Universities, Technical Colleges, Children and Families Committee Hearing for May 7, 2019 – Senate Bill 165

I was informed that the Committee has a scheduled hearing on May 7, 2019 to hear the Senate Substitute Amendment, Senate Bill 165 and wanted to share my support.

As President of Moraine Park Technical College (MPTC), I have heard numerous student conversations and stories regarding the lack of transferability between MPTC and the UW-System Colleges. Most students want to finish their baccalaureate degree at UW Colleges; however, they often turn to a private college once they are informed that few of their MPTC courses transfer. Those who decide to transfer pay for the cost of taking the same course twice and accumulate unneeded student debt. Recently, an MPTC graduate approached Representative Born's office regarding the desire to transfer to UW-Oshkosh. UW-Oshkosh would only accept 15 of the 72 MPTC credits earned. These stories are all too frequent!

The Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) is accredited by the same organization that accredits the four-year college in Wisconsin. Our instructors hold the same credentials as the four-year colleges; and, academic rigor is strong for both college systems. Many of our four-year private college partners offer a 2+2 agreement giving MPTC students full junior status – accepting both general education and occupational coursework into their four-year degree.

I support the substitute amendment language as outlined in the preliminary draft. MPTC consistently looks at ways to find solutions that are best for our students. This amendment is an affordable solution that decreases student time to completion as well as overall student debt load. It's the right thing to do for our students, parents, and our employer partners. We need affordable solutions to provide a talent pipeline as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your consideration of my request. I look forward to further dialogue as we work together to ensure that Moraine Park Technical College and the WTCS are collaborating with all stakeholders to address constituent needs within the State. If you have questions, or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best Regards,



Bonnie Baerwald, MPA, CPA
President



Dr. Susan A. May, President

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May 1, 2019

Senator Dale Kooyenga, Chair

Senator Stephen Nass, Vice-Chair

Members of the Senate Committee on Universities, Technical Colleges, Children and Families

Dear Senators Kooyenga, Nass, and committee members:

I am writing to extend my full support for the **substitute amendment to SB-165** currently under consideration by your committee. This bill would substantially improve credit transfer between all of Wisconsin's higher education institutions and serve as an excellent step toward better serving students, employers and families.

I have personally worked to forge articulation and transfer agreements with other colleges and universities for over 20 years. While we've made some good progress in this arena over that time, establishing these agreements for technical college graduates has always been much easier to achieve with private colleges/universities and out-of-state institutions than our in-state public universities. Although the development of program-to-program, institution-to-institution agreements is very arduous and time-consuming, we have been willing to invest the energy necessary to build opportunities for baccalaureate completion for technical college graduates. Expanded universal credit transfer legislation would certainly bring improved efficiencies to this work between institutions and more effectively serve students.

It is outstanding that this proposed legislation expands universal transfer beyond general education to also include occupational programs and has a provision to increase the number of credits over time. In my view, in the year 2020 there is no justifiable reason why Wisconsin residents shouldn't expect and experience robust associate degree to baccalaureate degree transfer in very common majors such as Accounting, Marketing, Business Management, Information Technology, Nursing, and Criminal Justice among our public institutions. Most often, students are interested in transferring credits within a specific field such as noted above, however when transferring to UW institutions, they are more likely to experience either very limited credit transfer, only general degree completion options, and/or courses transferring only as elective credit.

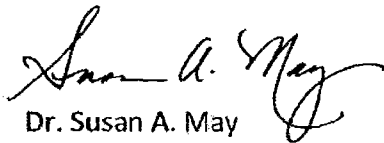
UW, WTCS and WAICU institutions are all accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association and, as such, held to the same quality standards and compliance criteria. This should serve as a sound basis for seamless transfer among Wisconsin's public higher education institutions. In fact, technical colleges have had full, successful program transfer agreements with many of the WAICU institutions for decades, producing valuable baccalaureate degree completion opportunities for thousands of working adults.

