

# Competency Based Education and the UW Flexible Option

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Aaron Brower

Provost and Vice Chancellor

University of Wisconsin – Extension

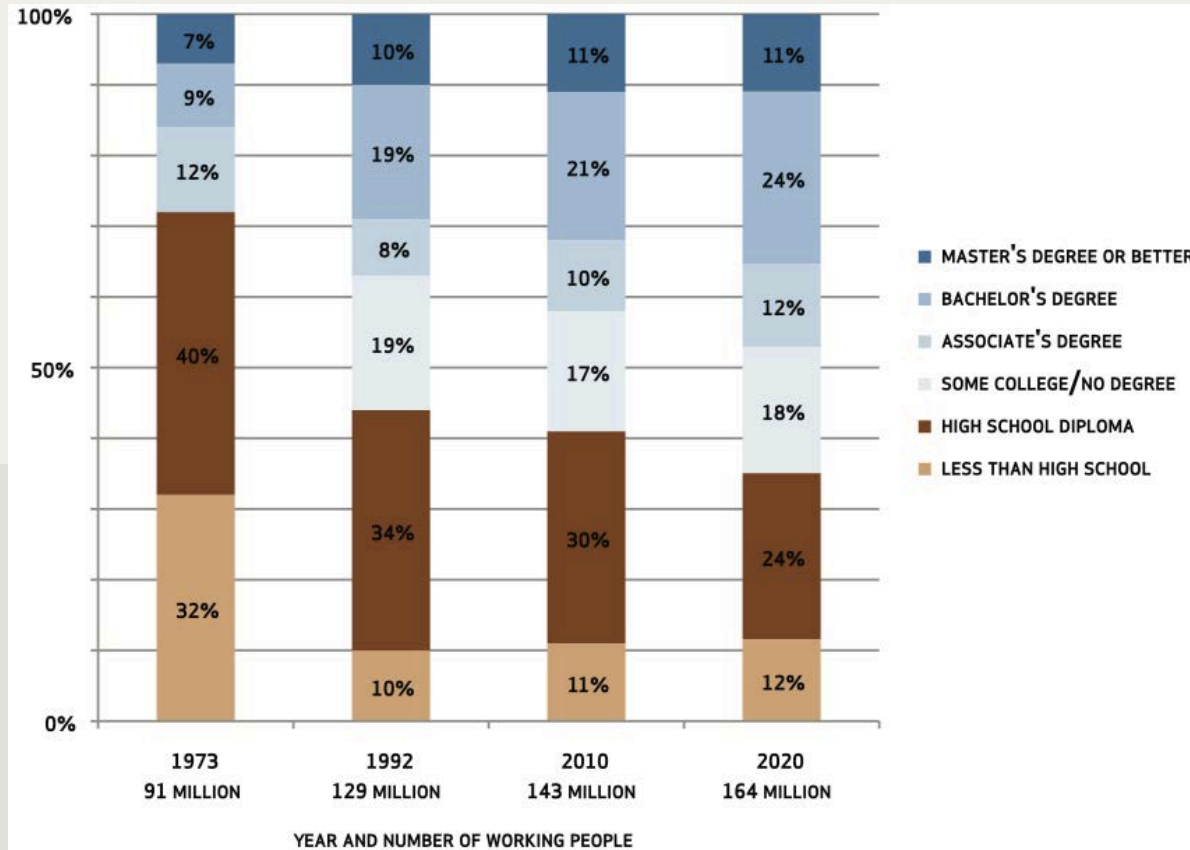
[aaron.brower@uwex.edu](mailto:aaron.brower@uwex.edu)

