

**STATE OF WISCONSIN**

**Wisconsin Technical College System Board**

**2019-21 BIENNIAL REPORT**

**October 2021**



Wisconsin Technical College System Board

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[Wisconsin Technical College System](http://www.wisconsin-technical-college-system.edu)

Morna K. Foy, President

## **AGENCY OVERVIEW**

### **Mission and Purpose**

Chapter 38, *Wis. Stats.*, provides that the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) Board is responsible for the initiation, development, maintenance and supervision of programs with specific occupational orientation below the baccalaureate level. These include associate degrees, training of apprentices and adult education below the postsecondary level. In order to foster economic development and expansion of employment opportunities, the principal purposes of the System are to provide occupational education and training and retraining programs necessary for full participation in the workforce and to provide customized training and technical assistance to business and industry. Additional purposes of the System are to cooperate and contract with secondary schools, provide collegiate transfer programs, offer basic skills education, offer community service programs and self-enrichment activities, and address barriers created by stereotyping and discrimination.

### **WTCS Board**

As the WTCS governing body, the WTCS Board is structured to reflect its mission and diverse responsibilities. The Board consists of 13 members, including three ex officio and ten non-salaried members appointed by the Governor. As established in Chapter 38, *Wis. Stats.*, the three ex-officio members are the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary (or designee), the University of Wisconsin System (UWS) Board of Regents President (or designee) and the State Superintendent of Department of Public Instruction (DPI) (or designee).

Of the ten appointed board members, one represents employers, one represents employees, one represents farmers, one represents students and six represent the public as at-large members. Appointed board members serve staggered, six-year terms, with the exception of the student representative, who serves a two-year term. The WTCS Board is empowered to determine the organization, plans, scope and development of postsecondary technical and adult education; appoint a System President; approve the qualifications of district educational personnel and courses of study; establish system-wide policies and approve district proposals for facilities development and land acquisition. The Board establishes procedures and criteria for determining course credit, state aid, uniform accounting for financial programs and other data required of the colleges.

During the 2019-21 biennium, the following individuals served on the WTCS Board:

Member	Representing	Residence
Becky Lezvow, President 2019-21	Farmers	Rio
Douglas A. Holton, Sr.	Public	Milwaukee
Terrance McGowan	Employees	Pewaukee
Dr. Rodney Pasch, Vice President, 2019-21	Public	Elroy
John Schwantes	Public	Elkhart Lake
Kelly Tourdot	Public	Waunakee
S. Mark Tyler	Public	Woodville
Cooper Richason	Student	Trempealeau
Stephen Willett	Employer	Phillips
Mary Williams	Public	Medford
Dr. Quincey Daniels, Jr.	Public	Mindoro

The following ex-officio members served on the Board during the 2019-21 biennium:

Member	Representing
Carolyn Stanford Taylor	State Superintendent of Department of Public Instruction
Dr. Eve Hall	University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents Designee
John W. Miller	University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents Designee
Caleb Frostman	Secretary, Department of Workforce Development
Amy Pechacek	Secretary-Designee, Department of Workforce Development