It would be my hope that the UW System and its faculty would welcome this proposed universal credit transfer expansion in an effort to better serve Wisconsin students, employers and families. Particularly related to technical college graduates, this expansion would also certainly strengthen the pipeline of students into the junior/senior years of their program majors where institutions often experience attrition and lower enrollments.

Talented, skilled technical college graduates who, at some point in their careers, either need or want to pursue a baccalaureate degree to compete for promotions or new positions, should have accessible and affordable options to continue their education without significant loss of credits already earned. To strengthen transfer options for students and ultimately strengthen our workforce, we need to further expand the active collaboration among the higher education institutions to achieve the requirements set forth in this proposed bill.

Thank you for your work on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan A. May". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Susan" and the last name "May" being the most prominent parts.

Dr. Susan A. May
President



Dr. Susan A. May, President

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May 6, 2019

Senator Dale Kooyenga, Chair
Senate Committee on Universities, Technical Colleges, Children and Families

Dear Senator Kooyenga:

This letter conveys my support of the substitute amendment to SB-165 which is currently being considered by your committee. As the Dean of Business programs, I have the pleasure of celebrating commencement each year by shaking the hands of hundreds of graduates each year. Unfortunately, too many students face obstacles when trying to continue their education at one of the state's public universities.

Knowing this bill was being considered, I asked several of our recent business graduates about their experiences in transferring on to the UW in pursuit of their bachelor's degree. A common theme experienced by our graduates is the requirement to repeat basic business courses, demonstrate mastery of the content again, all while paying for the course a second time. Several students explained the duplicity of content, the financial burden of paying for the content again, as well as the additional time commitment that often drove them away from our state universities and into area private colleges where they pay much higher tuition to avoid repeating basic business courses.

It's my opinion that the efforts of this committee will also benefit the University of Wisconsin institutions. I would point out several facts from their own 2016-17 informational memorandum regarding transfer students (attached without detailed appendices):

- Technical college students already make up 25% of all undergraduate transfers to the UW System (well over 3,000 students annually).
- Of all UW transfer student age groups, technical college transfers represent, by far, the largest block of students age 25 and over (working adults).
- Technical college transfer students are as successful as any other transfers, with average first year GPAs of 3.0; only international students had slightly higher first year GPAs.
- Second year retention rates among various sending institutions, including technical colleges, are also very similar.

I believe expanding the universal transfer legislation beyond general studies to include technical coursework will encourage more students at some point in their careers to pursue a bachelor's degree, ultimately increase their earning potential, enhance our economy, and increase the skillset of the labor force in the State. In doing so, the WTCS graduate avoids repeating courses they've already mastered, reduces college debt by avoiding duplicating their coursework, and the UW System benefits from students who've already proven they can be successful in their coursework.

As a father of two sons in high school considering college options, and on behalf of countless business students at our college, I applaud you for your work to ease the transferability within Wisconsin higher education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Borley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Scott A. Borley
Dean of Business

cc: Senate Committee on Universities, Technical Colleges, Children and Families

Dear Senator Kooyenga, Chair, and members of the Senate Universities, Technical Colleges, Children and Families committee;

As president of Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC), I am extremely pleased that the Senate Committee on Universities, Technical Colleges, Children and Families is taking up for consideration the substitute amendment for SB165. I strongly urge the committee to pass the substitute amendment as another important step in making it easier for technical college students and graduates to transfer credits into programs of study in the University of Wisconsin System institutions.

Over 20% of NWTC students tell us that their goal is to transfer into a UW university upon graduation. Many more will seek to transfer credits after working in their chosen career and deciding to further their education by pursuing a Bachelor's Degree while working. Given today's requirements by most businesses and industry for ever higher levels of skill and education, the education provided by the technical colleges is both rigorous and demanding. It is not uncommon to hear from students who already have a Bachelor's Degree and are now attending our college that the education they receive here is as demanding as when they were at the university.

