

FALL 2011



# WIDS*wire*

Worldwide Instructional Design System

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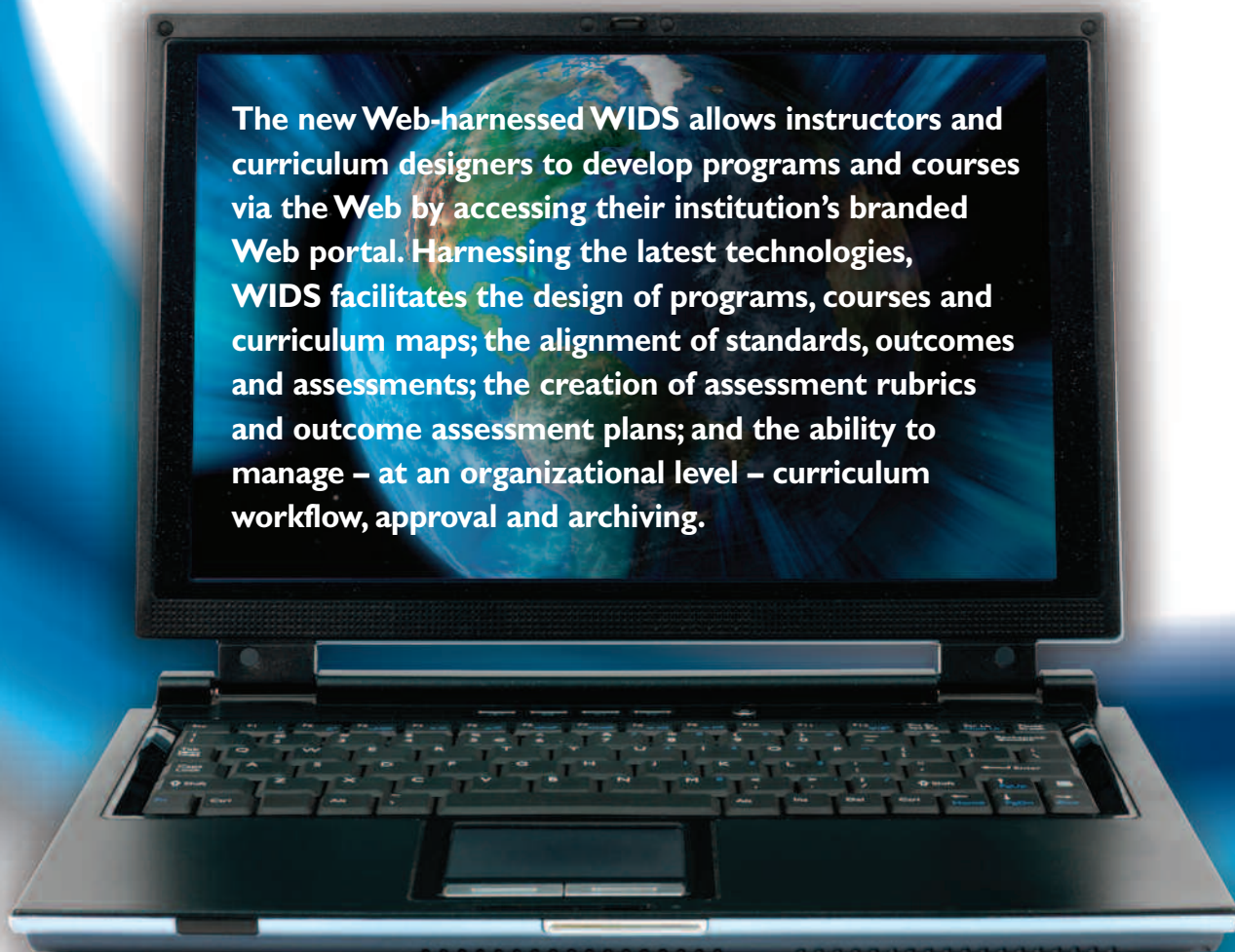
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## Web-harnessed WIDS is Here!

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# Web-harnessed WIDS is Here!



**It harnesses cloud-computing technology** to ensure licensed users can design, revise, export and store curriculum documents online, at any time of the day or night. Global editing ensures that when revisions are made to information referenced in multiple projects, changes take immediate effect in all projects!

