



**UW flexible option**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM

# 2020 - 2021

## Annual Report

[flex.wisconsin.edu](https://flex.wisconsin.edu)



As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, and as our personal and work lives adjust to “new normals,” it couldn’t be more clear that higher education needs to play a central role to provide adults with easily accessible, reputable, and skills-based training and education. Competency-based programs, like the UW Flexible Option, are one proven pathway that can help ensure an [equitable economic recovery](#) in the years to come.

The UW Flexible Option is a collaboration between the University of Wisconsin Extended Campus and the UW institutions. Now in its eighth year of enrolling students, the UW’s approach to competency-based education has proven to open opportunities for adults as they build and refine new professional and personal skills. By the time this report is published, UW Flexible Option will have graduated its 1,000th student!

Competency-based education focuses on students’ ability to demonstrate mastery of the knowledge and skills that employers are looking for. The programs are asynchronous and fully self-paced, making them ideal for those who are balancing work and family. Its flexible structure is not bound by semesters, meaning those looking to upskill or re-skill can earn an accredited UW degree more efficiently and effectively.

Our 2020-2021 academic year was our biggest year yet for the UW Flexible Option. Nearly 1,200 individual students enrolled across the ten degrees and certificates offered. We launched a new certificate in Health Care Informatics with UW-Milwaukee, and we rebuilt and relaunched our certificate in Project Management with UW-Parkside. By building new programs and continually improving existing ones, UW Flexible Option maintains its ability to meet the diverse needs of adult learners in an ever-changing world.

The focus in this annual report is on the stories of our students. I continue to find their stories of persistence a potent reminder of the “why” behind our work. When we recently surveyed our students to learn more about their motivations to earn their degree, the top three reasons were to (1) achieve a long-time personal goal, (2) set an example for their family, and (3) feel a greater sense of fulfillment. Earning a UW degree or certificate is a powerful economic tool -- but it has equal power to deeply impact individuals and families at a personal level.

I continue to be proud of the work of our faculty and staff across our UW partners for building and growing these innovative programs that facilitate the achievements of Wisconsin’s adult learners, and I look forward to the innovations yet to come.



Aaron Brower, Ph.D.  
Executive Director | UW Extended Campus  
Senior Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs | UW System Administration

## These innovative features make the UW Flexible Option a great choice for adult learners:

- » **Start any month of the year.**  
Instead of enrolling in traditional semesters, take advantage of flexible “subscription periods.” These are approximately 12 weeks long, and new subscription periods start every month. This means you can earn your degree on your own timeline, and take breaks without penalty. The sooner you start, the sooner you can finish.
- » **Study 100% online.**  
Programs are fully online and asynchronous. This means there are no live class times, and you can complete your courses when you have time.
- » **Build on existing knowledge and experience.**  
UW Flexible Option programs are competency-based. This means you are evaluated on your mastery of necessary knowledge and skills, not on how much time you spend in a class. If you already know the material, you can progress more quickly. If you are struggling with a concept and need more time to study before you complete an assessment, take as much time as you need.
- » **Earn a genuine University of Wisconsin credential.**  
All UW Flexible Option programs are offered by regionally-accredited University of Wisconsin institutions. They were created by the same respected UW faculty, using the same rigorous UW quality standards. These are programs that employers will recognize and respect.
- » **Your tuition will not increase.**  
The Flex Tuition Guarantee means your tuition will not increase as long as you are actively enrolled in the program. With our popular flat-rate tuition model, what you see is what you’ll pay from start to finish.
- » **Receive personalized support.**  
In the UW Flexible Option programs, you progress through your coursework on your own independent schedule. Along the way, your dedicated mentor - called an Academic Success Coach - and your course faculty will ensure you have the level of support you need to be successful.



# Associate of Arts & Sciences



The Associate of Arts & Science (AAS) is a broad-based liberal arts degree that gives its graduates a strong foundation for success in both the workplace and in future academic pursuits. AAS students demonstrate essential skills in areas such as critical thinking and communication, as well as a breadth of content-specific knowledge in social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, mathematics, and fine arts.