# Why is CBE so Hot Now?

## The Transition in Higher Ed

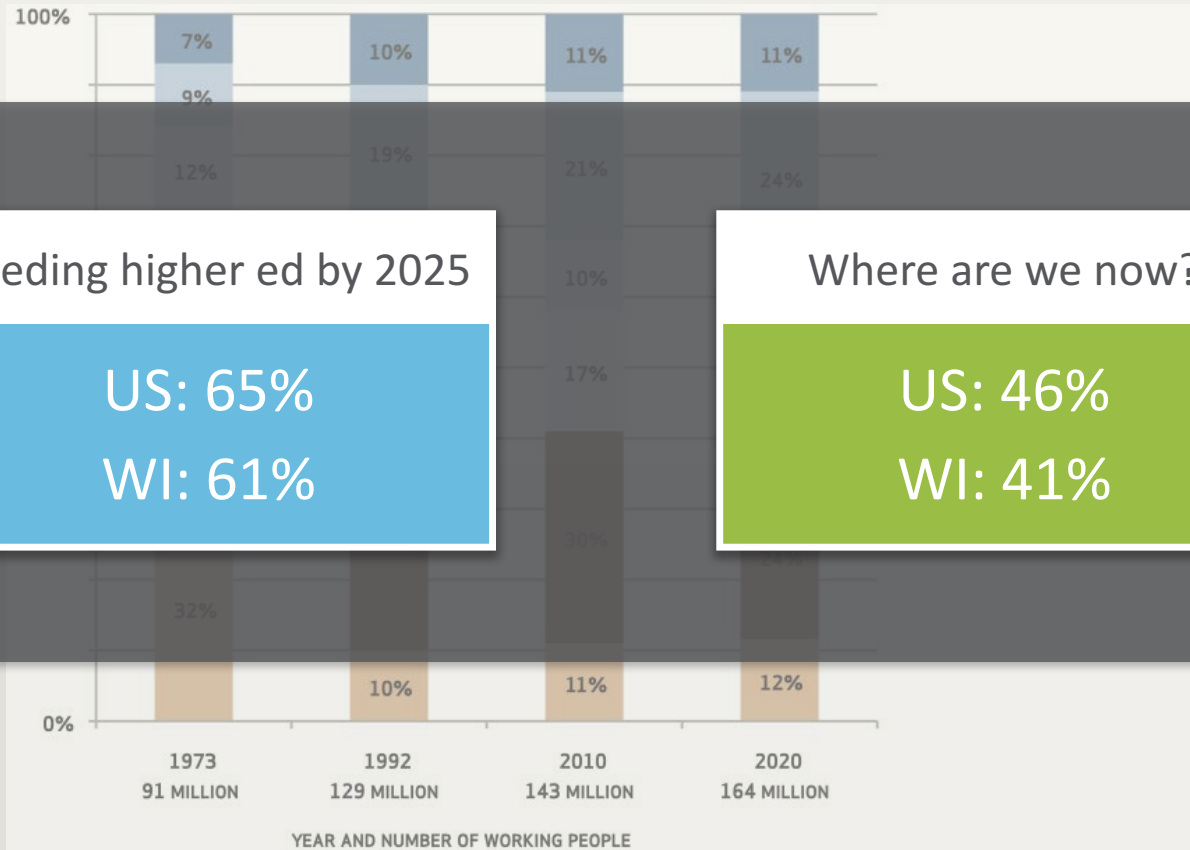
1. Increased need for higher ed
2. Demographics of those seeking higher ed
3. State funding and fiscal models
4. Technology

# 2020 Jobs Require More Education



Source: Carnevale, Anthony P. et al. (2013). Recovery: Job growth and education requirements through 2020. [https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.FR\\_Web\\_.pdf](https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.FR_Web_.pdf)

# 2020 Jobs Require More Education



Needing higher ed by 2025

US: 65%  
WI: 61%

Where are we now?

US: 46%  
WI: 41%

Source: Carnevale, Anthony P. et al. (2013). Recovery: Job growth and education requirements through 2020. [https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.FR\\_Web\\_.pdf](https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.FR_Web_.pdf)

- 15.6 million undergrads in 2001
- 18.1 million undergrads in 2011
- 20.3 million by 2021

More students are seeking higher ed than ever before

Source: [http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/coe\\_cha.pdf](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/coe_cha.pdf)







Only 15-25% are “Traditional” Students



- 75-85% not full-time, not 18-24, not living in or around campus
- 33% undergrads work full-time & 44% work part-time
- Nearly 25% undergrads are parents
- 38% are over age 25 and 25% are over 30