Now WIDS also delivers a way to manage time-dated information by allowing categorization of curriculum projects by status – work in progress, active, future and expired. Licensed WIDS users login to a Web portal customized for their college or company, to access WIDS. Then they can design, align, assess and manage curriculum. With WIDS, there is a workflow process for the life cycle of curriculum projects and customizable security roles and permissions so not just anyone has the

ability to edit courses and programs. Establishing those roles is completely up to individual organizations.

The new WIDS delivers access via the Web; program assessment rubrics, outcome assessment and improvement plans; and syllabus, learning plan and course assessment design capabilities. The Web-based application ensures curriculum documents are safe and secure; that courses and programs can be easily developed and edited; and that the latest curriculum documents are the most current versions.

Even better? WIDS support. WIDS implementation is orchestrated with assistance from WIDS consultants, who work closely with licensed organizations. This includes portal site set up and site administrator and project management training.



## Set-up & Implementation

Establishing your new WIDS Web Portal is straight forward, thanks to a defined process that takes your college step-by-step through WIDS set up, implementation and training. Together with WIDS personnel, your college will carryout the following tasks:

**Week 1: Remote Site Set Up:** Via Webinar, WIDS consultants help you configure your unique Web portal, including planning for units and subunits, identifying art work and logos and site administrators. Typically, WIDS will take 3 to 4 hours to work with your site administrators.

**Week 2-3: Planning Time:** Use this time period to follow your “Implementation Planning Guide” and make decisions about localizing and managing your Web portal. You’ll also put details in place for upcoming WIDS training. After organizing your old WIDS files (if applicable), you will upload them into the new Web portal.

**Week 4: Site Administrator/Project Management Training:** Get ready to learn about all the functionalities of WIDS during a two-day training at your college. During the first day, site administrators learn how to manage the new WIDS site. On day two, site administrators and other college leaders explore how to manage programs, roles, and approval in WIDS. You will also develop a customized plan for continued implementation.



## Transferring WIDS Curriculum Files; It’s a Snap

For existing users, WIDS files upload seamlessly to your new Web portal. And yes, curriculum is automatically populated into appropriate fields. Even better? WIDS assists you with this transfer!

*“Conversion of old version WIDS project files are performed in collaboration with clients and WIDS staff,” says WIDS Software Architect Jeff Martinson. Colleges may provide their WIDS files for upload and automatic population within the Web portal. “Colleges also have the flexibility to identify units and subunits under which to organize existing courses and programs,” says Martinson. “They can transfer their project files individually, in one large batch, or in many smaller batches,” he adds.*



## Customizing Your Web Portal

At WIDS, we understand that not all colleges organize and develop curriculum courses and programs similarly. That’s why your college’s new Web portal will be customized to perfectly suit the needs and goals of your college. So much of the WIDS portal – from the way it looks to how it functions – is customizable. So take advantage of everything you can tweak to make for the perfect portal look and feel!

**Customized Terms:** Customize major terms used within WIDS with your own terminology

**Hiding:** Hide major components of WIDS from view if they aren’t useful at your college

**Libraries:** Stock the WIDS libraries with information tailored to your college. Library data includes academic skills and their criteria, employability skills and their criteria, grading information, guidelines, performance assessment tasks, rating scales, verbs to write new outcomes and sets of external standards

**Select List Values:** Colleges can designate field values from choosing from a list or add, change and remove values from the list. List categories include, assessment strategy, competency, career cluster, content type, course category, difficulty, direct measure, environment, evaluator, focus, group size, importance, indirect measure, instructional level, learning cycle, and many more.

**Images:** Provide your own images to serve as the banner displayed across the top of the Portal and the logo to be included with any saved reports

**Roles:** Colleges can customize roles or add new roles to perfectly match college workflow

*Web-harnessed WIDS continues on back cover...*

# Colleges Harness Web-based WIDS

*While every college takes a slightly unique approach to WIDS set up and institutional implementation, several are on-board and cruising. Here, we highlight three candid and individualized stories about WIDS functionality, site set-up, training and implementation.*



## Central Community College – Columbus, Neb.



“We think WIDS is fabulous; better than sliced bread,” agree Central Community College’s (Central) Learning Support Specialist Wendy Wells and Instructional Technology Director Tracy Watts. Together Wells and Watts led the WIDS conversion process at Central with help from WIDS Consultant Leah Osborn. First and foremost, they love the functionality the new WIDS brings. All courses are available to instructors on their home page; there are no longer any software updates on multiple computers; WIDS offers anytime, anywhere Internet access; updating libraries is simple; transferring WIDS files is “flawless”; and it’s easy to create programs, link information, print, report and save.

