



MARK BORN

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 39TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony on Assembly Bill 189 *Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities* *September 12, 2019*

Chairman Murphy and members of the Committee on Colleges and Universities,

Thank you for allowing me to testify in favor of Assembly Bill 189.

Assembly Bill 189 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 a local college, an unexpected family emergency, or interest in a new major, planned or unplanned transfer students should have 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. During testimony in the Senate committee, a father of a student that attended a local technical college in Beaver Dam told the story of his daughter living 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 his daughter's 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 currently drafted would specify the total number of course credits that are transferable to 75 credits, from 30 credits under current law.

AB 189 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.

Senator Stroebel and I have been engaged in conversations with the University of Wisconsin System and the Wisconsin Technical College System to find ways to better improve the transfer process. Based off of previous testimony, we are working to improve our legislation with these stakeholders to make sure our proposal is in the best interest of the state and our students. I look forward to taking your questions today, and talking with members of the 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 AB 189

September 12, 2019

Chairman Murphy and members of the committee, thank you for hearing AB 189 today. AB 189 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. 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 AB 189 can and will make improvements in both areas without allocating a single GPR dollar.

Of course any credit hour 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.

Current law requires thirty credit hours and in a few short years the current negotiated transfer agreement has a range of thirty-seven to fifty-two. AB 189 increases this number to seventy-five. 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. AB 189's senate companion received a public hearing in May. We have had constructive discussions over the summer with stakeholders. It is my belief we should be able to get to an agreement. I will let these stakeholders speak for themselves here today.

I encourage their input and do not diminish their concerns regarding implementation of any transfer proposal, but I believe we have a responsibility as the Legislature. We should provide guidance and leadership since we appropriate significant taxpayer funds to run their operations.

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 and fuel Wisconsin's economy. I hope you will support SB 165. Thank you for your time.



Office of the President
1700 Van Hise Hall
1220 Linden Drive
Madison, Wisconsin 53706-1559
608-262-2321
rcross@uwsa.edu
www.wisconsin.edu

September 12, 2019

TO: Honorable Members of the Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities
FROM: Ray Cross, UW System President
RE: Assembly Bill 189 Testimony – For Information Only

Thank you, Chairman Murphy and committee members, for holding this public hearing on AB 189, relating to transferability of courses between the University of Wisconsin System (UW System), the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS), and Tribal and Private Colleges. Also, thank you to Senator Stroebel and Representative Born for continuing to work with us on this important issue. I will address this testimony to Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 189, however I appreciate the ongoing discussions with the authors to work with us on this legislation.

We all share the same goal -- making the transfer process easier and more transparent for students. There is good work being done on transfer by our staff and faculty improving and creating program articulation agreements and, most importantly, directly interacting with transfer students and their advisers.

What are the fundamentals of efficient and effective transfer programs: 1) faculty to faculty discussions and decisions – faculty must make the determination about what can be transferred and what does not meet the requirements; 2) good student advising is essential; and 3) articulation agreements require regular updating.

There are two transfer models: The course-to-course transfer model and the program-to-program articulation transfer model. Currently, the UW System has over 600 program-to-program articulation agreements with Wisconsin institutions, including Wisconsin Technical College institutions, Wisconsin Tribal Colleges and Wisconsin private colleges.

A program articulation agreement is the most efficient transfer model, because it views the entirety of the learning outcomes in a program – not just the learning outcomes within a single course. Since institutions often place learning outcomes in different courses or experiences, this model captures such outcomes, because it does not restrict the analysis to a single course. A second major advantage a program articulation model plays in advising students is that it provides a clear transfer map for the student and the student's adviser.

Traditionally, program articulation agreements are requested by the "sending" institution – that is, faculty send over their complete academic program and request that a transfer agreement be developed. After review by the program faculty at both institutions, agreements are negotiated and signed and thereafter function as the roadmap for students interested in transferring. Notice, these are institution by institution agreements developed by faculty within their respective departments. It should also be noted that five of the Wisconsin Technical Colleges have full collegiate transfer programs as defined in Wisconsin Statute Section 36.31 (1). In fact, Madison College is the largest transfer institution to UW-Madison and Milwaukee Area Technical College transfers the largest number of students to UW-Milwaukee. Obviously, those program articulation agreements have been working very well.

