



Western Technical
College

The Economic Value of Western Technical College

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



WESTERN Technical College (Western) provides relevant, high quality education, in a collaborative and sustainable environment that changes the lives of students and grows their communities. The college plays a key role in helping students increase their employability and achieve their individual potential. The college draws students to the region, generating new dollars and opportunities for the Western district.* Western provides students with the education, training, and skills they need to have fulfilling and prosperous careers. Furthermore, Western is a place for students to meet new people, increase their self-confidence, and promote their overall health and well-being.

Western influences both the lives of its students and the regional economy. The college supports a variety of industries in the Western district, serves regional businesses, and benefits society as a whole in Wisconsin from an expanded economy and improved quality of life. The benefits created by Western even extend to the state and local government through increased tax revenues and public sector savings.

This study measures the economic impacts created by Western on the business community and the benefits the college generates in return for the investments made by its key stakeholder groups—students, taxpayers, and society. The following two analyses are presented:



Economic impact analysis



Investment analysis

All results reflect employee, student, and financial data, provided by the college, for fiscal year (FY) 2017-18. Impacts on the Western district economy are reported under the economic impact analysis and are measured in terms of added income. The returns on investment to students, taxpayers, and society in Wisconsin are reported under the investment analysis.

* For the purposes of this analysis, the Western district is comprised of 60 zip codes within 11 counties: Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Richland, Sauk, Trempealeau, Vernon, and portions of Buffalo, Clark, and Crawford.

*The value of Western influences both the **lives of its students** and the **regional economy**.*



Economic impact analysis

Western promotes economic growth in the Western district through its direct expenditures and the resulting expenditures of students and regional businesses. The college serves as an employer and buyer of goods and services for its day-to-day operations. The college's activities attract students from outside the Western district, whose expenditures benefit regional vendors. In addition, Western is a primary source of higher education to the Western district residents and a supplier of trained workers to regional industries, enhancing overall productivity in the regional workforce.

Operations Spending Impact



Western adds economic value to the Western district as an employer of regional residents and a large-scale buyer of goods and services. In FY 2017-18, the college employed 859 full-time and part-time faculty and staff, 86% of whom lived in the Western district. Total payroll at Western was \$41 million, much of which was spent in the region for groceries, mortgage and rent payments, dining out, and other household expenses. In addition, the college spent \$19.2 million on day-to-day expenses related to facilities, supplies, and professional services.

Western's day-to-day operations spending added \$45.1 million in income to the region during the analysis year. This figure represents the college's payroll, the multiplier effects generated by the in-region spending of the college and its employees, and a downward adjustment to account for funding that the college received from regional sources. The \$45.1 million in added income is equivalent to supporting 926 jobs in the region.

Student Spending Impact



Some in-region students, referred to as retained students, would have left the Western district if not for the existence of Western. While attending the college, these retained students spent money on groceries, accommodation, transportation, and other household expenses. This spending generated \$3.6 million in added income for the regional economy in FY 2017-18, which supported 94 jobs in the Western district.

Alumni Impact



The education and training Western provides for regional residents has the greatest impact. Since its establishment, students have studied at Western and entered the regional workforce with greater

IMPACTS CREATED
BY WESTERN IN FY 2017-18



\$45.1 million
Operations Spending Impact



\$3.6 million
Student Spending Impact



\$281.6 million
Alumni Impact



\$330.3 million
TOTAL IMPACT

- OR -

4,699
JOBS SUPPORTED

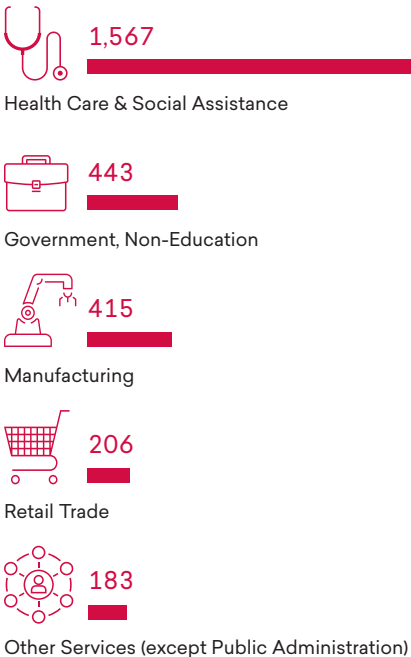
knowledge and new skills. Today, thousands of former Western students are employed in the Western district. As a result of their Western educations, the students receive higher earnings and increase the productivity of the businesses that employ them. In FY 2017-18, Western alumni generated \$281.6 million in added income for the regional economy, which is equivalent to supporting 3,680 jobs.

Total Impact

Western added \$330.3 million in income to the Western district economy during the analysis year, equal to the sum of the operations spending impact, the student spending impact, and the alumni impact. For context, the \$330.3 million impact was equal to approximately 2.4% of the total gross regional product (GRP) of the Western district. This contribution that the college provided on its own is slightly larger than the entire Accommodation & Food Services industry in the region.

