



## Fiscal Estimate Narratives

WTCS 6/9/2003

LRB Number <b>03-2619/1</b>	Introduction Number <b>AB-366</b>	Estimate Type <b>Original</b>
<b>Subject</b> Requiring UWS and TCS to accept transfer of credits		

### Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

1. Postsecondary students earn credits for all completed courses. However, all earned credits may not fulfill the students' degree completion requirements. Degree completion requirements include total credit minimums, general education requirements, and program specific requirements.
2. Enactment of 2003 AB 366 would require Wisconsin Technical College (WTC) district boards to accept all credits transferred from another district board or college campus within the University of Wisconsin (UW) System and would require the UW Board of Regents to accept all transfer of credits between UW institutions and from the WTC System. The bill does not address or affect UW or WTC Systems' or institutions' degree completion requirements.
3. Existing WTC System Policy 323, adopted in July 1999, recognizes the validity of prior learning experiences and the inherent mobility of students, both geographically and between and among post-secondary institutions. The policy identifies categories for transfer of credit and requires local WTC districts to adopt a similar policy.
4. WTC System Policy 323 specifies that, in assessing prior learning to award credit values, technical colleges "shall provide maximum recognition for work completed through other national or regionally accredited postsecondary institutions." Technical colleges also may award prior learning credit for courses for which they do not have a comparable instructional area or for which they do not have a direct course equivalent. Where appropriate, these credits should apply toward satisfying general education, electives and other program requirements.
5. The WTC System policy on transfer of credits for prior learning is intended to maximize students', parents' and taxpayers' return on investment for postsecondary education by eliminating the need for duplicating work while preserving the value of unique program credentials.
6. The ease of credit transferability between institutions facilitates student transfer and, therefore, could affect total enrollment levels.
7. Wisconsin technical colleges award credit for prior learning to approximately 6,300 students each year. Approximately 45 to 50% of the students awarded WTC credit for prior learning are transferring from a UW System institution to a WTC institution. Approximately 24% of the students awarded WTC credit for prior learning are transferring among WTC System institutions.
8. The number of students transferring from UW System institutions to WTC System institutions increased 10.9% from 1997-98 to 2001-02. The number of students transferring among WTC System institutions increased 17.1% during this same period. In 2001-02, 27.2% of the students who transferred from UW System institutions to WTC System institutions had a bachelor degree or higher.
9. WTC System per-credit tuition is uniform statewide.
10. WTC System per-credit tuition covers approximately 15% of the cost of postsecondary and vocational education credits and 33% of the cost of college transfer credits.

### Long-Range Fiscal Implications

Students transferring to a WTC institution already earn credit for prior learning under WTC System Policy 323. Students transferring to a WTC institution and who earned credits from coursework at another WTC or UW

System institution that are related to their WTC degree program can be awarded credit toward their degree completion requirements under Policy 323. Since enactment of AB 366 would not affect WTC program completion or graduation requirements, its enactment is not likely to increase the number of transferred credits that apply to degree completion. As a result, it would seem unlikely that WTC enrollment or transfer activity for students receiving credit for prior learning would be affected by enactment of AB 366.

For those students transferring to a WTC institution and who earned credits from coursework at another WTC or UW System institution that was unrelated to the students' chosen WTC degree program, AB 366 could increase the number of credits on the students' WTC institution transcript, but it would not, necessarily, change the number (and type) of credits the student had yet to complete to meet their WTC program graduation requirements. As a result, it would seem unlikely that WTC enrollment or transfer activity for these students would be affected by enactment of AB 366.

For those students whose prior learning experiences did not occur through credit coursework at another WTC or UW System institution, enactment of AB 366 would provide no added benefit beyond the existing credit for prior learning policy. As a result, WTC enrollment or transfer activity for these students is unlikely to be affected by enactment of AB 366.

If enactment of AB 366 encourages more students to transfer from UW System institutions to WTC institutions, WTC enrollments could increase. Similarly, if enactment of AB 366 increases the likelihood that WTC credits are applied toward UW System degree requirements, the desirability of WTC programs would be enhanced and WTC enrollments could increase. When enrollments increase, WTC district tuition revenues increase. At the same time, a corresponding increase in WTC district costs, which are not fully recouped through tuition (see assumption #10), would occur.