It is essential that students and incumbent employees be encouraged to continue their education at the appropriate time in their career. Only in this way, will Wisconsin be able to provide, in an on-going and continuous way, the educated workforce needed as the skill needs of our businesses and industry increase. It is the only way in which the state's citizenry can be assured of the opportunity to maintain employment and progress in their career.

Requiring the UW System institutions to accept more transfer credits and work with the technical colleges to create unambiguous pathways to higher education will ensure that more technical college educated students and employees pursue the education needed to keep Wisconsin's economy strong and their earning power sufficient to sustain the high quality of life they all deserve.

As always, I look forward to working with the committee in whatever capacity is needed to improve the ability of technical college students and graduates to transfer credits to the UW system. Once again, I urge the committee to act favorably on the substitute amendment to SB165.

Jeff Rafn

H. Jeffrey Rafn, President
Northeast Wisconsin Technical College
2740 West Mason Street
Green Bay, WI 54303
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COLLEGE

Ashland New Richmond Rice Lake Superior Hayward Ladysmith

Administrative Office

May 3, 2019

Mr. Patrick McNulty, Committee Clerk
Senate Committee for Universities, Technical Colleges, Children and Families
P. O. Box 7882, 310 South
Madison, WI 53707-7882

Via email to patrick.mcnulty@legis.wisconsin.gov

Dear Mr. McNulty,

Please accept this letter as written testimony for the upcoming hearing on SB-165 as it applies to the substitute amendment to SB-165.

It is my belief that Wisconsin is fortunate to have both an outstanding university system and technical college system. As a lifelong Wisconsin resident, I am proud to say that I have extensive experience with both systems. As a student, I hold degrees from UW Eau Claire, UW Whitewater, and UW Stout. I have also taken courses at UW Superior, and consider all of my interactions with Wisconsin's public universities to be extremely valuable. In addition, I have had the opportunity to interact professionally with leaders from several of our state's universities, which has similarly been a positive experience.

As the president of Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College (WITC), I currently have the privilege to serve students pursuing higher education in one of Wisconsin's 16 technical colleges. As you know, Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) colleges are primarily focused on providing occupational education based on regional workforce development needs. In WITC's graduates, I see people who are ready to contribute in their communities while making a better life for themselves and their families. Their hard-earned educational achievements are critical to supporting employers and to maintaining high-quality services throughout the region and state. In addition, students often pursue additional education, including baccalaureate and graduate degrees in the University of Wisconsin System (UW System), after they have experienced success at a technical college.

While I am a believer in both systems, my collective experience suggests our state's two postsecondary systems have an opportunity to complement each other in a way that better serves Wisconsin residents. The substitute amendment to SB-165 is a step in the right direction. Debate over this bill could focus on the respective roles of the UW System and the WTCS, and it could consider broad philosophical viewpoints about the institutions that are represented by the UW System and WTCS. My hope is that the debate instead focuses on the most important stakeholders of public higher education, which are students.

Focusing on students' best interests will lead to a simple conclusion. Technical college graduates deserve to have their hard work recognized at any publicly-supported higher education institution in Wisconsin.

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Administrative Office

It is in all of our best interests that those who choose the path of pursuing a college degree at a technical college have the opportunity to continue their education without duplicating relevant publicly-subsidized coursework. I believe that is true for students who move from WTCS institutions to UW System institutions, and when the reverse occurs. This bill signals legislative support for greater cooperation, but appropriately allows the respective system-level governing bodies to retain control over establishing the specific courses that align between the systems.

I look forward to continuing to work with partners in the WTCS, UW System, and the legislature to continue to move Wisconsin towards improved transfer opportunities for its students.

Sincerely,

John E. Will, Ed.D.
President

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May 3, 2019

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Dear: Chair Senator Kooyenga,

Re: Support of substitute amendment to SB-165

Chippewa Valley Technical College has a long history of collaborating with our UW partners to develop and implement transfer guides and articulation agreements. These guides and agreements provide CVTC students with access to information about how their courses and programs transfer into specific UW programs. Currently, CVTC has 47 established agreements with UW Institutions. Three of our strongest partners have been UW-Eau Claire, UW-Stout, and UW-River Falls all located in our district. Strengthening this legislation would provide an opportunity for our existing agreements to become even stronger for our students.