The current system addresses course-to-course transfer through the Universal Credit Transfer Agreement (UCTA), which requires a minimum of 30 transfer credits. Prior to 2010, there was no universal course-to-course credit transfer agreement. Since then, UW System, in partnership with the Wisconsin Technical College System, has gone above and beyond the UCTA. This growth is a result of faculty experts between our institutions continuing to work on what credits they believe are transferrable according to their assessments and standards, and I believe it is critical that faculty control the process. The current UCTA is a course-to-course model developed primarily to serve basic general education or core courses. As such, it does not provide a map to a destination nor does it consider learning outcomes that may be included in some other portion of a complete program.

This involvement of faculty is key. The reason transfer is a frustration no matter where you go, is because it is not simply about the transfer of credits, it is about the applicability of the credits towards the degree. To clarify, even if a certain number of courses are required to transfer, they may end up as electives and not applied towards the degree. If too many credits transfer as electives that are not applicable to a student's degree, that student may even encounter issues with financial aid credit limits.

The data shows that the process works with the agreements mentioned above coupled with effective student advising and faculty involvement. In fact, our data shows that 70% of students from WTCS transfer with 30 or more credits. Nevertheless, we are undertaking several initiatives to improve the transfer process. For example, we underwent a major restructuring initiative to improve transfer between our branch campuses and the four-year institutions. UW System recently approved a guaranteed transfer policy as part of the restructuring initiative for branch campus students to transfer with their already completed credits from one UW to another. In addition, we are in the contract review stage for new transfer technology tools for use by prospective students, current students, advisors, faculty, and the public. We will expand opportunities to maximize credit transfer by utilizing tools that increase the number of participating institutions, including in-state and out-of-state, international, and military, as well as incorporate standardized exam programs (AP, IB, CLEP, DSST). For the first time, students will be able to conduct comprehensive early research and review of transfer equivalencies. The new technology, from College Source, supports a seamless

transfer by providing easily navigable tools that students can operate on their phones. As you know, mobile-friendly tools are critical for reaching today's transfer students.

I want to conclude my testimony with the story of the student who was highlighted in the co-sponsorship memo of this bill, because it illustrates how the process I outlined above works. The student started her college career at Moraine Park Technical College and earned an associate degree in Early Childhood Education with 72 credits. Looking to make a change, she initially sought more information on the Community Engagement and Education program at UW-Milwaukee (UWM). An advisor at UWM provided her with two transfer credit scenarios for the two sub-major options in that program: based on the educational path for the different sub-majors, one option transferred 65 credits, and the other transferred 18 credits. While the one path only transferred 18 credits, the student felt it more closely aligned with her ultimate career goals.

Thankfully, the story did not end there, because she chose to look at different programs at other UW institutions that she felt met her career goals. She reached out to a Legislator who in turn reached out to UW System. Our staff successfully worked with the student to provide more options across the entire UW System. I am happy to report this student is officially enrolled at UW-Green Bay and began her first class on May 20. She was able to transfer 60 credits into this program, and she was excited to begin her studies at UW-Green Bay as a junior. This option was available to her because of the advising she received and the Early Childhood Education articulation agreement at UW-Green Bay, which allowed for her credits to transfer.

In my opinion, this is one reason why the system exists, and it illustrates the strength of having a system where each campus offers multiple pathways for students to achieve their goals. It's our job through to help match students with educational pathways. This is why student advising is so important. It is impossible to create a transfer policy that will work for all 170,000 of our students and the nearly 315,000 WTCS students that may want to transfer between our respective institutions. There are many pathways to success through UW System, and we remain committed to helping each of our students attain that success in the best and most efficient manner possible. Thank you for your time, and I am happy to answer any questions.



State Relations

Jeff Buhandt | (608) 262-1312 | jbuhandt@uwsa.edu

Senior Director for State Relations

Deej Lundgren | (608) 262-5450 | dlundgren@uwsa.edu

Director for State Relations

Van Hise Hall, 1220 Linden Drive, Madison, WI 53706

Analysis of Substitute Amendment 1 to AB 189/AB 165: Transferability of Courses

Relating to: transferability of courses between the University of Wisconsin System, technical college system, and tribally controlled and private colleges.

