

Landmark, collaborative, regional Engineering Technology program moving forward with final approval

Thirteen educational “points of entry” in one region. Two four-year state institutions from which to earn a diploma. One high-demand career field with a need for locally-developed engineering knowledge and talent.

And, now, a clear path to launch the academic program, propel students and drive northeast Wisconsin’s regional economy in the process.

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) has officially approved the groundbreaking, new Bachelor of Science in Engineering Technology, innovatively and collaboratively developed by the 13 Northeast Wisconsin Educational Resource Alliance (NEW ERA) institutions and colleges and regional manufacturers.

It is full-speed ahead for the academic partnership and programs, which will welcome a first cohort of students later this year.

Authorized by the University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents last summer, the three engineering technology majors within the program are hyper-collaborative in design and delivery. They were developed by faculty from the 13 NEW ERA partner colleges and institutions and by leaders of regional businesses, including those within the Northeast Wisconsin Manufacturing Alliance.

The goal of the programs is to make the Bachelor of Science in electrical, mechanical and environmental engineering technology more easily accessible to students living in the New North region while addressing regional manufacturers’ demands for new infusions of well-prepared engineering graduates. Students entering the new Leadership in Engineering Technology program and pursuing any of its three degrees will be able to begin their academic studies at any one of 13 NEW ERA institutions and colleges. They finish the program and earning their degrees at either UW-Green Bay or UW Oshkosh.

“If you’re a technical college graduate with a degree in a program such as electrical engineering technology, electronics, electrical-mechanical engineering technology, automation engineering technology, environmental engineering technology, mechanical design and several others, you now have a chance to complete your bachelor’s degree while living in northeast Wisconsin,” said Mark Weber, dean of Trades and Engineering Technologies at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College. “Efficiency is the real key here; we tried to efficiently use the resources we have.”

The new program is a convenient, rigorous and extremely high-quality education guided by employer-adviser panels and, upon completion, gives students incredible opportunities to enter a high-demand career field. NEW ERA institutions will deliver the Engineering Technology program based on the breadth of faculty expertise, both conceptual and hands-on application, combined with the state-of-the art laboratory equipment, technology and facilities at the region’s four technical colleges, the five two-year UW Colleges, UW-Green Bay, UW Oshkosh and the College of Menominee Nation.

NEW ERA Partners

College of Menominee Nation
Fox Valley Technical College
Lakeshore Technical College
Moraine Park Technical College
Northeast Wisconsin Technical College

University of Wisconsin Extension
University of Wisconsin Green Bay
University of Wisconsin - Fond du Lac
University of Wisconsin - Fox Valley
University of Wisconsin - Manitowoc

University of Wisconsin - Marinette
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh
University of Wisconsin - Sheboygan

“This program will provide students with a degree that has some very explicit and specific employment opportunities in areas which manufacturers are saying they need,” said Scott Furlong, Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences at UW-Green Bay, one of the two four-year institutions that will graduate the program’s students. “For students who have always thought about doing engineering or engineering-type work, it provides a Northeastern Wisconsin option for them to do that.”

Fred Rice, Ph.D., Moraine Park Technical College Dean of Applied Technology and Trades, said the new program capitalizes on the distinctiveness both technical college and university educations. Students in the engineering technology program can progress through and benefit from the knowledge and expertise within both environments and communities.

“All too often, students are faced with an ‘us or them’ proposition when it comes to college choices,” Rice said. “The Engineering Technology degree is different in that it is actually an ‘us and them’ opportunity for students. From development to offering, this degree has been a unique cooperation from the NEW ERA schools.”

John Koker, dean of UW Oshkosh Dean of the College of Letters and Sciences, where the program is also offered, said there are already students lining up to enroll and pursue the degree as partners finalize program details.

Prospective students’ interest is just as robust as employers’ demand for a program built ground-up by higher-educational and workforce partners’, Koker said.

“There may be no other region in the nation collaborating with partners like ours to design a responsive program that is as rewarding for its graduates as it is for the employers who will benefit from the infusion of highly-educated and skilled workers,” Koker said. “It is a tremendous accomplishment to have had an array of faculty and manufacturing leaders scattered throughout a region coming together, listening to their needs and hopes and working alongside one another to create an academic program that meets all of our different goals and honors our diverse missions.”

VIDEO: Hear more from NEW ERA-member college and university presidents, CEOs and chancellors on the landmark, collaborative engineering technology program moving forward (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjg0wKYOXBI>).

Learn more about the Engineering Technology program: uwosh.edu/engineeringtech. For more information about the program, contact Engineering Technology Director, Greg Kleinheinz at kleinhei@uwosh.edu.

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