Western’s total impact can also be expressed in terms of jobs supported. The \$330.3 million impact supported 4,699 regional jobs, using the jobs-to-sales ratios specific to each industry in the region. This means that one out of every 37 jobs in the Western district is supported by the activities of Western and its students. In addition, the \$330.3 million, or 4,699 supported jobs, stemmed from different industry sectors. Among non-education industry sectors, Western’s spending and alumni in the Health Care & Social Assistance industry sector supported 1,567 jobs in FY 2017-18. These are impacts that would not have been generated without the college’s presence in the Western district.

WESTERN IMPACTS BY INDUSTRY (JOBS SUPPORTED)



One out of every 37 jobs in the Western District is supported by the activities of Western and its students.



Investment analysis

An investment analysis evaluates the costs associated with a proposed venture against its expected benefits. If the benefits outweigh the costs, then the investment is financially worthwhile. The analysis presented here considers Western as an investment from the perspectives of students, taxpayers, and society in Wisconsin.

Student perspective



In FY 2017-18, Western served 8,061 credit and 4,320 non-credit students. In order to attend the college, the students paid for tuition, fees, books, and supplies. They also took out loans and will incur interest on those loans. Additionally, students gave up money they would have otherwise earned had they been working instead of attending college. The total investment made by Western's students in FY 2017-18 amounted to a present value of \$29.6 million, equal to \$12 million in out-of-pocket expenses (including future principal and interest on student loans) and \$17.6 million in forgone time and money.

In return for their investment, Western's students will receive a stream of higher future earnings that will continue to grow throughout their working lives. For example, the average Western associate degree graduate from FY 2017-18 will see an increase in earnings of \$9,600 each year compared to a person with a high school diploma or equivalent working in Wisconsin. Over a working lifetime, the benefits of the associate degree over a high school diploma will amount to an undiscounted value of \$432 thousand in higher earnings per graduate. The present value of the cumulative higher future earnings that Western's FY 2017-18 students will receive over their working careers is \$186.8 million.

STUDENTS SEE A HIGH RATE OF RETURN FOR THEIR INVESTMENT IN WESTERN



23.9%

Average annual return for Western students



9.9%

Stock market 30-year average annual return

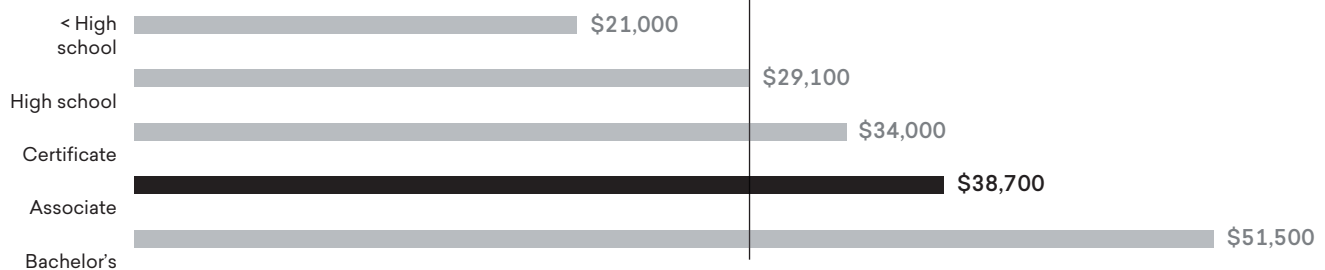


0.8%

Interest earned on savings account (National Rate Cap)

Source: Forbes' S&P 500, 1989-2018. FDIC.gov, 6-2019.

The average associate degree graduate from Western will see an increase in earnings of **\$9,600** each year compared to a person with a high school diploma or equivalent working in Wisconsin.



Source: Emsi complete employment data.

The students' benefit-cost ratio is 6.3. In other words, for every dollar students invest in Western, in the form of out-of-pocket expenses and forgone time and money, they will receive a cumulative value of \$6.30 in higher future earnings. Annually, the students' investment in Western has an average annual internal rate of return of 23.9%, which is impressive compared to the U.S. stock market's 30-year average rate of return of 9.9%.

Taxpayer perspective



Western generates more in tax revenue than it takes. These benefits to taxpayers consist primarily of taxes that the state and local government will collect from the added revenue created in the state. As Western students will earn more, they will make higher tax payments throughout their working lives. Students' employers will also make higher tax payments as they increase their output and purchases of goods and services. By the end of the FY 2017-18 students' working lives, the state and local government will have collected a present value of \$64.2 million in added taxes.

Benefits to taxpayers will also consist of savings generated by the improved lifestyles of Western students and the corresponding reduced government services. Education is statistically correlated with a variety of lifestyle changes.

Students' Western educations will generate savings in three main categories: 1) healthcare, 2) crime, and 3) income assistance. Improved health will lower students' demand for national health care services. In addition, students will be less likely to interact with the criminal justice system, resulting in a reduced demand for law enforcement and victim costs. Western students will be more employable, so their reduced demand for income assistance such as welfare and unemployment benefits will benefit taxpayers. For a list of study references, contact the college for a copy of the main report. Altogether, the present value of the benefits associated with a Western education will generate \$5.6 million in savings to state and local taxpayers.