Authors: Representative Born (R-Beaver Dam) and Senator Stroebel (R-Saukville)

Overview:

This substitute amendment replaces the statutory requirement that the UW and Technical Colleges must have at least 30 credits in core general education courses identified as transferable, with a new requirement that the UW and Technical Colleges must identify at least 75 credits as transferable, which satisfy credential requirements and may include general education courses by the 2020-2021 academic. Nine additional credits must be identified annually in each subsequent academic year. In addition, there must be procedures to revise the agreement each year, and the agreement is subject to passive review by the Joint Committee on Finance.

Areas of Support:

- We appreciate the continuing conversations the authors have had with us to continue working on this legislation, and their willingness to make amendments after the Senate public hearing.
- UW System supports the goal of making the transfer process easier and more transparent for students, which is demonstrated by the following examples:
 - UW System has over 600 program-to-program articulation agreements with other institutions and continues to add more.
 - UW System has gone above and beyond the Universal Credit Transfer Agreement (UCTA), which only requires 30 transfer credits.
 - UW System is investing significant resources to update the technology platform to make it mobile friendly so students can easily identify which courses are transferable.
 - UW System leadership is meeting regularly with leadership at the WTCS to identify additional areas for collaboration to improve the transfer process.
 - Our data indicate 70% of WTCS students transfer into the UW with 30 or more credits

Areas of Concern:

- Whether or not a course or program transfers between institutions should be about course content and learning outcomes.
- Subjecting the transfer agreement between the UW and technical colleges to passive review by JFC may delay the process and may interfere with faculty's ability to focus on course content.
- The requirements in this substitute amendment may create conflict with requirements from our accreditors, since the Higher Learning Commission has strict guidelines on how credits transfer, what credits can transfer, how institutions evaluate credits, and the roles of the faculty and boards of each institution etc.

AB189 Statement
Todd H. Stebbins, PhD
Dean, School of Arts and Sciences
Madison College

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information on this proposed legislation.

Currently, the college transfer program at Madison College, which is the largest program at the College with a headcount of over 5,000 students, offers over 300 unique courses in fulfillment of the Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees, all of which have transferability to one or more UW System schools. Subjects include:

- English
- World Languages
- Social Sciences (Anthropology, Economics, History, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology)
- Speech, Communications, & Performing Arts (Speech, Drama, Music)
- Math & Computer Science
- Engineering
- Natural Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physical Sciences)

We regularly assess our course offerings, typically adding from five to fifteen new courses each year, depending on what needs emerge as identified by new developments in key disciplines, including new employment/employability opportunities and workforce needs. Similarly, other courses may be discontinued in order to keep our course array as relevant and responsive as possible.

In addition, the college transfer program includes select courses from our “applied” occupational and technical programs that have transferability, even though these courses carry WTCS catalogue numbers that do not identify them specifically as being in the transfer program. Currently, we offer 11 of these three- and four-credit courses each year at Madison College. Examples include Introductory Engineering Graphics and Introduction to Computer Engineering that are taken by some of the students in our Engineering Pre-major transfer program, which leads to the Associate of Science degree. This program is growing significantly with our new agreement with UW-Platteville’s College of Engineering, Math, and Science.

We have just signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UW-Platteville to be a site for the UW-Platteville Engineering Partnership (UW-PEP). This agreement allows students to earn UW-Platteville bachelor’s degrees in Mechanical Engineering and Electrical Engineering “at a distance” (without having to travel to Platteville) and includes select courses from Madison College’s “applied” engineering programs such as Electrical Engineering Technology and Mechanical Design Technology. These “applied” engineering program courses are essential for students who seek transfer into these engineering majors. We intend to grow this type of opportunity for students seeking bachelor’s degrees in other fields with high-labor market needs as well. In this way, transferability of our courses and Associate degrees ensure an integrated pathway to Bachelor’s degrees linked to jobs/careers in Wisconsin requiring that credential.

All this to say that we have a wide array of courses in the college transfer program available for students interested in transfer—courses that currently have transferability to most or all of the UW System schools. Focusing on universal transfer of these courses makes great sense and offers excellent value for students and the two systems.

From my perspective, the most important consideration in student transfer is that students are able to plan their academic pathways clearly while avoiding missteps, complete their associate degrees, transfer if they choose, and attain a bachelor's degree as efficiently as possible. Students need to be able to transfer with no "wasted" credits from our college and spend no more time than is required to fulfill their academic goals.