### System Office

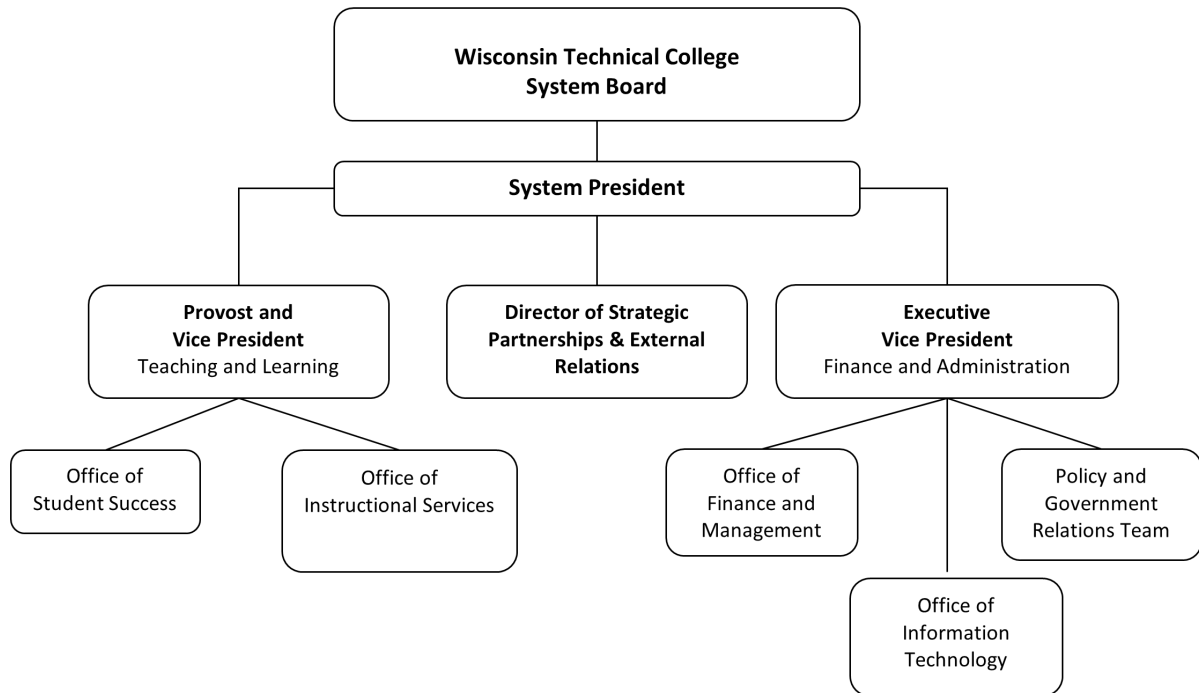
A System President, who serves at the pleasure of the WTCS Board, leads the WTCS Office. The WTCS Office ended the biennium with 55 full-time equivalent (FTE) authorized positions. Major staff responsibilities are as follows:

- The *Offices of Finance and Management and Information Technology* have oversight responsibility for operations including accounting, budgeting, procurement, payroll, human resources, facilities and information technology. The offices distribute state aid and provide guidance to the technical colleges in developing financial policies and standards. In addition, the offices assist the Board in determining student fees and tuition rates and in approving district

facility development projects. The offices are also responsible for the management of information and oversight of district budgets and enrollments.

- The *Office of Instructional Services* has responsibility for program definition, approval, evaluation and review. It focuses on programs in agriculture, office services, marketing, home economics (including family and consumer education), health occupations, trade and industry (including apprenticeship, fire service, law enforcement, safety, technical and vocational training), general education, personnel certification and environmental education. It also serves as a liaison to secondary schools.
- The *Office of Student Success* is responsible for the coordination of state and federal grant programs, student financial aid, federal projects for the disabled and disadvantaged, adult and continuing education outreach, adult basic education, English language learning and Workforce Investment Act projects. It also serves as a liaison to business and industry.
- The *Policy and Government Relations Team*, which reports to the executive vice president, provides leadership for System-wide policy analysis and development, public outreach and federal and state government relations. It is responsible for the coordination of System-wide budgeting and planning, research and labor market information.
- The *Strategic Partnerships and External Relations Director* serves as a member of the agency's leadership team. The Director is the WTCS Public Information Officer and functions as the liaison between WTCS and a wide variety of internal and external partners.

### Wisconsin Technical College System Board and Office



## WTCS Board Policies

The WTCS Board has the authority to establish System-wide policies. The WTCS Board uses a two-step process to consider policy changes and ensure the opportunity for member input. Draft policy recommendations are first developed by the WTCS Office in consultation with various stakeholders. The System President presents the draft recommendations to the Board for discussion. System Office staff incorporate the comments of the Board into the draft recommendations. At a subsequent Board meeting, the System President presents the final recommendations to the Board for its action. Policies approved by the WTCS Board are published in its [policy manual](#).

## WTCS Strategic Directions

The WTCS Board has adopted the following strategic directions and action steps for the five-year period, 2021-2025.

### **Transform the delivery of postsecondary education and training**

- Position the colleges to best meet the needs of the diverse communities they serve, with a particular focus on students and employers, by making clear the purpose and value of a broad range of diversity, equity and inclusion efforts.
- Increase awareness that the statutory mission of the Wisconsin Technical College System is exceptionally broad by design, uniquely positioning Wisconsin's technical colleges to meet shifting stakeholder demands in times of rapid change.

### **Innovate to increase college access, inclusion and success for all students**

- Identify, advance, support and continuously improve teaching and learning strategies that meet the needs of each student.
- Emphasize delivery of student support services that make Wisconsin's technical colleges consistently inclusive and student ready.
- Assure colleges' facilities proposals align with goals for meeting student and employer needs.