The AAS degree is ideal for students who plan to pursue a bachelor's degree but need to first satisfy general education requirements: it can be applied to over 200 baccalaureate majors at all thirteen UW System schools. That makes this program an excellent choice for adults who are looking to go back to school and make progress toward a bachelor's degree, but maybe are not sure of which bachelor's degree they want to choose.

In 2020-2021, the AAS program posted both its highest retention rate and highest enrollment numbers since launching in 2014. In addition to these achievements in program growth and quality, the program faculty revised a half dozen courses to ensure the program materials stay updated with the latest information. Three brand new courses were developed this year, SPA 102x (Second Semester Spanish), BIO 190x (Introduction to Environmental Sciences), and CTA 210x (Introduction to Intercultural Communications).

## Here's How an Associate Degree Can Help You Earn a Bachelor's Degree

Returning to school to earn a degree can be intimidating. You may be wondering how you'll fit classes into your busy schedule, how you'll be able to afford a degree, or how to narrow down your interests to one program.

An associate degree program can serve as a **bridge to a bachelor's degree** in many ways. An associate degree allows you to complete general education requirements, fine-tune your interests, and—perhaps most importantly—gain confidence in your ability to be successful in an educational program.

An associate degree is an educational credential between a high school diploma or GED certificate and a bachelor's degree. On average, associate programs are 60 credits and take 2-3 years to complete. The degree is focused on equipping you with foundational knowledge and skills—such as critical thinking, oral and written communication, and resourcefulness. These skills, among so many others across the liberal arts, will prepare you to be successful in your next steps, whether that's a bachelor's degree or employment.

Completing an associate degree can make the **transition to a bachelor's degree program** feel less daunting. You'll get a feel for courses and figure out the best way to fit them into your schedule.

You'll also learn to navigate course registration, financial aid, and support services—all skills needed in bachelor's programs.

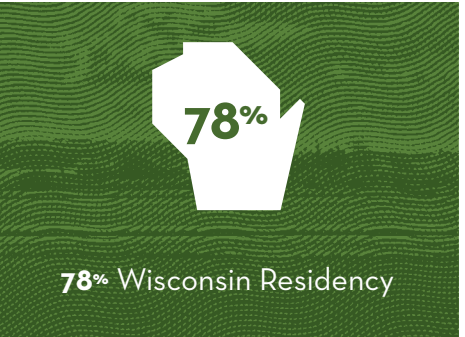
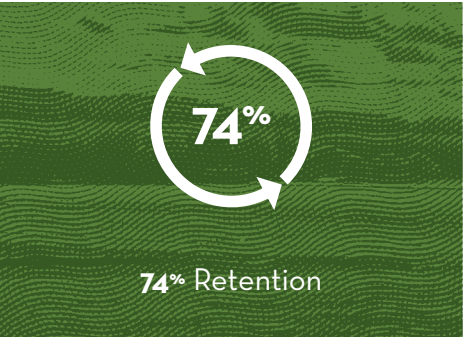
An associate degree is completed in a much shorter time than a bachelor's, making the transition seem more attainable. An educational program takes time and commitment, and you can get a glimpse into what a bachelor's degree schedule would look like for you while completing your associate degree. A liberal arts associate degree program features a wide range of topics, including courses in English, arts and humanities, computing, math, natural science, and social science, among many more, to help you narrow down a field of interest if you haven't yet decided on one.

Courses in a liberal arts associate degree program are often transferable to four-year institutions to fulfill general education credits, which primarily make up the first two years in most bachelor's degree programs. For example, all credits earned from the [online UW-Milwaukee Associate of Arts and Sciences \(AAS\) degree offered through UW Flexible Option](#) are fully transferable to all University of Wisconsin campuses. Your associate degree lays the foundation for more than 200 bachelor degree majors, giving you a wide variety of subjects to choose from.

After earning your AAS through the UW Flexible Option, check out some of the great online bachelor's degree completion programs in the University of Wisconsin System



See the entire catalog of bachelor's degree programs at <https://uwex.wisconsin.edu/degrees-programs/>





# Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

The first UW Flexible Option bachelor's degree offered in partnership with UW-Parkside, the innovative Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) degree provides students a well-rounded management education. In this program, students master 20 competency areas that are essential to successful business administration. Students experience a project-based curriculum, which is designed to mimic scenarios that students will experience in their workplace.

