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# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 11, 2013

## **UW institutions approved to offer Flexible Option degrees**

*UW-Milwaukee and UW Colleges gain Higher Learning Commission approval*

MADISON, Wis. – Two University of Wisconsin institutions planning to offer self-paced, competency-based degrees via the [UW Flexible Option](#) have received permission to move forward from their accrediting authority, the [Higher Learning Commission](#) (HLC).

“This is an important step in our progress toward offering new Flexible Option degrees,” said UW System President Kevin P. Reilly. “It is a strong vote of confidence from our higher-education colleagues – one that follows intensive efforts by UW faculty and staff to launch this innovative learning platform in a manner that preserves high quality and academic rigor.”

[UW-Milwaukee](#) received permission to offer three bachelor’s degree programs and one certificate program:

- A bachelor’s degree for registered nurses who need additional college to qualify for higher professional credentials (master’s degree in nursing to come in fall 2014)
- A bachelor’s degree in diagnostic imaging (through the B.S. in Biomedical Sciences) for certified diagnostic imaging professionals
- A bachelor’s degree in information science and technology, preparing students for jobs in today’s digital culture and economy
- A certificate in professional and technical communication, providing students with the essential written and oral communication skills needed in the workplace

The [UW Colleges](#) received permission to offer the [Associate of Arts and Science](#) degree and certificate programs.

News of these approvals was announced today at the UW System Board of Regents meeting, where the Business, Finance, and Audit Committee is scheduled to vote on a tuition structure and schedule for UW Flexible Option degree programs. Students enrolled in the new programs will be able to choose an “all-you-can-learn” pricing option, which would cover financial aid, advising, tutoring and other support services normally available to UW students. Other students may choose an assessment-only option. The full Board is expected to act on those items tomorrow.



**HLC approves UW Flexible Option degrees  
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While additional steps must still be taken to complete the new offerings, UW leaders expressed confidence that the UW Flexible Option degrees will be open for enrollment in coming months.

“This is a complex undertaking, but we are committed to enrolling our first students before the end of this year,” said Ray Cross, Chancellor of UW Colleges and UW-Extension. “The Flexible Option is yet another way UW Colleges and our fellow UW institutions can extend college access to people of all ages in every corner of the state and beyond.”

“The Commission’s permission to move forward recognizes UW-Milwaukee’s strong tradition of innovation in the delivery of higher education,” said UWM Chancellor Michael R. Lovell. “Faculty and staff from these programs have maintained very high academic standards and now even more Wisconsin residents will be able to take advantage of their expertise.”

The UW Flexible Option is a joint undertaking of the UW System, UW-Milwaukee, UW Colleges and UW-Extension’s Division of Continuing Education, Online and E-Learning. See <http://flex.wisconsin.edu> for more information.

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