### **Inspire learners of all ages to engage in technical education**

- Consistently, actively seek to ensure that all students feel safe, welcome and included and have the opportunity to pursue lifelong learning, achieve academic success and prepare for careers.
- Create broad awareness of college offerings and outcomes and elevate the image of Wisconsin's technical colleges as a first-choice postsecondary option supported by data and student success stories.

### **Collaborate to efficiently, effectively advance student and employer goals**

- Maintain affordability for students, balanced with a lasting commitment to rigor and quality.
- Assure that course and program curriculum is industry-aligned, flexible and responsive, meeting the needs of employers and providing value for learners at all stages of life and career.
- Engage policymakers, educators, employers, workforce and economic development partners and community organizations to create a lifelong learning continuum and position Wisconsin for economic growth and stability.
- Actively and strategically coordinate state and federal grant finance and administration with instructional and student support objectives.
- Align Information Technology (IT) infrastructure and services and leverage data to drive improvements in identifying and addressing student achievement gaps.
- Work together with WTCS colleges in the areas of professional development, System finance and advocacy with a consistent focus on student outcomes and maintaining quality workplaces.

## **WTCS College Districts**

Currently with 51 campuses, the 16 WTCS colleges deliver career and technical education to meet the needs, interests and abilities of their students and the demands of the labor market. To assist the colleges in their missions, WTCS Office staff provide the colleges with technical assistance and help to coordinate activities and support services.

Each WTCS college has unique demographic, geographic and economic characteristics. Programs are tailored to meet local needs within the uniform program standards established by the WTCS Board. Each technical college is governed by a district board appointed by local elected officials. Similar to the WTCS Board, district board membership is intended to reflect the diversity of district stakeholders. Excluding the Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC), membership for each of the remaining 15 district boards is comprised of nine members who must be residents of their respective districts: two members representing employers, two representing employees, a local K-12 school administrator, a state or local elected official and three at-large members.

MATC's District Board is also comprised of nine members, seven of which must reside in Milwaukee County. Membership in the MATC District Board is as follows: five represent employers, three represent employers with 15 or more employees and two members represent employers with 100 or more employees. In addition, at least two members must represent employers that are manufacturing businesses. A person representing an employer must have at least two years of experience managing a business entity, non-profit, etc. with at least 15 employees or at least two years of experience managing the finances or hiring of personnel of a business entity or non-profit, etc., with at least 100 employees. Finally, MATC's Board includes a school district administrator, a state or local elected official and two at-large members.

District boards are empowered to levy taxes on property, provide facilities and equipment, contract for instructional services and appoint a college president who serves as chief executive officer for the district. Additional information and a map for Wisconsin's 16 technical colleges can be viewed on the [WTCS college webpage](#).

## ***REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE AND OPERATIONS***

Wisconsin's technical colleges strive to provide graduates with the education and training that provides skills to compete in today's competitive job market. The WTCS regularly publishes data on enrollment, costs and graduate outcomes. The data is available on the [WTCS publications and resources page](#).

### **Operational Costs**

In order to provide the instruction, services and activities necessary to carry out their mission and achieve their goals, WTCS colleges rely on a combination of federal, state and local revenues. In 2019-20, the latest year for which complete financial information is available, WTCS colleges enrolled 286,381 individuals at an operational cost of \$1.1 billion.

Actual 2019-20 cost allocation data show that 64.1 percent of operational costs were for instruction while the next highest amounts were for general institutional (14.7 percent), student services (11.3 percent) and physical plant (7.8 percent). Instructional resources accounted for the remaining 2.2 percent of operational costs. Data on college costs is published annually, with the most recent year of complete data available in the [cost allocation summary report](#).

## **Enrollment**

The number of full-time equivalent (FTE) students enrolled annually decreased 1.5 percent from 65,318 in FY 2018-19 to 64,315 in FY 2019-20. Data on enrollment is published annually in the [Fact Book](#) with the most recent year of complete data available.

## **Grant Programs**

WTCS provides a number of grants to individual technical colleges using funds received from general purpose revenue, the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act and the federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act.

These programs are intended to assist WTCS districts in providing educational and economic development services to individuals and high priority industry sectors. Grants also help promote innovative or successful practices related to priorities identified by the WTCS Board, such as:

- strengthening career and technical education programs through multi-college collaborative efforts to develop measures of technical skill attainment; and
- promoting and supporting high school-to-college transitions for career and technical education students through multi-college collaborative efforts to develop programs of study.