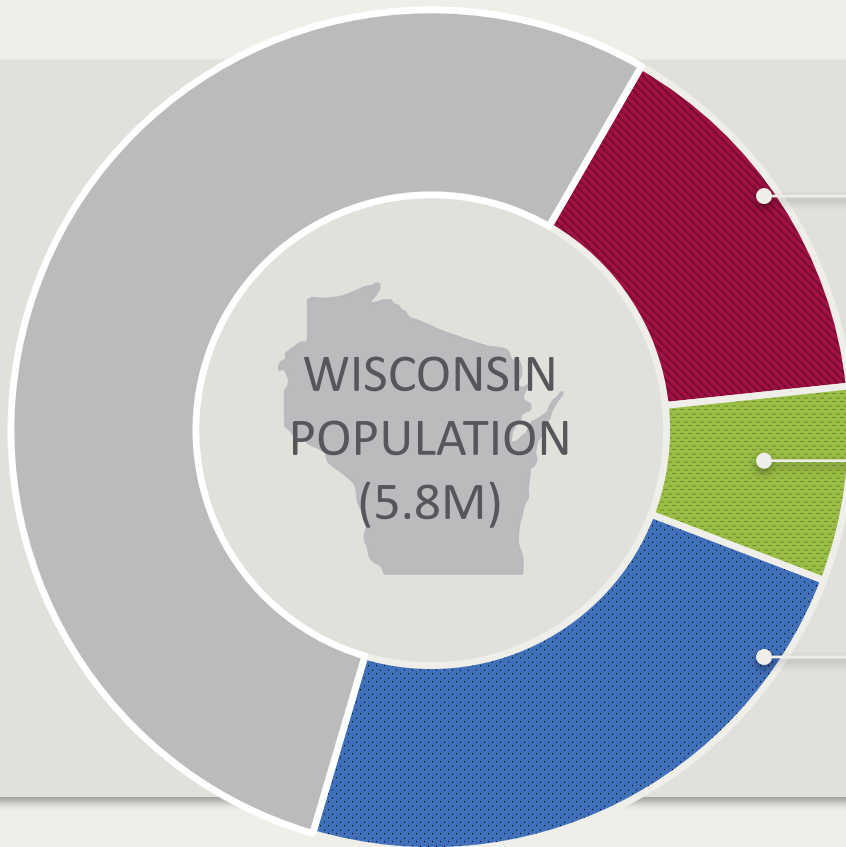
Only 15-25% are “Traditional” Students

Source: ACE President Molly Broad Feb. 2013 presentation to UW Board of Regents, <http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Documents/Post-Traditional-Learners.pdf>

- 43% attend 2-year colleges
- About half of degrees awarded are “sub-baccalaureate”

Only 15-25% are “Traditional” Students

Source: ACE President Molly Broad Feb. 2013 presentation to UW Board of Regents, <http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Documents/Post-Traditional-Learners.pdf>



**12%**

Adults enrolled in higher ed in last 2 years

**6%**

Adults currently enrolled, any source  
(public, private, profit, nonprofit)

**19%**

Adults who think about enrolling in higher ed  
at least once/week

## What will attract more students? *What do students want?*

- 60% of nontraditional students are driven by career advancement
- 70% are focused on lower tuition and fees
- 51% identified self-paced completion as very important
- 47% want and need credit for life/work experience through an exam
- 44% want accelerated completion options
- 43% want options to test out of courses for faster completion

