

Aurora University Fact Sheet



AURORA UNIVERSITY

Mission Statement

Aurora University — an inclusive community dedicated to the transformative power of learning.

Core Values

- The core values of Aurora University are integrity, citizenship, continuous learning and excellence.

History

- Aurora University traces its origins to the 1893 founding of a seminary in the small town of Mendota, IL. Though established initially to prepare graduates for ministry, the institution soon adopted a broader mission and moved to a new campus on the western edge of the nearby community of Aurora. With this change came a different name and a growing enrollment. When World War II ended, the campus population swelled again as veterans enrolled in the college's innovative evening degree program. The 1970s and 1980s saw an expansion of curricular offerings in a number of professional fields and the awarding of advanced degrees in selected disciplines. These changes culminated in the 1985 decision to rechristen the institution Aurora University.
- The roots of George Williams College run deep in the YMCA movement of the 19th century. In 1884, leaders from America's "western" YMCAs gathered in the Lake Geneva area to attend a summer training program. Two years later, the camp was incorporated, and the first parcel of the current Williams Bay campus was purchased. Since that time, "college camp" has been a source of inspiration, recreation, education and renewal for thousands of guests and students. In 1992, the Aurora and George Williams College traditions blended when the two institutions entered into the affiliation agreement that paved the way for the merger eight years later.

Campus

- Aurora University is comprised of two campuses: a 32-acre campus in Aurora, IL, with instructional, administrative and residential buildings; and a 200-acre campus in Williams Bay, WI, that features an educational center, conference center, lodging, dining facilities, a music pavilion and an 18-hole golf course. The institution enrolls approximately 4,000 degree-seeking students a year on its Illinois and Wisconsin campuses.
- The Aurora campus is currently undergoing a number of building and renovation projects with a master plan designed to meet the current and future needs of the campus community. The Institute for Collaboration opened in 2006 and houses several of the university's academic programs, an expanded School District 129 partnership school for 200 elementary school students, the Caterpillar Center for Teaching and Learning, Crimi Auditorium, the Institute for Collaboration, and the community-based organization, Communities in Schools. Renovations to Perry Theatre, located in The Aurora Foundation Center for Community Enrichment, were completed in 2005. Future projects include a football/soccer field and an addition to Alumni Hall that will accommodate classroom, laboratory, computer, faculty offices and support resources for nursing, social work and health science projects.
- At George Williams College of Aurora University in Williams Bay, a number of building and renovation projects have been completed to meet the needs of the growing campus. The Winston Paul Educational Center opened its doors in 2004 and houses academic offices, classrooms, meeting rooms and a computer lab. The residential wing of the building, developed in partnership with Children's Oncology Services Inc., is known as the One Step Lodge. The Beasley Campus Center was remodeled in 2007 and features a state-of-the-art kitchen, special dining areas, an outdoor dining venue and space for concerts and receptions. It also features the George Williams Memorial Room, one of two existing replicas of the London quarters where the YMCA was established in 1844. Renovations to Meyer Hall were also completed in 2007. The building houses academic offices, classrooms and the campus resource center. A new home for Music by the Lake at George Williams College of Aurora University will be completed in summer 2008. The Ferro Pavilion will feature additional seating under cover; improved lighting, sound and ventilation; and a larger permanent stage are part of the plans as well.

Academic Programs

- Aurora University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association to award degrees at the baccalaureate, master's and doctoral levels. The university is an exemplary institution of higher learning that provides its students with life-changing, quality learning experiences. We believe that the educational needs of our students are served best through the formation of strategic partnerships with institutions of like vision, mission and values.
- The Aurora campus offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs through the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Education (including the School of Health and Physical Education) and the College of Professional Studies (including the Dunham School of Business, School of Nursing and School of Social Work). More than 40 majors are offered in the undergraduate curriculum, leading to Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Bachelor of Social Work degrees. The graduate programs offer areas of specialization, leading to master's degrees in business administration, teaching and social work, as well as a doctorate in education.
- Academic programs at Aurora University are designed to prepare students for lives of meaning, leadership and service. The Crouse Center for Student Success is an academic and career services office that assists students with selecting courses and introduces students to campus programs. Unique opportunities include the Honors Program which combines advanced coursework, innovative seminars and special events; May Term, a three-week semester in which students can study abroad or enroll in a unique on-campus course; and the Dunham Scholars program which provides deserving business students with a challenging academic experience.
- George Williams College of Aurora University offers undergraduate and graduate academic programs. Fourteen programs include undergraduate degrees in business leadership, communication, hospitality, nursing, and recreation administration, as well as graduate degrees in recreation administration, education, social work, and business, and a doctorate degree in education.
- AU offers its undergraduates a wide range of on- and off-campus learning experiences on the Aurora campus. Students participate in more than 60 musical, literary, religious, social and service organizations and play active roles in campus governance. The university also fields 18 NCAA Division III intercollegiate athletic teams. The Spartans boast a winning tradition with 44 conference titles in recent years and 25 regular appearances in national tournaments.

Community Programs

- On the Aurora campus, AU is making a difference in the lives of its students and the community through a variety of programs. Students are connected to the community through academic outreach programs, including a literacy program sponsored by athletes, tutoring services offered by education students, and social work students collaborating with area social service agencies. In addition, community and scholarly enrichment programs are offered through various conferences and seminars sponsored by the Wackerlin Center for Faith and Action, the Celebrating Arts and Ideas series, the HR Institute and the Sales Institute sponsored by the Dunham School of Business. Many other lectures and events are held each year for community members, and the university also offers volunteer programs in the community.
- The local Lake Geneva community benefits from the many community programs and outreach activities sponsored by the campus. Community programs include Music by the Lake, the Bistro Speaker series, youth leadership programs, adventure education and recreation activities. In addition, the community benefits through a number of special partnership programs, such as recreation administration students who run the local park district program and other community programs as part of their academic studies.
- As Aurora University continues to grow, so does its benefit to the community. Communities are impacted by our students and alumni and through educational and cultural offerings. As an example, in 2006, Aurora University's economic impact was \$284.5 million on the greater Chicago area, and George Williams College had a \$4.5 million impact on Walworth County in Wisconsin.