Offered by the College of Business, Economics, and Computing, the BSBA degree is the first and only AACSB-accredited competency-based degree. AACSB International is the gold standard of business education accreditors, with fewer than 5% of programs internationally meeting their high standard. Additionally, this program broke new ground by becoming the first competency-based degree to pass AACSB's rigorous Continuous Improvement Review.

In 2020-2021, this program received approval from the U.S. Department of Education to award federal financial aid. This major accomplishment will help even more students affordably earn their bachelor's degree. Additionally, the faculty revised one third of the program curriculum courses to bring innovative new techniques to teach the latest concepts in the business field, showcasing their commitment to ensuring adult learners earn a career-focused and relevant education. Lastly, with the redevelopment of the Project Management Certificate (see page 14), BSBA students can now earn an industry-valued certificate as they earn their bachelor's degree.



208 Unique Headcount in FY21




62% Retention




7 Graduates



2019 Program Launch Date



35 Median Age



75% Wisconsin Residency

## UW Flexible Option Graduate Says Business Administration Degree Launched Her “Redemption Career”

Gabrielle took charge of her future when she graduated from the AACSB accredited UW-Parkside Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) program and completed the Project Management Certificate, offered through the UW Flexible Option. Both diploma and certificate are now framed in her office.

“They are on the sides of my work laptop, where it feels like a trifecta of completing a huge stage in my life,” she said.

Gabrielle is the director of business development at General Dynamics Information Technology, for Federal Financial Agencies. She landed the role less than a month after graduating from the BSBA program this spring.

“My current career is 100% a testament to what I have learned in the UW Flexible Option program,” Gabrielle said. “I have a solid platform to launch from, which is far from what I could say before I started the program.”

When Gabrielle first enrolled in the UW Flexible Option BSBA program, she was an account executive for a major fitness brand. At the time, she was based out of Seattle, Washington, with a fluctuating work schedule that catered to clients' needs.

Both the job market and the fitness industry were becoming increasingly competitive. Gabrielle was worried. Although her undergraduate degrees in philosophy and theology helped her work collaboratively with clients, she lacked the technical and business skills needed to advance her career.

“I knew that if I wanted to make a shift, I needed to do it now,” Gabrielle said. “I did a lot of research on programs, knowing that I really

needed something that was just as flexible for my work and lifestyle, which is why the UW Flexible Option program worked so well for me.”

Gabrielle Rivera is now based in the Washington D.C. area as a director of business development.

The 100% online aspect of the UW Flexible Option BSBA program piqued Gabrielle's interest. When she learned of the program's self-paced format and that many of her college credits would transfer, she eagerly applied.

Today, her coursework from the program's innovative competency-based curriculum has come full circle, as she applies her knowledge and experience directly to her director position.

“To now have such a deep accounting background has helped me gain a lot of confidence,” Gabrielle said. “In my current role, colleagues often give Excel spreadsheet presentations, and I have to be able to ask the important questions, to peel back the layers of the data and really understand how we are going to positively affect the business with that information—how we are going to turn something around or solve a problem. I know I can do that now.”

Along with her gained accounting and IT skills, Gabrielle wanted to expand her project management experience. Virtually everyone she worked with had their project management certificate, so she knew she needed it to keep up.

Ariel Powers-Schaub, Gabrielle's Academic Success Coach, advised her to supplement her BSBA degree with the UW-Parkside Project Management Certificate—offered by UW Flexible Option.

The certificate is also 100% online and a self-paced format. Gabrielle worked on the certificate while completing coursework for her BSBA degree and found the two greatly complemented each other, rounding out her education. She is the first BSBA graduate to concurrently complete the degree and the certificate.

As focused as Gabrielle was to earn her UW-Parkside degree and certificate, the commitment proved to be a juggling act. She credits the flexibility of the program for keeping her on track, especially last fall when her family made a major cross-country move to the east coast.

Gabrielle started interviewing for her current role shortly before graduating. She felt prepared and confident. She not only was qualified but also had just completed coursework and projects that directly applied to the position. This self-proclaimed “redemption career” has renewed Gabrielle's drive and fulfillment in her work. Now, five months into her director role, Gabrielle is grateful her hard work has paid off, and she plans to apply for MBA programs next spring.