“We have three campuses and 12 instructors may teach the same course,” says Wells. “They now have access to the most current WIDS curriculum file and can easily create and print personal syllabi tailored to their instructional delivery method. With the new WIDS, we will never have to ask, ‘Where is the current file?’”

A total of 174 WIDS course files were initially uploaded to Central’s new WIDS Web portal – branded with the college’s logo and banner – where they automatically populated appropriate fields. When all is said and done, more than 1,000 courses will be uploaded and Central will move forward with program design. “When we began, our goal was to ensure all courses taught had a course syllabus,” says Watts. “With the new Web-based WIDS, we will begin the program design process and development of program outcomes.”

## Nicolet Area Technical College – Rhinelander, Wis.

At Nicolet Area Technical College (Nicolet), WIDS implementation is taking a phased approach, according to the Chuck Komp, Dean of Business and Institutional Effectiveness. “We elected to take five or six programs and roll them into WIDS on a pilot basis,” he says. “We used those programs to train a core group of implementers.”

As the curriculum is uploaded, trained faculty link program outcomes and core abilities to the courses. Once the curriculum for a set of programs is fully linked and complete, another set of programs will be uploaded. “This incremental approach allows us the opportunity to verify the integrity of the curriculum data,” Komp says. “We are coming out of this process with consistent curriculum and really looking forward to the curriculum product when we are all through.”

Thus far, feedback is positive. Komp attests instructors appreciate the 24-hour accessibility offered via the new WIDS, as well as the levels of control. “The problem of managing a database of files on personal computers goes away with the new WIDS,” says Komp. “Now users know where to locate the most current curriculum files. It’s a huge benefit.”

Ultimately, Nicolet will also revise its curriculum management processes. “We want to fully understand the levels of user permissions and flexibilities in WIDS. Once we get a handle on that, we can rewrite our internal control procedures,” adds Komp.

**“It used to require a lot of administrative attention and staff time to keep curriculum updated,” he says. “Nicolet will realize significant gains using the new WIDS Web-based application. We will be more efficient and accurate.”**

### **Southwest Wisconsin Technical College – Fennimore, Wis.**

The same holds true at Southwest Wisconsin Technical College (SWTC), where course curriculum development includes below-the-line learning plans, assessments and rubrics. Kristal Davenport, Instructional Technology Support Specialist, maintains the new WIDS simplifies program management and the process of linking program outcomes to course components. Moreover, it streamlines Technical Skill Attainment (TSA) development and tracking.

As part of the transition to the new Web-based WIDS, all curriculum files across SWTC were uploaded to the new portal. Pre-launch meetings with WIDS Consultant



*Left to right: Nicole Waterman, Kristal Davenport and Beth Cummins of Southwest Wisconsin Technical College make the transition to the new WIDS*

Terri Johnson helped Davenport lead the College in making key customizations to the WIDS portal and application.

“The first day, we worked with the site administrator to layout how to manage the site, upload files, customize libraries and input core abilities,” says Johnson.

“I had a lot of reservations about the new WIDS,” adds Davenport, “but the final product has sold me. It’s exceeded my expectations and will work really well with a lot of different departments. The flexibility to create personalized fields, such as attaching a budget field indicating who funded and developed the curriculum, is great.”

Davenport celebrates the relational database that serves as the foundation of the new WIDS. Any changes made in any part of a curriculum project are instantaneously made everywhere else in the curriculum.

“All of our faculty write their own curriculum using WIDS and we use WIDS as part of our Quality Review Process,” says Davenport. “Our next goal is to put all program outcomes into WIDS and train our faculty on how to link those outcomes to their courses.”