Total taxpayer benefits amount to \$69.8 million, the present value sum of the added taxes and public sector savings. Taxpayer costs are \$55.7 million, equal to the amount of state and local government funding Western received in FY 2017-18, including \$5.5 million in local tax revenue from Western's 2012 property

*For every dollar of public money invested in Western, taxpayers will receive a cumulative value of **\$1.30** over the course of the students' working lives.*



STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

\$186.8 million
Present value benefits

\$29.6 million
Present value costs

\$157.3 million
Net present value

Benefit-cost Ratio	Rate of Return
6.3	23.9%



TAXPAYER PERSPECTIVE

\$69.8 million
Present value benefits

\$55.7 million
Present value costs

\$14.1 million
Net present value

Benefit-cost Ratio	Rate of Return
1.3	2.1%



SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

\$707.1 million
Present value benefits

\$83.4 million
Present value costs

\$623.7 million
Net present value

Benefit-cost Ratio	Rate of Return
8.5	n/a*

* The rate of return is not reported for the social perspective because the beneficiaries of the investment are not necessarily the same as the original investors.

tax levy. These benefits and costs yield a benefit-cost ratio of 1.3. This means that for every dollar of public money invested in Western in FY 2017-18, taxpayers will receive a cumulative value of \$1.30 over the course of the students' working lives. The average annual internal rate of return for taxpayers is 2.1%.

Social perspective



Society as a whole in Wisconsin benefits from the presence of Western in two major ways. Primarily, society benefits from an increased economic base in the state. This is attributed to higher student earnings and increased business output, which raise economic prosperity in Wisconsin.

Benefits to society also consist of the savings generated by the improved lifestyles of Western students. As discussed in the previous section, education is statistically correlated with a variety of lifestyle changes that generate social savings. Note that these costs are avoided by the consumers but are distinct from the costs avoided by the taxpayers outlined above. Healthcare savings include avoided medical costs associated with smoking, alcohol dependence, obesity, drug abuse, and depression. Savings related to crime include reduced security expenditures and insurance administration, lower victim costs, and reduced expenditures by the criminal justice system. Income assistance savings include reduced welfare and unemployment claims. For a list of study references, contact the college for a copy of the main report.

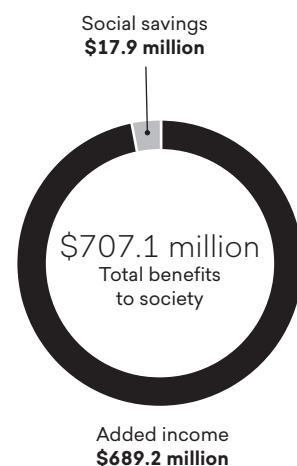
Altogether, the social benefits of Western equal a present value of \$707.1 million. These benefits include \$689.2 million in added income through students' increased lifetime earnings and increased business output, as well as \$17.9 million in social savings related to health, crime, and income assistance in Wisconsin. People in Wisconsin invested a present value total of \$83.4 million in Western in FY 2017-18. The cost includes all the college and student costs.

The benefit-cost ratio for society is 8.5, equal to the \$707.1 million in benefits divided by the \$83.4 million in costs. In other words, for every dollar invested in Western, people in Wisconsin will receive a cumulative value of \$8.50 in benefits. The benefits of this investment will occur for as long as Western's FY 2017-18 students remain employed in the state workforce.

Summary of investment analysis results

The results of the analysis demonstrate that Western is a strong investment for all three major stakeholder groups—students, taxpayers, and society. As shown, students receive a great return for their investments in a Western education. At the same time, taxpayers' investment in Western returns more to government budgets than it costs and creates a wide range of social benefits throughout Wisconsin.

SOCIAL BENEFITS IN WISCONSIN FROM WESTERN



Conclusion

The results of this study demonstrate that Western creates value from multiple perspectives. The college benefits regional businesses by increasing consumer spending in the region and supplying a steady flow of qualified, trained workers to the workforce. Western enriches the lives of students by raising their lifetime earnings and helping them achieve their individual potential. The college benefits state and local taxpayers through increased tax receipts and a reduced demand for government-supported social services. Finally, Western benefits society as a whole in Wisconsin by creating a more prosperous economy and generating a variety of savings through the improved lifestyles of students.

About the Study

Data and assumptions used in the study are based on several sources, including the FY 2017-18 academic and financial reports from Western, industry and employment data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Census Bureau, outputs of Emsi's Multi-Regional Social Accounting Matrix model, and a variety of studies and surveys relating education to social behavior. The study applies a conservative methodology and follows standard practice using only the most recognized indicators of economic impact and investment effectiveness. For a full description of the data and approach used in the study, please contact the college for a copy of the main report.

The results of this study demonstrate that Western creates value from
multiple perspectives.



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