When she thinks of prospective UW Flexible Option BSBA students, Gabrielle hopes that they are not scared to apply and to invest in themselves and their futures.

“It's going to be tough, I definitely had some challenges,” she said. “But, if you already knew everything, you would already have the degree. Stay the course. Stay persistent. And, don't hesitate to reach out if you need anything, because the coaches and professors care, and they are more than willing to help!”



# Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN)



The UW Flexible Option Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program is a convenient, innovative option for RN-licensed nurses to earn their bachelor's degree. Offered through the UW-Milwaukee College of Nursing—a nursing college in the top 15% of the nation—this program helps nurses build on their work experience and their associate degree to more quickly earn their BSN. Students master a range of competencies that are in demand across the healthcare industry, such as evidence-based practice, community health nursing, and chronic care management.

The year 2020-2021 was undeniably challenging for the nursing industry in Wisconsin and across the country, as nurses and other frontline healthcare professionals dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic. Our students spoke about the difficulty in balancing school and the extra stressors at work. In recognition of their efforts on the frontline, the UW System offered scholarships to the UW Flexible Option BSN students. Despite the challenges of this year, over 300 nurses enrolled in the BSN program and made progress toward their degree. Additionally, in the past year the program welcomed a new academic director, Nicole Simonson, DNP, RN, who brings experience in acute care and interprofessional education. This program also created a process for prospective students to receive a pre-admissions credit evaluation.

## Busy Nurse Finds Opportunity to Complete Degree through UW Flexible Option

Jeanette Williams knew she didn't have the time to jump head-first back into school, but that didn't stop her. Instead of finding a way to fit her busy life as a working mom into a program, she found an online degree that catered to her needs: the [University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Bachelor of Science in Nursing](#), which is offered through the UW Flexible Option. She took one course per subscription period online, completing her BSN in three years.

While her kids were young, Jeanette took nursing prerequisite courses part-time at UW-Parkside. After moving, she enrolled in an associate degree program in nursing at Blackhawk Technical College in Janesville, Wisconsin.

Upon completion of her associate degree, she took a job as a registered nurse at the Monroe Clinic Hospital. The hospital required her to enroll in a bachelor's in nursing degree program. Having completed prerequisite courses years before, Jeanette also felt motivated to finish her degree.

"I had already started a bachelor's program and felt like it was silly to not finish it," she said.

The UW-Milwaukee BSN program came out on top as Jeanette was researching where to finish her degree. While she was drawn to the program's affordability, 100% online format, and 12-week subscription periods, she was thrilled that all of her prerequisite courses taken at UW-Parkside transferred.

Even with years of experience in the field, Jeanette found the courses were engaging and relevant.

"I have heard other BSN-prepared nurses discuss their programs as 'busy work' or not learning much, if anything from them. I can happily say that this has not been the case with this program," she said. "I have learned a lot and have had the opportunity to apply new things to my work."

To manage her time, Jeanette looked ahead at her 12-week subscription period and scheduled when she would work

on assignments in advance. Planning kept her accountable, while also ensuring she had time for family and friends.

Jeanette also had support built into the program. [Blake Bishop](#), her Academic Success Coach, was always available to answer her questions and help in any capacity that he could: "He's very encouraging and was always asking about how my course was going and planning future classes," she said.

The courses helped Jeanette refine her healthcare interests: "When I started [the program], I was thinking about going into public health nursing," she said "I took the public health class and decided it was absolutely not for me."

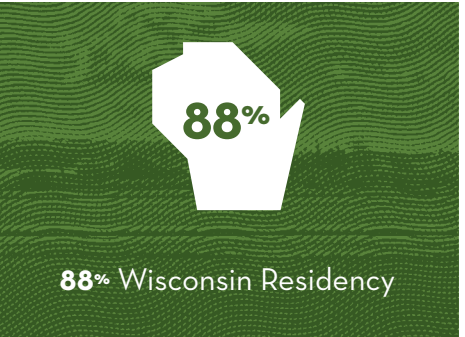
Instead, she shifted her focus to mental health. While in her associate degree program, Jeanette was introduced to mental health topics and enjoyed the courses, but got the opportunity to dive deeper into the topic during NURS 448: Mental Health Nursing Across the Care Continuum, an elective course in the BSN program.