Over the course of the past three years, CVTC averaged 320 students transferring to UW institutions each year. This number far surpassed the number of students transferring to private colleges, demonstrating that the UW institutions are our students preferred choice. One of the challenges that we have with our current UW agreements is the dramatic variation in the number of credits accepted towards a Bachelor's degree. Currently we have 45 program-to-program agreements that range from 24 credits up to 85 credits counting toward the completion of a Bachelor's degree.

Those same 45 program-to-program agreements with UW institutions were developed using the course-to-course equivalency method. With this method, the Universal Transfer Agreement (30 credits in core general education) and the ability for students to transfer 60 credits has not always provided a shorter path to completing a bachelor's degree. Too often there are not good course-to-course equivalency matches, which result in credits transferring in as general electives that do not help students meet degree requirements, thus leaving them with a large number of credits to complete at the UW System College. CVTC supports language that increases the number of credits that apply directly to a student's degree which in turn would allow them to complete a bachelor's degree with approximately 60 additional credits.

CVTC also collaborates with private colleges to develop transfer guides and articulation agreements. The private colleges frequently develop agreements using two approaches: program-to-program agreements as described above and degree completion agreements.

An affirmative action
employer and educational
institution.

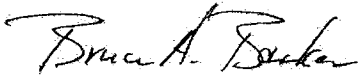
Bruce A. Barker
President

Two benefits of the degree completion agreements are that they apply to all of our Associate degree programs and all credits earned at CVTC count toward a Bachelor's degree. Completion agreements work well when there is not a direct link between a CVTC program and a major at a University. Currently CVTC has degree completion agreements with 10 private colleges. These agreements apply to all of our associate degree students and accept all of our CVTC student's credits toward a bachelor's degree, leaving them with approximately 60 credits to complete their bachelor's degree. CVTC has 2 program completion agreements with UW partners and would support expanding the use of this model. Expanding the program completion model would provide a simpler and more robust pipeline into the UW System.

Wisconsin has two nationally recognized systems of higher education in our Wisconsin Technical College and UW System, as evidenced by the accreditation both maintain with the Higher Learning Commission. Strengthening the ability for our students to transfer more seamlessly between our colleges is a win for our students and our state economy.

In conclusion, I would like to express my support for the substitute amendment to SB-165. Please feel free to contact me with any additional questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bruce A. Barker".

Bruce Barker
President



Bryan D. Albrecht, Ed.D.
President and CEO

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May 6, 2019

Dear Senator Kooyenga, Chair, and members of the Senate Universities, Technical Colleges, Children and Families committee;

RE: Support of Substitute Amendment to SB-165

Gateway Technical College opened its doors in 1911 as Racine Continuation School and has grown and expanded to a nationally recognized higher education institution serving approximately 20,000 students annually. We recognize that our relationships with our educational partners are critical to our success. We have a long history of collaborating with our higher education partners in the UW system to create articulation agreements. We currently have 117 articulation agreements with UW institutions. On average, Gateway Technical College has 440 students transferring to UW institutions each year. In addition, we recently held our second articulation summit with UW-Parkside, our strongest partner, and are developing some innovative articulation and transfer ideas. This proposed amendment to SB-165 would provide an opportunity to strengthen existing agreements, definitely a benefit to our students.

There are many reasons this substitute amendment would be beneficial to our students. Two that are very important are student debt and ease of transfer. The support of the amendment would allow WTCS students to enter the UW system without having to unnecessarily retake courses, which assists with lower student debt. As well as, students being able to transfer between institutions easier which would potentially increase the number of students achieving a Bachelor's degree within the UW system.