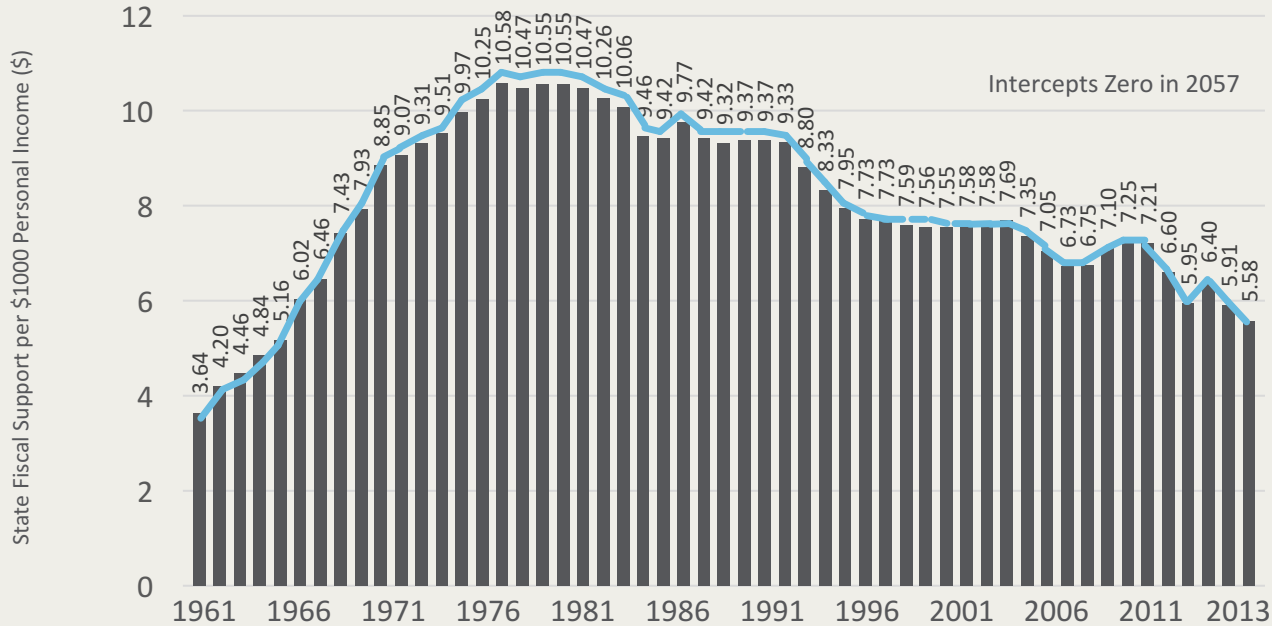
Source: Closing the Degree Completion Gap: Challenges and Opportunities, Eduventures, May 2014.

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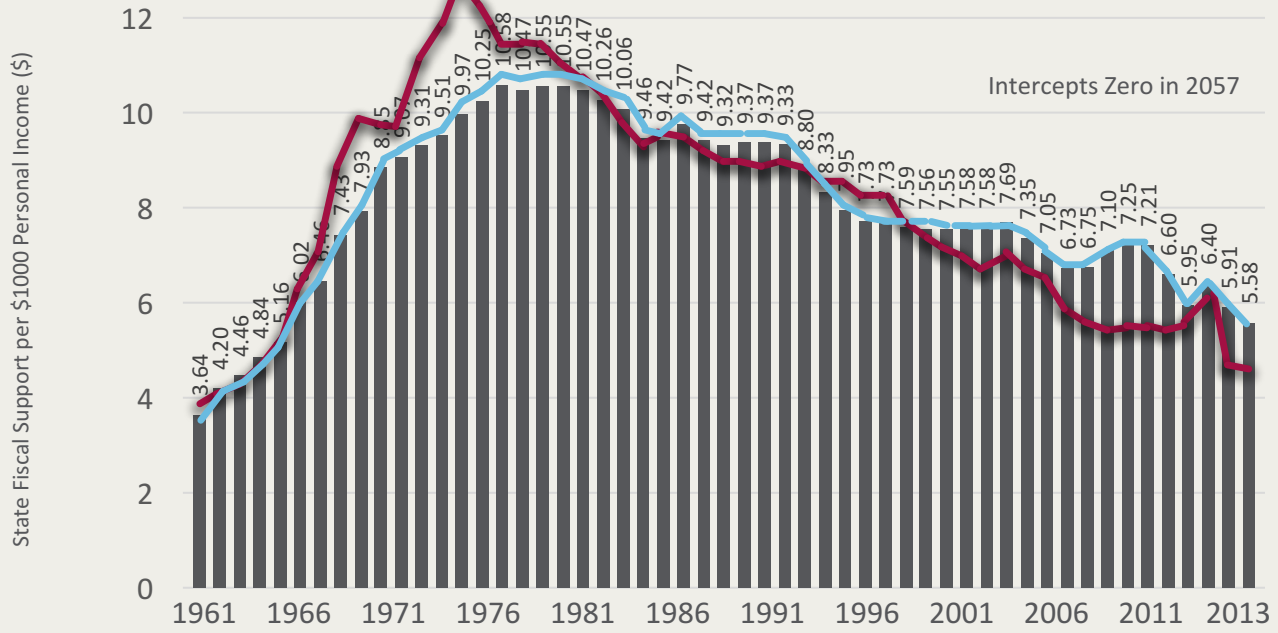
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## State Fiscal Support for Higher Education per \$1000 of Personal Income FY1961 to FY2013



Source: Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education, February 2013.

State Fiscal Support for Higher Education per \$1000 of Personal Income  
FY1961 to FY2013



Wisconsin Fiscal Support for Higher Education per \$1000 of Personal Income  
FY1961 to FY2013

Source: Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education, February 2013.