Seeing the opportunities and increased needs in the mental health field, Jeanette now has her eyes set on a psychiatry graduate program.

"It's just nice to finally have my bachelor's degree done and then to have the option of being able to go back to do what I really want to do ultimately," she said.

Jeanette loved the UW Flexible Option BSN program so much that she recommends it to coworkers who also need to complete their bachelor's degrees.

"I've prompted at least four or five nurses that I work with to enroll in the program," she said. "It is a rock-solid program in my personal experience."





Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences:

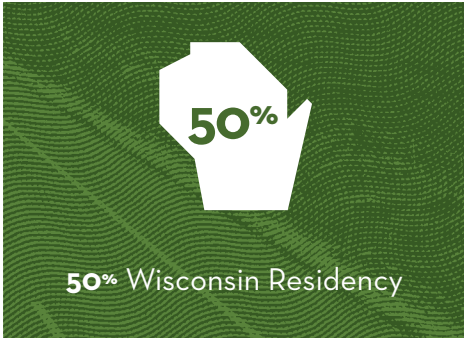
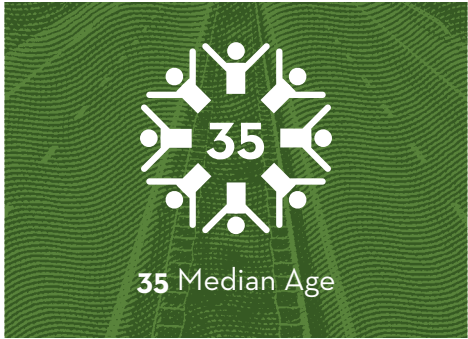
# Diagnostic Imaging

## Health Sciences

The Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences: Diagnostic Imaging, offered by UW-Milwaukee College of Health Sciences, is a degree completion program for medical imaging professionals. Building off of an active registry in the field, this degree prepares sonographers, radiologists, MRI technicians, and other imaging professionals to take their career to the next level. In the curriculum, students study a range of skills—such as healthcare leadership, client diversity, and human pathophysiology—which ensures students are staying on top of the in-demand skills that employers are looking for.

The UW-Milwaukee College of Health Sciences offers a second degree completion program in the UW Flexible Option, a Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences: Health Sciences. This program is for students who currently have 60 transferable credits, or an associate degree, and are looking to finish their bachelor's degree. This broad-based degree is ideal for students to advance their career in a diverse array of healthcare settings, such as hospitals, general care facilities, public and private agencies, nonprofits, and other health-related organizations. This degree can also be the foundation for students interested in advanced healthcare degree programs.

In 2020-2021, these programs saw 18% year-over-year growth in enrollments, as interest in the healthcare field continues to grow. Furthermore, the Health Sciences degree received approval this year to award federal financial aid, which will help increase access to this program. The program faculty have continued to review the coursework to ensure the program delivery is as efficient as possible.



## “Flexible and Accommodating” Diagnostic Imaging Degree Completion Program Helps Graduate Get Promotion

Christina Lozano needed to finish her bachelor's degree in medical imaging as quickly as possible to earn a much-desired promotion. She was working full-time and wanted to prioritize work-life balance and her family. After researching a lot of programs, UW-Milwaukee's 100% online Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences: Diagnostic Imaging degree program offered through UW Flexible Option rose to the top of Christina's list.

“You'd be hard pressed to find a program that is this flexible and this accommodating for the price,” Christina said.

Using her more than 20 years of experience in the medical imaging field and strong determination, Christina flew through the program and finished her bachelor's degree in just 15 months—saving both time and money.

Christina enjoyed helping students learn how to use diagnostic equipment in previous positions, but she didn't decide to pursue teaching until after she faced her own illness.

“I had some really great medical help, and I had some not-so-great medical help,” Christina said. “These inconsistencies inspired me to want to teach patient care. I want to show technologists how they're supposed to be, and why it makes a difference to patients.”

Christina was hired in 2015 as a part-time adjunct instructor in medical imaging at the College of Lake County in Grayslake, Illinois. She loved teaching at the college and was thrilled when a full-time tenure track faculty position became available at the same institution. However, she was missing one important

qualification: a bachelor's degree. And, she needed it fast in order to be considered for the position.