For course transferability, the most important consideration should be that our present transferable courses actually count toward the total credits required for a bachelor's degree (120 credits for most majors). Otherwise, these become "wasted" credits in that they do not help students toward completion of their bachelor's degrees. To clarify: it is not particularly helpful if a course transfers to the university as "elective" credit. While most bachelor's degrees accommodate some elective credits, "too many" elective credits transferring in result in many of these credits not counting toward the degree. Therefore, if numerous WTCS courses transfer only as elective credits, the effect is that many will not actually count toward the 120 credits needed for a student's bachelor's degree, thus increasing the time to completion, increasing cost to the student, and delaying entry into the workforce.

This is one problem with the current list of courses on the Universal Credit Transfer Agreement (UCTA): many of these courses transfer to some UW System schools as electives, which often means students are left earning more than 120 credits for bachelor's degrees that require only 120 because they exceed the allotment of allowed elective credits at the university. As an example of this, I direct you to a handout of data pulled this week from the UW System Transfer Information System that shows different levels of transferability across four of the top UW System transfer destinations for Madison College students for three courses currently on the UCTA list:

- Written Communication
- Economics
- Intro to Ethics: Theory & Application

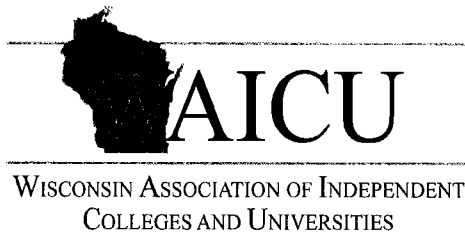
You will note that in some cases, the course transfers as a one-to-one with an equivalent course at the university, while the same course transfers as an elective at another university. This is confusing for students, and it can mean that a given course may count toward the 120 credits needed for graduation at one university, but not at another. This leads to an excess of elective credits that, again, increases the time to completion, increases the cost to students, and delays entry into the workforce.

Which brings me to my last observation about AB189: As you know, the WTCS colleges have some unique roles based on different markets we serve, as do UW System schools; we are not all simply duplicating each other in different parts of the state. Rather, we are responsive to business, industry, and community needs unique to our parts of the state. Consequently, we need to be thoughtful about how we approach expanding transferability of courses. Ideally, the courses that are part of any system-to-system guaranteed transfer arrangement would be courses that all 13 of the UW System schools offer. In many cases, WTCS courses do not have equivalents at UW System schools because these courses serve different populations and business and industry needs. This situation yields courses that may be identified as "transfer," but that do not really help students toward the 120 credits for a bachelor's degree. We need to ensure that we are not simply adding more courses to a transfer list that transfer only as electives. Doing so presents students with what is essentially a false promise of transferability.



WTCS Course	Catalogue #	UW Madison	UW Whitewater	UW Milwaukee	UW Platteville
<i>Written Communication</i>	10-801-195	English Elective	English 101 College Writing & Reading	English 101 Intro to College Writing	English 1130 College Writing I
<i>Economics</i>	10-809-195	Social Studies Elective	Economics Elective	Econ 100 Introductory Economics	Economics 2130 Principles of Macroeconomics
<i>Intro to Ethics: Theory & Application</i>	10-809-166	Philosophy Elective	Philosophy 261 Introduction to Ethics	Philosophy Elective	Philosophy 2530 Ethics

ALVERNO COLLEGE
BELLIN COLLEGE
BELOIT COLLEGE
CARDINAL STRITCH UNIVERSITY
CARROLL UNIVERSITY
CARTHAGE COLLEGE
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
EDGEWOOD COLLEGE
HERZING UNIVERSITY
LAKELAND UNIVERSITY
LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY
MARIAN UNIVERSITY



WISCONSIN'S PRIVATE, NONPROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
WORKING TOGETHER FOR EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY
MEDICAL COLLEGE OF WISCONSIN
MILWAUKEE INSTITUTE OF ART & DESIGN
MILWAUKEE SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING
MOUNT MARY UNIVERSITY
NASHOTAH HOUSE
NORTHLAND COLLEGE
RIPON COLLEGE
ST. NORBERT COLLEGE
SILVER LAKE COLLEGE OF THE HOLY FAMILY
VITERBO UNIVERSITY
WISCONSIN LUTHERAN COLLEGE

Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities

September 12, 2019

Informational Testimony on Assembly Bill 189

Submitted By

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

Chair Murphy and members of the Committee, my name is Rolf Wegenke. I am president of the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU). Assembly Bill 189 provides the WAICU colleges and universities the opportunity to voluntarily participate in the state-wide Universal Credit Transfer Agreement (UCTA). We are grateful for the opportunity.