# What Happens in an Internet Minute?



## And Future Growth is Staggering





In Google world, classrooms go from this...



To this...



# The Future of Public Higher Education

- Accessible to new populations – adult & returning students will grow the pie
- Need for new funding models, particularly for public education
- Built around project based learning
- Blended learning – using technology and face-to-face wisely

THE  
*Higher Education*  
**MINDSHIFT**

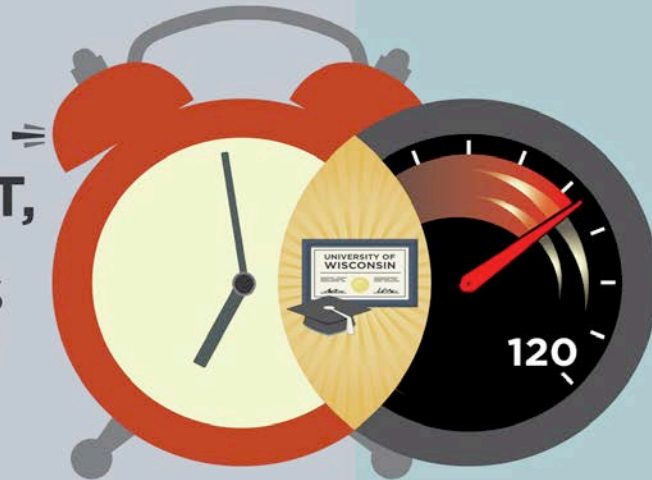
**CREDIT-HOUR**

**FOCUS ON TEACHING**

**COMPETENCY-BASED**

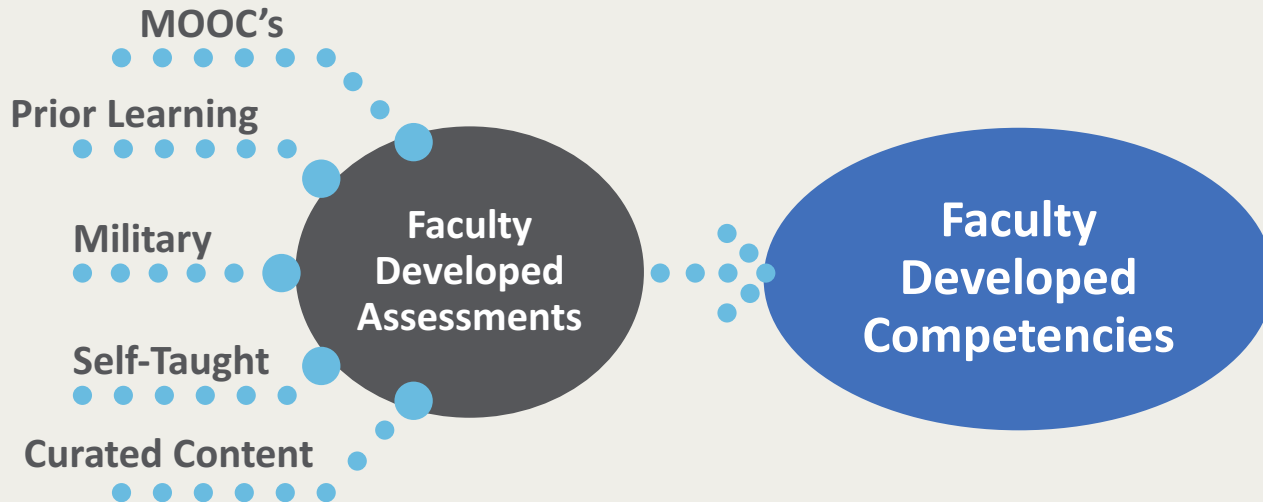
**FOCUS ON LEARNING**

TIME IS  
**CONSTANT,**  
BUT  
LEARNING IS  
**VARIABLE**



TIME IS  
**VARIABLE,**  
BUT  
LEARNING IS  
**CONSTANT**

# Direct Assessment CBE





flex.wiscconsin.edu



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# Flex YOUR POTENTIAL.

Earn a University of Wisconsin degree at your pace, on your schedule, using knowledge you already have.

