Lifelong Learning 2020
A UW-Madison Campus-Wide Strategic Plan
lifelonglearning.wisc.edu

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Lifelong Learning 2020

Creating transformative and meaningful learning experiences, reaching more learners, and generating more revenue

Lifelong learning is the
“process by which individuals consciously acquire formal or informal education throughout their life spans for personal development or career advancement” (Educational Resource Information Center [ERIC], 2014).1

Lifelong learning may be broadly defined as learning that is pursued throughout life: learning that is flexible, diverse, and available at different times and in different places; lifelong learning crosses sectors, promoting learning beyond traditional schooling and throughout adult life (Delors, 1996).2

Who is a lifelong learner?

At UW-Madison, we consider everyone—regardless of age or background—a lifelong learner. Our current lifelong learners range from children here for summer camp to recent graduates completing an online master’s degree to working professionals seeking additional career skills or certification. While we as a campus have traditionally focused on full-time, residential degree-seeking students, we aspire to help more people expand their skills and enhance their knowledge throughout their entire lives.

Today lifelong learning at UW-Madison is concentrated on:
➤ Learners in noncredit continuing education programs
➤ Learners enrolled in program revenue post-baccalaureate degrees and certificates
➤ Learners in nondegree or visitor status

It is estimated that approximately 75,000 lifelong learning enrollments at UW-Madison generated approximately $45 million in lifelong learning revenue in fiscal year 2014.3

It is time for lifelong learning to play a more significant role on campus.

We can position UW-Madison at the center of the global village, showing what our state and our university have to offer the world. To do so, we will need new educational offerings that attract new audiences at new junctures in their lives.

In alignment with the UW-Madison vision and strategic priorities, the Vice Provost for Lifelong Learning and other campus leaders have developed the first campus-wide strategic plan focused on the complete lifelong learner experience: Lifelong Learning 2020.

“Because the educational landscape is becoming more learner-driven and adult-focused—and to remain a global competitor—UW-Madison needs to be far more intentional in our thinking about access, audience, content, and delivery.”
—Jeffrey S. Russell, Vice Provost for Lifelong Learning, September 15, 2014

“It’s been more than a century since UW first coined ‘the Wisconsin Idea’ as a way to capture its enduring commitment to public outreach—and today, that commitment is stronger than ever. As one of the world’s top public universities, we are dedicated not only to building knowledge, but to sharing that knowledge with all of the people of the state to help drive economic growth and to make life better here.”
—Rebecca Blank, Chancellor
Lifelong Learning and the UW-Madison Vision

The Lifelong Learning 2020 plan is designed to align with and enhance UW-Madison’s vision to be “a model public university in the 21st century, serving as a resource to the public, and working to enhance the quality of life in the state, the nation, and the world”4.

Goal 1: UW-Madison will create opportunities for transformative experiences and meaningful learning with every lifelong learner across campus

- **Objective A:** Become an industry leader in delivering flexible, learner-driven, high-quality course/program offerings so anyone can be a Badger, anytime, anyplace
- **Objective B:** Establish clear pathways and increase accessibility for learners and contributors to participate in the educational experience
- **Objective C:** Establish and maintain a strong positive emotional connection to UW-Madison throughout the lifelong learner student and alumni lifecycle

Goal 2: UW-Madison will reach more lifelong learners annually campus-wide

- **Objective A:** Expand opportunities for lifelong learners
- **Objective B:** Expand the definition of and grow the pool of lifelong learners
- **Objective C:** Leverage marketing, communications, outreach, and engagement to expand and improve our learner reach

Goal 3: UW-Madison will generate additional annual lifelong learning revenue

- **Objective A:** Increase revenue through marketing and sales initiatives, grants, and donations
- **Objective B:** Assess credit and noncredit program offerings based on revenue potential and create new programs based on high demand and potential to generate new revenue
- **Objective C:** Create and maintain transparent, easy-to-understand, and actively managed finances

What is transformative learning?

Transformative learning helps individuals become independent thinkers by negotiating their own values, meanings, and purposes rather than acting on those of other people.5 Through transformative learning experiences, UW-Madison learners are better prepared to make decisions, be leaders in their industries, and show an increased commitment to lifelong learning.
As shown below, the Lifelong Learning 2020 goals align directly with the campus strategic priorities.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>UW-MADISON STRATEGIC PRIORITY</th>
<th>LIFELONG LEARNING 2020 GOAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational Experience</td>
<td>Create opportunities for transformative experiences and meaningful learning with every lifelong learner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research and Scholarship</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Our People</td>
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<td>The Wisconsin Idea</td>
<td>Reach more lifelong learners annually</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stewards of Our Resources</td>
<td>Generate additional annual lifelong learning revenue</td>
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Lifelong Learning 2020 centers around the needs of lifelong learners. Academic and infrastructure partners play an important role in ensuring that UW-Madison offers lifelong learners a better experience, with a better return on investment, than our competitors are able to provide. (See below and pages 6-7.)
Making Lifelong Learning a Reality: 
Supporting Initiatives

The launch of Lifelong Learning 2020 includes the following initial, emerging initiatives:

➤ **Create learner satisfaction, value, and engagement**
   Expand the use of sophisticated market research—Develop the right content at the right time for the right audience at the right price

➤ **Innovate for transformative learning**
   Evaluate campus space utilization to deliver lifelong learning programs—Bring lifelong learners to campus spaces that are currently underutilized across campus (evenings, weekends, summers) and better leverage the opportunities available to offer online education

➤ **Champion policies to support transformative learning**
   Expand financial aid and scholarship opportunities for lifelong learners—Help adult learners access higher education by overcoming financial barriers

➤ **Build a shared lifelong learner relationship management system**
   Develop a campus-wide customer relationship management (CRM) system for lifelong learners—Strengthen lifelong learners' commitment to UW-Madison by providing rapid and personalized responses, and by tracking their interests, concerns, and requirements

➤ **Establish a shared service support infrastructure**
   Deliver automated capability to scale-up blended and online education—Ensure that noncredit learners can, upon registration, immediately gain access to their online courses

➤ **Develop common reporting tools**
   Create a common framework for reporting on budgets, finances, and learner enrollments—Improve our ability to measure and analyze the impact of lifelong learning on campus

➤ **Form strategic partnerships**
   Align continuing education units—Enhance fiscal responsibility and better serve lifelong learners by leveraging shared resources

**Next Steps**

We look forward to collaborating with campus partners to ensure campus-wide implementation of Lifelong Learning 2020. Please contact the Vice Provost for Lifelong Learning to discuss ways to incorporate lifelong learning into your unit’s strategic plan.

**References**


Lifelong Learners Touch Every Part of UW-Madison

Through the combined expertise of UW-Madison’s academic and infrastructure partners, lifelong learners truly live the reality of our campus vision. Their experiences show that we are a model for others to follow, that we serve the needs of the public, and that we improve the lives of individuals and the communities in which they live.

Academic Partners

When we think of lifelong learners as central to our campus mission, it becomes clear that all academic partners will need to plan, collaborate, and cooperate. These partners design and develop the innovative creation, presentation, and application of curriculums that broaden the learner experience—and will enable us to attract a larger population of lifelong learners.
Infrastructure Partners

Our infrastructure partners provide the supportive services either directly to lifelong learners or behind the scenes to enhance the learning, or in some cases, to even make the learning enterprise possible.
For More Information

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