Now, SWTC curriculum specialists can instantly see all courses, the dates they were last revised, and the name of the person who revised them. This simplifies the QRP process greatly, according to Davenport.

Finally, TSA assessments, which allow evaluators to determine if students are meeting core program outcomes or not, will be easier to develop, manage and track. The assessments, according to Davenport, measure student achievement of industry-relevant program outcomes.

# 'Greening' Wisconsin with Help from WIDS

## Apprenticeships target 'green' technologies and sustainability

*Several new "green" apprenticeship offerings recently kicked off with help from WIDS and the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS). Coursework – delivered in a variety of ways – supports "green" energy, sustainability and technologies.*

At Moraine Park Technical College (Moraine Park) a new **Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Apprenticeship** program focuses on the reclamation of wastewater prior to its release into the environment. Meanwhile, Northcentral Technical College's (NTC)



Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship centers on specialized farming practices using pasture-based grazing, rather than animal confinement for dairy production. At Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC), a new Substation Electrician Apprenticeship program targets the role of substation electricians in helping install and maintain smart electrical distribution grids and working with renewable energies; and at Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC), new "green" learning modules created using WIDS address several emerging skills related to "green" trends within the Electric Utility Line Worker trade and apprenticeship program.

Moraine Park's new Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Apprenticeship program, funded by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards, prepares students to monitor industrial waste discharges, chemical testing and biological and chemical treatment of wastewater, in addition to maintaining equipment and controlling plant processes. Coursework, which is delivered online via Moraine Park, is offered as a statewide training program. WIDS, which was heavily involved in the project, assisted with performing a DACUM occupational analysis, facilitating focus group meetings, creating apprenticeship exit learning outcomes and program design, and aligning existing Moraine Park courses to external standards, according to WIDS Consultant Hal Zenisek.

The nation's first Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship program, designed with help from WIDS, uses a competency and time-based hybrid training model. The project is supported by GrassWorks Inc., a nonprofit organization promoting managed grazing as an alternative approach to dairy production, and the DWD's Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards. Apprentices work on farms with a master dairy grazer and take courses at NTC and the University of Wisconsin School for Beginning Dairy Farmers.

Managed grazing, according to GrassWorks, is an efficient, sustainable and profitable farming method in which livestock are rotated through paddocks of nutritious grasses and legumes that are allowed to rest and re-grow. Farmers who utilize managed grazing improve animal health, build soil and water resources, create habitat, produce high quality food and contribute to local economies.



"The apprenticeship is a comprehensive program that will prepare future owners and operators, as it will cover all the aspects of grazing and dairy farm management," says GrassWorks Program Director Joe Tomandl III.

A two-year, 4,000-hour program, the apprenticeship combines on-farm learning and classroom instruction and is funded in part by the U.S. Department of Labor's Sector Alliance for the Green Economy (SAGE) grant and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Zenisek, a key project contributor, facilitated a DACUM occupational analysis, led a farm leadership focus group and organized program outcomes, performance standards and assessment strategies using WIDS curriculum design system.

*Photos: As part of their jobs as plant operators at the Fond du Lac Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility Steven McCord (in circle above), a 2011 Moraine Park graduate, examines sludge under a microscope and Joseph O'Boyle (top of page 7), a 1988 graduate of Moraine Park, collects a sample of activated sludge for daily testing.*



NWTC's new **Substation Electrician Apprenticeship** program, funded by the DWD, is the first of its kind in Wisconsin. Graduates are the first line workers operating, maintaining, inspecting, testing and repairing substations. The implementation of smart grid technologies is revolutionizing electricity delivery in the United States to meet the needs of the 21st century economy, according to SmartGrid.gov. "The transformation to a smarter grid will increase the reliability, efficiency, and security of the country's electrical system; encourage consumers to manage their electricity use; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and allow the integration of all clean energy sources and electric vehicles into the grid of tomorrow."

As such, graduates will be prepared to install, test, adjust and repair substation equipment, including power transformers, load tap changers, high voltage switchgears, battery and charger systems, as well as control equipment.

Once again, WIDS facilitated large parts of the project, including a DACUM, program design, course development, curriculum rollout and instructor training.

