

UW-Eau Claire: U.S. News ranks UW MBA Consortium top online program in the Upper Midwest, among best in nation

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The [University of Wisconsin MBA Consortium](#), managed by UW-Eau Claire, remains the top online master's degree program in business administration in the Upper Midwest and among the best in the nation, according to U.S. News & World Report's 2023 rankings.

In the rankings released Tuesday, the consortium that includes UW-Eau Claire, UW-La Crosse and UW Oshkosh, is ranked ninth in the country. This is the fifth consecutive year and the sixth time overall that the consortium has been among the top 10 online MBA programs in the U.S.

"We are excited to again be included among the best of the best," says [Jessica Franson](#), UW MBA Consortium managing director. "The rankings recognize our impressive graduation rates, phenomenal faculty and our ability to educate professionals wherever they are while also offering the education and support they need to be successful."

The UW MBA Consortium is ranked ninth in the country out of 366 MBA programs, making it among the top 2.5% in the U.S. It also is ranked sixth in U.S. News' Best Online MBA Programs for Veterans.

Of the eight other online MBA programs from Wisconsin included in the rankings, UW-Whitewater and Herzing University are the next closest to the UW MBA Consortium, coming in at the 27th and 169th spots, respectively.

“The UW MBA Consortium — a vibrant, highly successful program — is perhaps the greatest value in online MBAs today,” says [Dr. Brewer Doran](#), dean of UW-Eau Claire’s College of Business. “It’s offered at a highly affordable price, and the teaching and curriculum is outstanding despite limited resources. This program is small and self-funded yet competes with the best-funded and best-known programs across the country.”

U.S. News ranked the online programs using five categories: engagement; expert opinion; faculty credentials and training; student excellence; and services and technologies.

The consortium continues to be successful for multiple reasons, says [Dr. Paula Lentz](#), UW MBA Consortium academic director. Students appreciate its flexibility and affordability, and once they are in the program, they value the “enthusiastic and highly engaged instructors who provide them with an outstanding learning experience,” she says.

Central to the students’ experience is the design of the program’s curriculum, Lentz says. Each year, nearly 50 instructors from four different UW System schools teach the 70 courses the program offers. The program’s three governing institutions and UW-Parkside, a participating campus, provide instructors.

“We have exceptional instructional designers who partner with faculty, and that partnership ensures each course is designed and delivered according to best practices for online pedagogy,” Lentz says. “Each class is creative, responsive and applicable to students’ individual academic and professional goals.”

The online program has experienced significant growth in recent years, expanding by 21% in the past three years. This academic year, nearly 400 students are enrolled, a number that program leaders expect will increase as the program adds capacity. Students from 37 states are currently enrolled. About a third of the students are from Wisconsin, with 50% from the region consisting of Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan and Minnesota.

With about 80 students graduating annually, more than 800 students have graduated since degrees were first awarded in 2008.

As the program looks to the future, Franson says directors are excited to develop new pathways for students to focus their MBA experience in different professional

areas. For example, the program recently added a health care management specialization option to its MBA degree after receiving funding through the Wisconsin Economic Development Corp.'s Workforce Innovation Grant program.

“The UW MBA Consortium is a shining example of what can be achieved with collaboration across campuses,” Doran says.

For more information about the UW MBA Consortium and its placement in the U.S. News online MBA rankings, contact Jessica Franson, UW MBA Consortium managing director, at 715-836-3880 or fransonj@uwec.edu.