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Five UW campuses to collaborate on new master's degree in sustainable management

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Five University of Wisconsin System campuses got the green light Friday to pool their resources and offer a collaborative online Master of Science degree in sustainable management.

The new collaborative degree, approved Friday by the UW Board of Regents, will be a collaboration between UW-Stout, UW-Green Bay, UW-Oshkosh, UW-Parkside and UW-Superior.

The master's degree will offer an advanced degree for students who earn a Bachelor of Science degree in sustainable management. That degree program was developed three years ago.

"This is a logical next step after we started offering our online bachelor's degree in sustainable management," Mary Hopkins-Best, interim provost and vice chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs at UW-Stout, said in a prepared statement. "We are confident that this will be a popular advanced degree that will appeal to a wide range of working adults."

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, jobs in environmental sustainability, or green technology careers, are becoming big business as the global market expands and more companies increase their commitment to environmental sustainability.

Careers in green technology are expected to grow much faster than the job market as a whole, translating to a roughly 20% increase per year, at least until 2018, the bureau projected.

About one-third of applicants to the bachelor's program already had a degree, and some indicated they would have pursued a master's degree if it had been available, UW officials said. More than 200 students have indicated their interest in possibly pursuing a master's degree in this area.

The new online master's program is projected to have 146 students enrolled after five years.

Each of the campuses involved will provide up to 10 credits for the 34-credit curriculum. Students will apply to one of the five partner institutions; that campus will be the student's administrative home for the degree, and where they will receive all necessary services.

UW-Extension will provide administrative support, financial investment, marketing and student services for the new degree. The program will establish a Sustainable Management Advisory Board to work closely with employers, including minority-owned businesses, interested in professional development for their employees, according to a news release from UW-Stout.

For more information on the new degree program, go to sustain.wisconsin.edu.

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