Challenges we have with our current agreements are the variation in which courses are accepted and the number of credits accepted towards a Bachelor's degree. Also many courses transfer in as general electives that do not meet degree requirements. In our current program to program agreements, the number of credits that count toward the completion of a Bachelor's degree ranges from 16 credits up to 70 credits.





Gateway also collaborates with private colleges to create articulation agreements. Most offer the program/degree completion model where all of Gateway Associate's degree credits count toward a Bachelor's degree.

Both the Wisconsin Technical College System and the UW system are accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and are nationally recognized. Improving the pathway from the WTCS colleges to UW institution Bachelor's degrees benefits all students, both systems, and the state of Wisconsin.

Gateway Technical College supports the substitute amendment to SB-165. I would be happy to provide additional information or answer any questions you may have on our articulation agreements with the UW system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bryan Albrecht". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Bryan Albrecht, President and CEO

ALVERNO COLLEGE
BELLIN COLLEGE
BELOIT COLLEGE
CARDINAL STRITCH UNIVERSITY
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SILVER LAKE COLLEGE OF THE HOLY FAMILY
VITERBO UNIVERSITY
WISCONSIN LUTHERAN COLLEGE

Senate Committee on Universities, Technical Colleges and Children and Families

May 7, 2019

Testimony on Senate Bill 165

By

Rolf Wegenke, Ph.D., President
Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

Chair Kooyenga and members of the Committee, my name is Rolf Wegenke. I am president of the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU). Senate Bill 165 confirms an earlier enactment of this legislature providing WAICU colleges and universities the opportunity to voluntarily participate in the state-wide Universal Credit Transfer Agreement. We are grateful for the opportunity. I think we bring a lot to the table. WAICU has had long-standing, significant transfer agreements in place for many years. And we want to do more – for the sake of the students and for the State of Wisconsin.

Since 2012, over 10,000 students have transferred from Wisconsin Technical College System institutions to WAICU institutions. WAICU members have – voluntarily and without direct operating support from the taxpayers – organized a multitude of articulation agreements outlining the terms of transfer for students between our institutions. While not a comprehensive list, I have shared some examples of partnerships as an attachment to this testimony.

WAICU has been in extensive discussions over the last year with the Wisconsin Technical College System on how to expand our transfer partnerships and broaden agreements.

We have also been talking to other states such as North Carolina with a voluntary system. Universal transfer agreements between private colleges and public community colleges have been established. As a result, we are already in the process of applying lessons learned and best practices gained from their experience.

I said at the beginning that we want to do what is best for the students. Creating more transfer opportunities for students and articulating clear pathways for them can reduce frustration for a student looking for transfer opportunities, speed time to graduation and reduce costs for students in completing their degree. In our experience, technical college students are ready and willing to embrace these opportunities. To mention just a couple examples. A Northwestern Wisconsin Technical College student can transfer credits to get a B.S. in Electrical Engineering Technology from the Milwaukee School of Engineering. Additionally, a Blackhawk Technical College student can transfer credits to get a Bachelor of Arts in Criminology & Law Studies from Marquette University.

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BELOIT COLLEGE
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RIPON COLLEGE
ST. NORBERT COLLEGE
SILVER LAKE COLLEGE OF THE HOLY FAMILY
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Examples of College to College transfers

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College

Concordia University
NWTC Program: Accounting
Partner Program: BS Accounting

Silver Lake College
NWTC Program: Business Management
Partner Program: BS Management

Silver Lake College
NWTC Program: Business Management - Hotel & Restaurant Management
Partner Program: BS Management

Lakeland University
NWTC Program: Criminal Justice Professional Studies
Partner Program: Non-Specified Bachelor Degree

Silver Lake
NWTC Program: Leadership Development
Partner Program: BS Management

Milwaukee Area Technical College

Cardinal Stritch:
Milwaukee Area Technical College: Culinary Management, Hotel/Hospitality Management or Meeting and Event Management
Partner Program: Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management program