The UW-Milwaukee Diagnostic Imaging program, offered through UW Flexible Option, is an ideal fit for working adults who are looking for an opportunity to choose their own learning schedules. Christina took full advantage of the “All-You-Can-Learn” option—which allows students to take as many courses as they want during a 12-week subscription period—taking at least three courses each subscription period. “I loved having the flexibility to say: ‘I don't have to wait 12 weeks for this class to be over,’” Christina said.

The UW Flexible Option's competency-based format allowed Christina to use her experience in the medical imaging field to complete courses faster.

The Diagnostic Imaging program also helped her gain confidence in her skills and knowledge, and it reinforced what she learned from working in the field for more than two decades.

“I would impress myself. I'd be like, ‘Oh, I do know how to do that,’ or ‘I know how this would work or how this applies,’” Christina said. “That was so encouraging for myself.”

Despite her accelerated pace in the program, Christina was able to build meaningful relationships.

“I was on as fast of a track as the UW Flexible Option program allowed, but I had really great experiences with all of my instructors, my professors, and my academic success coach, Jane,” Christina said. “I can't speak enough about it.”

Academic Success Coach Jane Schimmel was always available to

help Christina with anything she needed, including scheduling courses. Christina also connected with her professors, Susan Stalewski, the UW-Milwaukee College of Health Sciences' Director of Academic Initiatives and Planning, and Jayne Wisniewski, discussing everything from homework assignments to program advancement.

Even though she finished the program quickly, Christina doesn't think that students have to progress toward the degree as fast as she did.

“If somebody wanted to, they could take their time,” Christina said. “However, I would say it's hard to find a program this flexible. I've looked everywhere. I know the other programs that are out there.”

The Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences: Diagnostic Imaging degree completion program is offered through the UW-Milwaukee College of Health Sciences. It is designed for licensed imaging professionals who are looking to build on their training and advance to the baccalaureate level. As a student, you will take a wide array of courses, including diagnostic medicine, business and technical communication, and pathophysiology. They are all taught by expert UW System faculty.



# Bachelor of Science in Information Science & Technology



The UW Flexible Option Bachelor of Science in Information Science & Technology (IST) program, offered by UW-Milwaukee's School of Information Studies, prepares students to be IT leaders in this increasingly digital economy. This curriculum emphasizes core IT skills like front-end web design, database management, information architecture, human-computer interaction, information organization, storage and retrieval, and applications of the Internet. This program is specifically designed for industry professionals with at least one year of IT experience, and its competency-based environment is ideal for these professionals to leverage their experience to more quickly progress toward their degree.

In addition to earning a bachelor's degree, students in this program have two unique certificate options: the Business & Technical Communications Certificate and the Health Care Informatics Certificate, both offered by UW-Milwaukee in the UW Flexible Option (page 13 & 14). Graduates who earn these certificates gain additional, in-demand specialized skills for a competitive advantage in the workplace. Students choose the certificates to further a specific interest area that is complementary to IT. Also new in 2020-2021, this bachelor's degree offers prospective students an unofficial credit evaluation so they can have a better idea of how their transfer credits fit into this degree.

## Determined UW Flexible Option Grad Furthers Education with UW Data Science Degree

In 2015, Madison, Wisconsin resident, Tim Drexler, a delivery operations support manager at South Central Library System, began looking for a degree that would prepare him for a more technology-focused career. As a self-described "Evolving Data Scientist," Tim knew an online program would work best for his busy schedule. He considered a local technical college, but it offered programs with in-person class requirements that didn't fit into his life.

However, [University of Wisconsin Flexible Option](#) caught his eye, especially its 100% online Information Science and Technology (IST) bachelor's degree. It felt like an attainable next step that worked with Tim's goals and around his work/life schedule.

It took Tim only 13 months to graduate from the **UW Flexible Option IST program** with a UW-Milwaukee bachelor's degree.


"I can definitely say that I wouldn't have made it through the UW Flexible Option without (Academic Success Coach) [Danielle Stertz's](#) help," Tim said. "She was a great advocate and was always there to answer questions. I had some tough moments in that program, and I wouldn't have pulled through without her support."