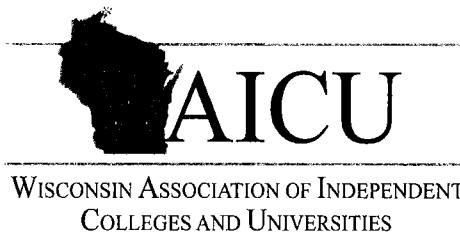
Since 2012, over 10,000 students have transferred from Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) institutions to WAICU institutions. WAICU members have – voluntarily and without direct operating support from the taxpayers – organized a multitude of articulation agreements with the WTCS outlining the terms of transfer for students between our institutions (see attached Examples of College to College transfers). Faculty input was vital in developing these agreements and faculty will continue to be critical for expansion of state-wide agreements going forward. Additionally, a lot of work among college and university faculty and administration has been put into creating the existing UCTA and it will be important to clarify those existing agreements count toward any expansion of a state-wide agreement.

WAICU has been in extensive discussions over the last year with the WTCS 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. We are already in the process of applying lessons learned and best practices gained from their experience.

We want what is best for 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, Wisconsin technical college students are also ready and willing to embrace these opportunities.

Again, WAICU has had long-standing, significant transfer agreements in place for many years. We look forward to our continued partnerships with our public sector partners to facilitate transfer to the benefit of students.

ALVERNO COLLEGE
BELLIN COLLEGE
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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

Wisconsin Assembly Hearing on AB 189 and Substitute Amendment 1

Testimony of Glen R. Schwalbach, P.E.

September 12, 2019

Thank you for holding this hearing. I am Glen R. Schwalbach. I reside at 1090 Moonriver Dr. in the Town of Rockland, Brown County. I got my first two years of pre-engineering at the UW-Fox Valley Center in Menasha. Then I transferred seamlessly to UW-Madison for two and one-half years to get my B.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering. I got my Masters in Business Administration at UW-Oshkosh for which some of my credits transferred from UW-Madison. This was in the late-1960's and mid-1970's. So, transferability was important for me and was possible way back then.

What also was important was that these programs were duly accredited and met high standards for academic achievement. The baccalaureate education was financed by me and the masters was eighty per cent paid by my employer. It was extremely important that I and my employer got what we were paying for, that is, challenging programs that would prepare me for the challenges of our business.

I also have attended technical college programs and was involved in developing the first gas distribution course in Wisconsin which is now an associate degree program at our technical college.

There is a big difference in technical college associate programs and four-year programs and there needs to be for our industrial and service businesses. I know well the needs of engineering teams. We need skilled technicians from two-year engineering technology associate programs, skilled engineering technologists from four-year baccalaureate engineering technology programs and skilled engineers from four-year baccalaureate engineering programs. They are accredited purposely by different criteria. There are significant differences between engineering technology programs and engineering programs. But the public, parents, high school students and even some high school counselors (and, maybe, some legislators) are often confused. So, recognize that we don't want legislation that adds to the confusion and we don't want legislation that will assume every program can be merged. That said, the efforts for some carefully designed two-plus-two programs in engineering technology and even engineering seem to show promise. The reason is partly because these are being designed by the schools, not by a legislative mandate.

The risk of this legislation is that Wisconsin's higher education gets watered down. The language of this bill must acknowledge that accreditation standards are to be maintained. If it isn't explicitly noted in a bill such as this one with prescribed levels of transferability and a deadline, some schools may do dumb things because they feel the law requires it.

For these reasons, the substitute amendment is a bad idea. From my read, it adds a requirement to increase the transferable credits by nine annually. This mandates an objective for which there is no supportive data and provides no assessment of whether more is better based on future experiences. If passed, it threatens the quality of Wisconsin education with its arbitrary mandate.

Thank you.

Glen R. Schwalbach, P.E. Cell: 920-680-2436, Email: glenschwalbach@netzero.com