Alverno College
Milwaukee Area Technical College:
Partner Programs: Business and Management, Liberal Arts, Elementary Education, Elementary Education (Early Childhood) and Community Leadership and Development

Blackhawk Technical College

Marquette University
Partner Programs: B.S. Leadership and Organizations
B.A. Criminology & Law Studies

Waukesha County Technical College

Marquette University

Partner Programs: Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering

Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering

Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE) has articulation agreements from Associate Degree Electrical Engineering Technology to BS Electrical Engineering with the following WTCS colleges:

- Fox Valley Technical College
- Gateway
- Madison Area Technical College
- Milwaukee Area Technical College
- Northeast Wisconsin Technical College
- Waukesha County Technical College
- Western Technical College



May 6, 2019

Dear Senate Committee,

Below is the written testimony regarding the support for the substitute amendment to SB-165. I do believe more partnership and collaboration between the WTCS and UW System will benefit students who are seeking high-quality education. LTC partners with both private and public universities to provide transfer options for our students. Often times, students graduating Lakeshore Technical College (LTC) who are looking to further their education, look to the private education sector. This is a result of more universal and seamless transition with these private institutions. Strengthening the ability of our students to transfer into a University of Wisconsin (UW) institution would be a win for all involved.

Overall, Lakeshore Technical College has articulation agreements with 26 universities; of those, eight are with our University of Wisconsin partners. The number of articulation agreements that result in junior status (defined as at least half of the credits awarded in terminal degree from LTC) are with 15 university partners; three of those agreements are with UW partnerships.

LTC has a good working relationship with UW System. These strong relationships have been built on a history of identifying programs where students are able to transition from LTC into a UW University. Increasing universal credits that apply directly from a WTCS college into a UW University would better serve the student who is transferring, reduce cost in time assessing transcripts, and offer in-state education to WTCS college graduates. Also, the students would have less confusion with a universal system wide credit agreement. A system where all WTCS credits are able to count toward a UW System Bachelor's degree would also benefit the UW System, as more WTCS graduates would transfer into UW Universities.

Reducing student cost and time to completion is an initiative we have taken very seriously at LTC. The substitute amendment to SB-165 is a step in the right direction to help impact this on a state level. The substantive amendment encourages greater cooperation, and allows the separate system-level governing bodies to preserve control over establishing the specific courses that align between the WTCS and UW Systems.

I would like to express my support for SB-165 substitute amendment; this is a forward-thinking legislative action that will benefit our students and state employers. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have for me.

Sincerely,

Jim Lemerond

Vice President of Instruction

Paul Carlsen, Ph.D., President



MARK BORN

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 39TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony on Senate Bill 165

Senate Committee on Universities, Technical Colleges, Children and Families

May 7, 2019

Chairman Kooyenga and members of the Committee on Universities, Technical Colleges, Children and Families,

Thank you for allowing me to testify in favor of Senate Bill 165.

Senate Bill 165 provides students in the University of Wisconsin System and the Wisconsin Technical College System with more classes that are guaranteed to transfer between schools. This bill streamlines the transfer credit process, helping students and advisors clearly understand what classes will be accepted when transferring.

Many students transfer colleges for a variety of reasons. Whether it's trying to save money at local college, an unexpected family emergency, or interest in a new major, planned or unplanned transfer students should have the flexibility and clarity throughout this process. This bill will assist students by reducing the number of similar courses they have to retake, which only further saddles students with unnecessary additional debt.

My office has been contacted from constituents struggling through the transfer credit process. In one recent case, a student attended a local technical college so she could live at home to save money and work while completing an associate's degree. When applying to transfer to gain a bachelor's degree at a four year institution, only 15 of her 72 credits were initially accepted. Cases such as these lead students to decide not to further or complete their education, opting to not pay again for classes they have already taken.

This common sense legislation streamlines a system that already exists between universities. According to UW System, there are currently 600 articulation agreements in place between UW institutions and the Wisconsin Technical College System. Students don't always know which credits transfer in this confusing system, and far too often a significant number of credits may end up lost in the shuffle. The bill as amended would specify the total number of course credits that are transferable to 75 credits, from 30 credits under current law.