*Find out if the UW Flexible Option is right for you!*

[TAKE THE FLEX FIT SURVEY](#)



## YOU'RE SMART.

**Hardworking. You have the potential to go far.**

But without a college degree, it's not easy to get ahead. You'd like to go back to school, but how would you make it fit?

# UW Flex is a Partnership Model

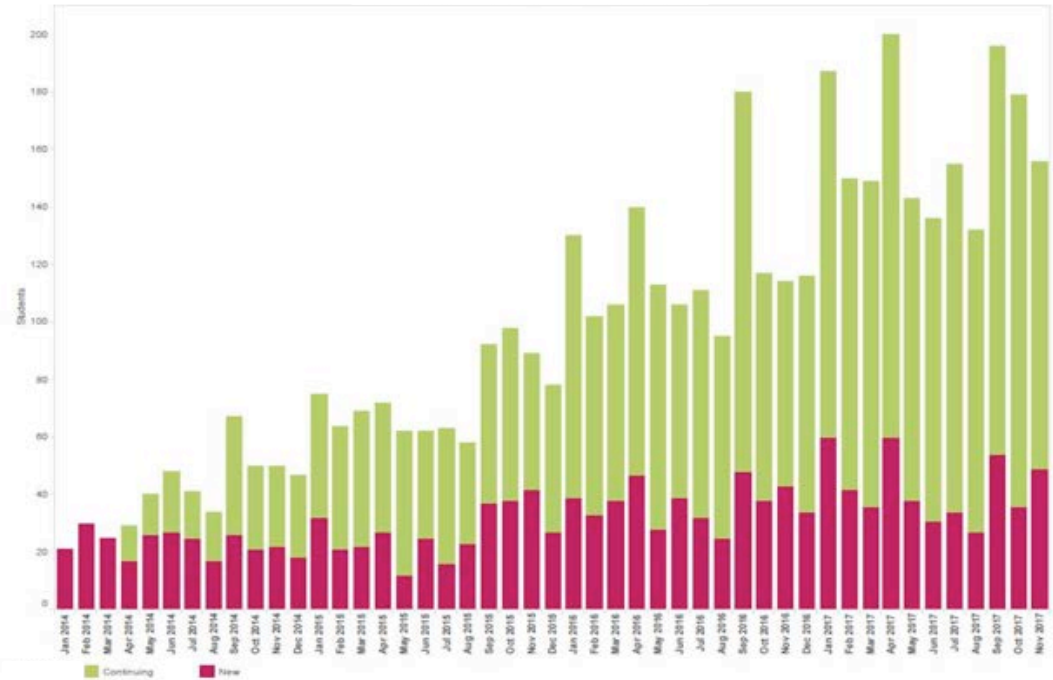


- BS Nursing
- BS IT
- BS Diag. Imag.
- BS Health Sci
- AAS
- BS Bus. Admin.
- MS GIS (2018)
- Certificates in
  - Prof./Bus. Com.
  - Project Management
  - Sub. Abuse Counseling

# How's it working? (since launch in Jan 2014)

- **Enrollments/Subscriptions:** 4,577
- **Unique Headcount:** 1,508
- **Retention:** 74%
- **Age\*:** 52% between 31-45
- **Gender\*:** 62% female
- **Employment:** Most work part or full time
- **In-State:** 76% (of subscribed students)
- **Financials:** Will break even within 5 year projection