A summary of grant programs is available on the [Grants information page](#).

## **Engagement and Partnerships**

The WTCS Board and System Office are committed to working with internal and external partners to improve the quality, availability and cost-effectiveness of WTCS education and workforce training programs.

The WTCS Office and individual colleges participate in a variety of collaborative projects involving outside educational and workforce development agencies to:

- improve college transfer opportunities;
- enhance college access and affordability; and
- develop career clusters and pathways.

Partner institutions involved with these projects include the Wisconsin Departments of Workforce Development and Department of Public Instruction, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, the University of Wisconsin System, the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities and Ascendium Education Group. Additional information about WTCS is available on the [WTCS website](#).

## ***MAJOR PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES***

### **Expand the Pool of Skilled Workers in the State's Labor Force**

The WTCS Board continues to approve demand-driven, cutting-edge career and technical education and training programs developed by Wisconsin's technical colleges in collaboration with Wisconsin's businesses and industry, labor and other partners. The colleges have developed state-of-the-art programs in emerging industries like biotechnology, manufacturing robotics and renewable energy. At the same time, the colleges continue to deliver graduates in core programs to meet Wisconsin's ongoing demand for construction, information technology, public safety and health care professionals. To accomplish this and operate with the highest degree of efficiency, the WTCS Board discontinues about the same number of programs as it approves each year.

## **Employer Satisfaction**

Conducted every four years since 1980, the Employer Satisfaction Survey measures employer satisfaction with the skills and abilities of WTCS graduates. Feedback from employers has consistently shown that WTCS graduates continue to meet or exceed employer expectations compared to other new employees, in both occupational abilities and other core skills. In the most recent survey, employers report WTCS graduates meet or exceed employer expectations in the following areas:

- mastery of knowledge in their fields (88 percent);
- ability to perform technical skills (91 percent);
- ability to communicate effectively (89 percent);
- relevance of skills and knowledge (87 percent);
- mastery of “STEM” (i.e., science, technology, engineering and mathematics) (82 percent); and
- overall preparedness for employment (89 percent).

Ninety-six percent of employers said they would hire a WTCS graduate again, and 98 percent of employers felt that their local technical college was important or very important to the success of their business. The complete results from the latest survey are available on the [WTCS website](#).

## **Career Pathways**

WTCS is continuing its work with a wide variety of internal and external partners to develop pathways “to and through” postsecondary education that seamlessly link education and work throughout an individual’s career. For middle and high school students, career pathways increase awareness of the academic preparation needed for postsecondary education. In addition, high school students can earn technical college credits that also fulfill graduation requirements — “dual credit” — at no cost to the student or their family.

At the postsecondary level, WTCS is working in partnership with employers to “stack” technical college credentials: short-term certificates, technical diplomas and associate degrees in a way that supports career advancement based on employer-identified needs and an individual’s career goals and timeline.

## **Increase Postsecondary Educational Opportunities**

WTCS used a variety of methods to increase postsecondary educational opportunities over the 2019-21 biennium. WTCS colleges continued to provide training opportunities for incumbent workers, develop career pathways to address skills shortages and offer low-income adults clear and reliable courses of action to progress in their careers.

Employer-specific worker training is a critical component in meeting the needs of new and expanding businesses in Wisconsin. In the 2019-21 biennium, WTCS colleges continued to serve on average over 82,000 individuals annually through customized instruction contracts with businesses, in which the colleges design and deliver customized instruction and technical assistance, either on-site or on-campus.

Employers and workers continue to place a high value on incumbent worker training and WTCS developed a survey instrument to gauge the economic and other impacts of this training. Results from the survey indicate that most respondents believe WTCS contract training meets or exceeds their expectations, allowing them to improve productivity, achieve cost savings, increase sales and retain or create jobs.



Adult career pathways created by WTCS colleges also commonly include remedial education “bridges” that allow students who need basic instruction, including English language learning to address those needs without postponing their entry into postsecondary occupational programs. One strategy for bridge programs pairs basic education and occupational instructors in the same classroom so that students can improve their basic academic abilities and at the same time earn a certificate-level credential that will help to improve their employment outcomes.