This educational milestone motivated Tim to consider pursuing a master's degree in data science. In 2018, he enrolled into the 100% online [UW Master of Science in Data Science](#) program (UW MSDS).


"UW Flexible Option was really good preparation for online learning in general," Tim said. "I had experience within the learning system, and I knew how to motivate myself and manage my time, which are skills I continue to use in UW MSDS."

Read Tim's full story on the [UW Master of Science in Data Science website](#).


Like Tim, you too can earn this B.S. in Information Science & Technology from UW-Milwaukee and be well-prepared for advanced graduate studies. Here are a few examples of online master's degrees in technology fields that are designed specifically for adult learners.




M.S. in Applied Biotechnology




M.S. in Cybersecurity




M.S. in Data Science




M.S. in Information Technology Management




Library & Information Science (MLIS)




M.S. in Information Science & Technology




**186** Unique Headcount in FY21




**66%** Retention




**137** Graduates



**2014** Program Launch Date



**40** Median Age



**66%** Wisconsin Residency



## Business & Technical Communications Certificate

In today's economy, it is more important than ever for workers to have a diverse array of skills and be flexible in their professional areas. The Business and Technical Communications Certificate takes an innovative approach with helping students develop practical skills in writing, research, communication, and technologies that will enable students to improve their skills for working. Over six courses (18 credits), students master skills in strategic writing, technical communications, project management, and information design. This certificate can either be taken as a stand-alone credential, to supplement a different bachelor's degree, or to satisfy elective requirements in other UW Flexible Option programs.

## Project Management Certificate

Project management skills are essential in nearly every industry, and they increase the value of employees regardless of their formal title. As a result, today's employers are looking for employees who can independently manage complex projects both large and small. This certificate is focused on the knowledge and skills necessary to competently manage projects from start to finish. The curriculum covers both the technical and interpersonal skills managing projects and project teams. This certificate can be earned as a stand-alone credential, or students enrolled in UW-Parkside's Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, also offered in the UW Flexible Option, can earn this certificate as part of their bachelor's degree. Students graduate ready to leverage their project management skills in the workplace right away. In 2020-2021, this certificate was entirely rebuilt to ensure it remains aligned to the latest standards of the Project Management Institute (PMI).

## Substance Use Disorders Counseling Certificate

In partnership with UW-Madison's Division of Continuing Studies, this noncredit certificate is specifically designed for practitioners in Wisconsin looking to become certified as a Substance Abuse Counselor (SAC). Drug overdoses and cases of substance abuse and addiction continue to increase, impacting hundreds of thousands of Wisconsinites and their families. Every community in the state - and especially rural ones - have an increasing need for Substance Abuse Counselors to help close the treatment gap. The COVID-19 pandemic has proven that now more than ever, Wisconsin needs more licensed professionals to help meet the substance abuse crisis head-on.

This highly successful program has over 400 graduates so far, with several dozen more actively enrolled. It is designed for human service professionals with a bachelor's degree in a behavioral health related field, who can use this certification to build off their existing counseling training to more efficiently help address substance use disorders. It satisfies the 360 hour specialized educational requirement by the state of Wisconsin to become a SAC. Building off of successful partnership in previous years, in 2020-2021 this program built new partnerships directly with several clinics and health agencies to help their clinicians expand their scope of practice and become dually licensed.

## Health Care Informatics Certificate

The UW Flexible Option's newest program, this 18-credit certificate offered by UW-Milwaukee, combines competencies in health care leadership and information technology. A collaborative effort between three different colleges at UW-Milwaukee, students can enroll in this certificate as a stand-alone offering or earn it along the way to their bachelor's degree. Now more than ever, the healthcare industry needs professionals who are skilled in managing IT and well-versed in the unique needs of healthcare systems. This certificate is a great fit for current IT professionals seeking to change industries into healthcare; or for existing healthcare practitioners interested in expanding their role into IT. Students learn skills in health informatics, data analysis, healthcare technology, and healthcare ethics.



# Ready to Learn More?

Here's how you get in touch.

Interested in pursuing a program?

Call **608-262-2011** or email [flex@uwex.edu](mailto:flex@uwex.edu)  
to speak to an adviser.

Interested in partnering with us?

Email [flex@uwex.edu](mailto:flex@uwex.edu)



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