Subscriptions by New and Continuing Students

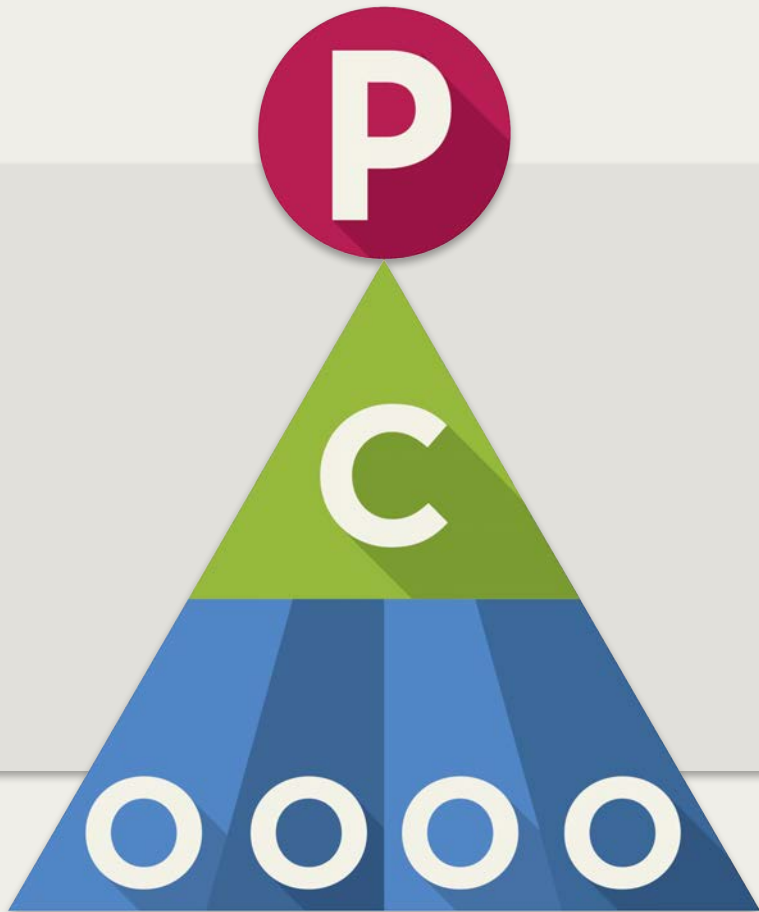


\*Excluding the Substance Use Disorders certificate



# Key Structural Features of UW Flex:

- Backward design, integrated curriculum
- Faculty from across UW; unbundled roles
- 3-month subscription periods
- Start at beginning of any month
- All-You-Can-Learn pricing
- Cost-recovery business model
- “No asterisk on diploma”



**Curriculum Structured as  
Competency Hierarchies**

**Students Assessed Thru  
Projects**

**Rubrics Guide Assessments**



### Carla Lundeen

RN Case Manager at Western WI Cares  
Bachelor of Nursing



*“Here’s how I approach Flexible Option assessments: First, I look at the assessments and try to figure out the big picture. Then I go back and fill in the places I know I have the knowledge; then I look at the gaps in my knowledge. For example, one of the first projects I had to do was on quality management—that’s what I do for a living.”*

# What do Students do?

## Practice & Proctored Assessments

- Assessed on projects
- Applied in their lives
- Projects composed of competencies
- Graded through rubrics
- Graded as “mastered” or “not yet mastered”
  - Mastery threshold determined per competency

# What do Students do?

- Work with Academic Success Coach
  - Create *Individual Learning Plan*
  - Weekly contact
- Engage with integrated curriculum
  - Competencies
  - Curated content
  - Assessments
- Work with Faculty for content assistance



## What do Faculty do?

- Develop competencies, assessments & rubrics
- Curate content
- Evaluate assessments
- Provide feedback on projects
- Correspond with ASCs & students
- Regularly refresh curriculum



**NOTE: not all faculty perform all roles**

# What do Academic Success Coaches do?

## Masters-Level Professionals

### Provide Wrap-Around & Proactive Tutoring, Mentoring, Advising

(85:1 ratio; proactive contact once/week)

- Assigned at registration; continues through graduation
- Create a customized learning plan & timeline w/student
- Provides “foundational” tutoring, overseen by faculty
- Connects student to specialized resources
- Helps keep student on track, provides guidance based on feedback received from faculty and assessments



# Moving from Credits to Competencies



- **New educational model**

- Self-paced vs. semesters
- Multiple paths thru curriculum
- Wrap-around and proactive support
- Flexible delivery blends technology with F2F
- New roles and workloads for faculty & staff

- **New operational model**

- *Student Engagement System* (integrated SIS/CRM/LMS) for admissions, bursar, registration, transcripts, financial aid not based on credits
- Efficiencies through collaboration, standardization

- **New business model**

- Self-supporting & intended to scale
- No ongoing state support



# First in the Nation Challenges & Opportunities

## Federal & State Policy



- HLC & Disciplinary Accreditors, US Dept of ED
  - *Financial Aid*
  - *Direct Assessment*
  - *Experimental Sites*
- Institutional Policies & Practices

## Infrastructure & Backend Operations



- Little is off-the-shelf
  - *Creating own Student Engagement System*

## Program Array & Institutional Culture



- Market-driven decisions
  - *...to build new programs*
  - *...to modify/close existing programs*
- New roles & workload expectations



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