Finally, new "green" learning modules – developed using WIDS – address needed emerging skills impacting the **Electric Utility Line Worker Apprenticeship** program at CVTC. These modules address renewable energy metering systems, smart utility grids, reverse power flow from distributed generation systems, as well as new generation, environmentally friendly oils.



## Register now for User Group & Pre-conference Workshops

WIDS will host its 5th annual User Group Conference, Thursday, Nov. 3. As a precursor, we invite you to dive into Web-harnessed WIDS at targeted pre-User Group workshops, Wednesday, Nov. 2. Register online at [www.wids.org](http://www.wids.org).

### Wednesday: Mini Workshops

The pre-conference workshops are tailored for colleges and organizations interested in learning more about the new WIDS Web-based application. Consider "Plan for the Transition" from 9 a.m.-noon or "Syllabus" from 1-4 p.m.

### Thursday: User Group

On Thursday, Nov. 3, from 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m., the WIDS User Group Conference, held at the Concourse Hotel in Madison, Wis., promises to draw instructional designers, educators and trainers from across the United States to share ideas and discuss best practices related to instructional design and learning.

Presentations will include, "Syllabus Design, Approval and Integrity" by Central Community College of Grand Island, Neb.; "Moving a Mountain: Building a Culture of Assessment," by Director of Curriculum and Assessment Cynthia Cicchelli, of Schoolcraft College in Livonia, Mich.; and a fully loaded WIDS general session offering a guided tour of the new WIDS Web-based application, including capabilities in project management and outcome assessment planning, as well as in development of syllabi, learning plans and performance assessment tasks.

## Free WIDS Webinars

Get the scoop on WIDS! Join us for a live instructional overview of the new Web-based WIDS application and Web portal. Learn more about WIDS – a robust curriculum design and organizational management tool and solution. Sign up now for a free Webinar, and explore the many features and capabilities of WIDS.

- Web portal set-up
- Navigation and data entry
- Organization-wide outcome assessment planning
- Program Design
- Course Design
- Course outcome summaries, syllabi, learning plans and course assessments
- Curriculum management and approval processes

Go to [www.wids.org/ViewWebinar.aspx](http://www.wids.org/ViewWebinar.aspx) to register.



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## **Web-harnessed WIDS**

### **Saving IT Labor and Expense**

College IT personnel are released from support duties because WIDS is hosted off-site and no longer mandates installation on personal computers or college servers. WIDS isn't under the control of IT staff – freeing them to handle other institutional IT issues. No longer are IT personnel involved with troubleshooting, installing or uninstalling WIDS. Everything is handled for you – saving you time and money. WIDS also provides first-level technical support Monday-Friday.

### **It's in the Vault**

Feel secure knowing your college's WIDS curriculum is highly protected. WIDS software is hosted on servers located at SupraNet Communications Data Center in Madison, Wis. It is monitored and backed up 24/7 to ensure reliability and recovery in the event of a system malfunction or client error. The Data Center is further secured with critical technologies, including a natural gas generator, uninterruptible power supply, anti-static tile floor, enterprise air conditioning system, two-state dry pipe fire suppression system, magnetic card security system and dedicated hardware firewall, among many others. Additionally, clients define back-up and disaster-recovery plans.

### **A Brief History**

Founded in 1992, WIDS provides front-line tools and services for the development of learner-focused curriculum, courses and programs. Since that time, WIDS has morphed to offer professional curriculum consulting and training services, as well as unleashed a number of curriculum development

technologies impacting hundreds of educational organizations across the globe.

Every offering – service, training or tool – is designed around the WIDS performance-based learning model. The WIDS model makes sense to educators because it integrates current learning theory and practice into a practical model that brings together critical elements of performance-based design.

WIDS launched its first curriculum design software in 1994, with considerable help from front-line educators and curriculum design specialists within the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS). But, met with much success, WIDS expanded to also facilitate curriculum development opportunities across the world.

Just launched is the organization's most important release yet – the unveiling of its new Web-based WIDS. Harnessing the latest technologies, the new WIDS extends beyond desktop instructional design to encompass a complete system supporting organizational curriculum design, management and dissemination.

### **Experience WIDS Firsthand**

Take advantage of a WIDS Webinar, the upcoming User Group Conference, Nov. 2-3, or view the quick WIDS video at <http://wids.org/Home/Videos>