### **Closing the Achievement Gap**

The enrollment of students of color, as a proportion of the overall student body, continues to climb, increasing from 16.7 percent in 2010-11 to 22.1 percent in 2019-20. This compares favorably with the percentage of persons of color in Wisconsin as a whole, which was 19.6 percent according to the 2020 Census. Over the last nine years, the percentage of students of color graduates has increased from 12.5 percent in 2010-11 of total graduates to 18.9 percent of total graduates in 2019-20. The number of WTCS students of color transferring to UWS institutions continues to increase. In 2011, students of color composed 14 percent of WTCS students transferring to UWS. In 2018-19, (most recent data available) students of color composed 16.3 percent of WTCS students transferring to UWS institutions.

### **By Gender**

In 2019-20, WTCS colleges reported enrolling 140,834 men and 141,286 women, while gender was not reported for 1.5 percent of enrollees. Of the men enrolled 62.9 percent were enrolled in degree or diploma program courses, while 16.3 percent were enrolled in non-postsecondary courses and 42 percent were in continuing education courses. Of the women enrolled, 73 percent were enrolled in degree or diploma program courses, 33.2 percent in non-postsecondary and 20.6 percent in continuing education courses. Because students may take courses in more than one area, percentages add to more than 100 percent.

### **Services for Students with Special Needs**

WTCS provides specialized services for:

- students with physical or mental disabilities;
- students who are disadvantaged, including academically or economically disadvantaged individuals; and
- students with limited English proficiency.

In 2019-20, 14,016 students with disabilities received specialized services. These services were supported with funds from GPR, WTCS districts, the federal Perkins Act and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation within DWD. These services enable students with disabilities to enroll and succeed in technical education programs and courses. Services include specialized guidance and counseling, needs assessment and evaluation, support services, remedial instruction, career development, adaptive equipment and career placement.

In 2019-20, the WTCS colleges provided services to 82,435 disadvantaged students (unduplicated), of whom 43,518 were academically disadvantaged, 56,303 were economically disadvantaged and 8,752 had limited English proficiency. Services provided to disadvantaged students – including academically or economically disadvantaged individuals and those with limited English proficiency – are supported with funds from WTCS general state aid, local funds, targeted state GPR funds and federal funds provided through Perkins Act and the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. Services provided include

remediation services such as specialized reading and mathematics laboratories, note taking instruction and staff and peer tutors.

### **Graduate Outcomes**

WTCS colleges annually survey the previous year's program graduates. The latest survey results for 2020 graduates were available in May 2021. Of the 24,558 graduates, 15,256 (62 percent) responded to the survey.

Among the respondents:

- 97 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with their WTCS training;
- 91 percent of those in the labor force were employed;
- 94 percent of graduates are working in Wisconsin; and
- 75 percent of employed graduates were working in a job related to their WTCS training.

The median salary six months after graduation, regardless of degree type, for 2020 WTCS graduates was \$44,249. Median salaries six months after graduation range from \$41,337 for 2020 graduates with a short-term technical diploma to \$48,000 for 2020 associate degree graduates.

The number of programs with median salaries of \$50,000 to \$60,000 six months after graduation grew from 40 in 2018 to 46 in 2020. There were 22 WTCS programs with a median salary of over \$60,000 six months after graduation. These programs range from short term technical diplomas in CNC Programming, Power Plant Mechanic and Business operations to Associate Degrees in Cardiovascular Technology, Quality Engineering and Manufacturing Management.

### **STEM**

WTCS collaborates with education and industry partners to increase the courses and programs offered in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). WTCS colleges offer over 500 degree and diploma programs, of which 20 percent are classified as a STEM Career Cluster or are in one of the six STEM-related Career Clusters under the framework of the National Career Technical Education Foundation:

- Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources;
- Architecture and Construction;
- Health Sciences;
- Information Technology;
- Manufacturing; and
- Transportation, Distribution and Logistics.

### ***Alternative Work Patterns***

WTCS Office policies have permitted alternative work patterns since 1976. In 2005, the WTCS Office adopted a revised policy that permits any employee of the agency to request an alternative work pattern. Alternative work patterns include, but are not limited to, part-time, shared-time and flex-time schedules. Employee and agency work needs are accommodated through the use of non-standard work weeks and straight shift work. During the 2019-21 biennium, the WTCS developed a short-term and long-term telecommuting policy in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. In the same period and currently, all employees participate in some type of alternative work pattern.