SB 165 would also have faculty from both systems meet on a yearly basis to determine which courses should be transferable. This plan gives both the Wisconsin Technical College System and the University of Wisconsin System the flexibility to work on a proposal that they can implement while ensuring proper input from faculty through the process. In addition, the proposal continues to grow the number of credits in the agreement each year moving forward.

I look forward to working with Senator Stroebel, the University of Wisconsin System, the Wisconsin Technical College System, and members of each committee to make progress on this issue and find a commonsense solution that addresses our shared goals of student success, affordability, and workforce development.

Thank you for your time.



DUEY STROEBEL

STATE SENATOR • 20TH DISTRICT

Testimony on SB 165

May 7, 2019

Chairman Kooyenga, members of the Senate Committee on Universities, Technical Colleges, Children and Families, thank you for hearing SB 165 today. Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to SB 165 does several important things to improve outcomes for Wisconsin residents accessing the higher education system by building upon concepts we know work on smaller scales and bringing those lessons system wide.

First, let me take you through what the substitute amendment does. It augments the statutory framework for the original 2013 law that required UW-System and WTCS to develop a list of courses that would universally transfer. The substitute amendment would allow, but not require, these transferable courses to be beyond general education requirements. The minimum number of credit hours would go from 30 to 75, with an ongoing obligation to increase this number by 9 credit hours per year when the agreement is renewed. Faculty from both institutions would select the appropriate courses. Finally, these changes would first go into effect for the 2020-2021 school year with JFC passive review of the initial agreement.

We all, as elected officials, hear common themes from our constituents. Two loud refrains I have heard are workforce shortages and the cost of higher education/student loan debt. I believe SB 165 can and will make improvements in both areas without allocating a single GPR dollar.

Any credit hour of course taken at a UW-System or WTCS institution costs the student tuition dollars and the state dollars in our support of those institutions. Any credit hour taken that does not transfer is a sunk cost we all bare. I understand not every course should transfer, but our guiding directive to our higher education entities should be maximizing credit transfers.

More transferred credit hours means less time spent in school and a quicker pipeline to the workforce. How often have you heard Wisconsin business plead for more quality Wisconsin graduates to staff their firms? More efficient use of course work means less cost to both student and taxpayer, which will lessen total student loan debt. Time and cost barriers to higher education fall disproportionately on low income students, families without a previous college graduate, and communities of color. Social mobility is a cornerstone of the American Dream, we have a chance to politely spur our institutions of higher learning to facilitate that dream to make the path of our students to their desired degrees less arduous.

Current law only requires thirty credit hours and in a few short years the current negotiated transfer agreement has a range of thirty-seven to fifty-two. In 2013, it was controversial to establish the benchmark of thirty yet it is now accepted. Many individual 4-year campuses have

additional specific articulation agreements with technical colleges, including WAICU universities, which indicate greater transfer possibilities.

Higher education is a massive endeavor and I am not going to sit before you today and claim this is an easy change for UW-System or WTCS. Both entities have reached out to discuss their concerns and suggestions. As of the current substitute amendment WTCS is supportive and UW-System is not. I'm sure they will speak for themselves shortly. For my part, I am willing to discuss implementation details with stakeholders, but I am interested in making progress on these important issues.

I do not diminish their concerns or input into implementing any transfer proposal, but I believe we have a responsibility to provide guidance and leadership since we appropriate significant taxpayer funds to run their operations. This proposal may be bold in the political world. In the private sector I would call this proposal scaling up operations to enhance customer service in a high demand product.

Every student whose bachelor's degree we could expedite one semester because of spurring this type of creative problem-solving will increase our available labor pool to fuel this great Wisconsin economy. These effects, while helping us all, will have a disproportionately greater impact on low income students, students without a family history of collegiate degrees and students of color. I hope you will support SB 165.

Thank you for your time.