

Topic Summary:
**Transfer of College Credits between Wisconsin Technical Colleges
and the University of Wisconsin System**

Personal circumstances, including affordability and accessibility, can limit students' educational options. For these students, a technical college is an attractive choice.

- ***Affordability***
Tuition and fees at a technical college are considerably lower than a 4-year college. Additionally, many students have the option of living at home, saving the cost of room and board.
- ***Accessibility***
Family obligations, a desire to stay in a community, and/or economic circumstances require many students to seek higher education close to home. For these "place bound" students find a high quality, locally available education at a technical college.

Technical college graduates want options to continue their education. However, transfer of credits can limit their options.

- Many adult students wish to stay in their communities and the state. They would prefer to continue their education at a University of Wisconsin System campus.
- *Few* UW System campuses are receptive to accepting technical college credits. Each technical college must pursue transfer, or articulation agreements, with each UW System on a program by program basis. The exception is UW-Stout which transfers all technical college credits into its Industrial or Service Management degrees.
- Unless a formal agreement is in place, credit transfer must be negotiated on a case by case, campus by campus, course by course, credit by credit basis.

The current transfer agreement between the UW and Technical College System is inequitable.

- An April 2000 agreement between the UW and Technical College Systems allows a technical college student to transfer up to 15 general credits and up to 10 additional credits in math or science to any UW institution.
- Technical college credits are often transferred as elective course work rather than counting toward degree completion.
- UW institution credits are transferred without complication and count toward degree completion at a technical college.
- Last year, more students transferred from a UW institution to a technical college than from a technical college to a UW institution. 3,100 UW students transferred to a technical college; 2,500 technical college students transferred to a UW institution.

In order to earn a degree from a UW System institution, technical college graduates are forced to repeat courses they have already completed.

- It is unreasonable to require technical college graduates to pay for and complete a course they've already taken – using the same textbooks. Unfortunately, this occurs all too often.

Inflexibility influences students' choices. Currently, the most convenient options for technical college graduates wishing to pursue an advanced degree are through out-of-state and private colleges and universities.

- Northcentral Technical College has transfer (articulation) agreements with Upper Iowa University, Western Governors University, Franklin University, and the University of Phoenix.
- Tuition at private colleges and universities is much higher than the UW system. However, due to a lack of transferability, technical college students have little choice.
- Lack of transferability drives students away from the UW System and out of Wisconsin, further contributing to brain drain.

Credit Transfer Stories

Lynn figured out how to work around the complicated transfer system.

Lynn- graduated from NTC with a degree in Computer Information Systems. She wanted to transfer to UW Eau Claire to complete her bachelor's degree in the same field. Lynn was only eligible to transfer 15 credits to UW Eau Claire. So, she transferred her NTC credits to UW Stout and then transferred to UW Eau Claire to maximize the number of credits that would transfer.

Ross is wasting his money earned from classes he has already completed.

Ross- was able to transfer 16 credits into UW Stevens Point (NTC and MATC-Milwaukee). Ross is currently enrolled in 2 junior level courses at UWSP that use the same textbook he had used MATC. He says his classroom notes are identical for both classes.

It is a good thing Andy isn't on a tight schedule to complete his education! Lack of credit transfer has delayed Andy's graduation.

Andy- graduated from NTC in Marketing and decided to continue his education at UW Stevens Point. Andy was interested in staying in the Marketing field, but when he discovered that only 12 of his credits transferred, he switched majors two times. Four years later, he is still in college at UW Stevens Point. He to expects graduate with a degree in Sociology in December of 2004.

Keith is able to continue his education at his employer's expense.

Keith-graduated from NTC's Electronics program and his current employer is encouraging him to continue his education. He is applying at the University of Phoenix, because they will accept the majority of his technical college credits. He wants his degree as quickly as possible and his employer is willing to pay for him to continue his education.

It is a good thing that Amanda has a job where she can afford private college tuition.

Amanda- graduated from NTC in Accounting and wanted to continue her education by pursuing a bachelor's degree in Accounting. She really wanted to transfer her credits to a UW system school, but when she looked into the transfer agreements, she decided that it would be less confusing if she went through the program at Upper Iowa University, even though it would be more expensive.

This is how it should work! As a Youth Option student, Mandy took classes at the technical college level in her junior and senior year of high school.

Mandy-graduated from NTC's Graphic Communications program in one and half years and transferred all of her credits in January 2002 to UW Stout and will complete her bachelor's degree in May of 2003.