



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

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Financial assessment: UWO ‘responsive and decisive’ on deficit, has ‘substantially changed the trajectory of its financial situation’

(OSHKOSH)—A Universities of Wisconsin-supported consultant’s financial assessment of the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh describes the university’s significant deficit-reduction measures over the last several months as “responsive and decisive.” Additionally, the firm’s review urges adoption of academic restructuring proposals already designed by UWO faculty, staff and students to save additional administrative costs while reshaping colleges and launching new schools centered on Wisconsin career clusters.

The Universities of Wisconsin released UWO’s financial assessment along with those for six other UW institutions today. Stakeholders [can review them HERE](#).

“Current and prospective students need to know how UWO is responding to the challenging headwinds disrupting higher education everywhere,” Chancellor Andy Leavitt said. “The financial assessment is a powerful validation of the progress we have made, confronting UWO’s deficit head-on over the last several months. The report acknowledges our efforts to reduce an \$18 million gap to \$3 million through difficult but necessary measures while striving to shield student services and experiences. Consultants leading the independent review acknowledge the perfect storm of demographic, enrollment and fiscal pressures we have identified. And they conclude that [UWO’s Institutional Realignment Plan \(IRP\)](#) ‘has substantially changed the trajectory of its financial situation.’ We continue our important work to erase our deficit while maintaining laser-focus on student support and success.”

From December through March, the consulting firm undertook a deep dive into UWO’s finances, carefully examining and corroborating the magnitude of UWO’s deficit and the efficacy of its university deficit-reduction efforts since late last summer. The resulting assessment also identifies a series of additional opportunities—some well underway at UWO, such as two academic restructuring proposals scheduled for a faculty referendum this month—to help generate additional savings and hone the university’s appeal and distinctiveness in experiential learning.

UWO’s [academic planning initiative](#) generated [two new academic models](#) as proposals to not only reduce administrative costs but also to better align UWO’s distinctive academic units with nationally recognized career clusters already infused into Wisconsin’s K-12 school systems. In February, UWO Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Ed Martini unveiled the academic models—both reform UWO’s four colleges into three with a series of new schools under each—as the result of “significant analysis, input, feedback and discussion during an intensive and inclusive design and planning process led by representatives of the entire UWO community.”

Among its many findings, the UWO financial assessment concluded:

- UWO offers a solid academic portfolio blending liberal arts education with strong professional programs including nursing, business, education, engineering and others in alignment with regional and state workforce demands and prospects. The analysis notes 80 percent of degrees conferred by UWO in FY2023 aligned with the “Top 20 Hot Jobs” in its region requiring bachelor’s degrees identified by Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development.
- Consultants noted UWO’s distinctive and “rich employer ecosystem across manufacturing, education, and health care industries...,” adding that UWO has opportunities to enhance its distinctiveness in experiential-based education as a unique brand.
- UWO has an opportunity to strengthen its enrollment by better capitalizing on and yielding students from its dual enrollment program, the [Cooperative Academic Partnership Program \(CAPP\)](#), largest in the Universities of Wisconsin. This initiative, too, is already underway.
- UWO has opportunities to amplify its identity and success in NCAA Division III Athletics. In March, UWO Athletics reached another milestone, earning its 50th championship in UWO Gymnastics third-consecutive national title.

“We have more work to do, but UWO has responded to the challenges it faces and remains on the right path,” Martini said.

“Our faculty members are poised to, this month, recommend a futuristic and more efficient and effective academic structure that will drive what we call ‘UWO 2.0’ for decades to come. I thank the many faculty, staff and students who have invested so much time and thought into advancing new academic models that reimagine UWO’s structure and will typify UWO’s experiential learning distinctiveness in this economically and culturally vibrant Fox Valley region.”

Learn more:

[UWO Academic Planning](#)

[UWO Institutional Realignment Plan \(IRP\)](#)

[UWO2030 Strategic Plan](#)

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh is home to more than 9,000 undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students on three campuses. Student success is at the heart of UWO. Students benefit from personalized support with small class sizes, a wealth of academic and personal support services, and personalized career and academic advising. Oshkosh has been recently ranked as the No. 1 best college town and the No. 4 most livable small city in the United States, and students benefit from employment, entertainment and recreation of a thriving community and region. With a strong undergraduate research focus and national reputation for sustainability, Titans demonstrate on a daily basis what students can do to change the world. Learn more at uwosh.edu.