

U of M - WASECA INTRODUCES NEW PROGRAMS



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TECHNICAL COLLEGE, WASECA

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This June the University of Minnesota, Waseca will graduate the 17th class. Since UMW's opening, hundreds of UMW horticulture students have entered the work force in Minnesota and across the nation. Many of the Landscape Maintenance graduates are now employed as successful golf course superintendents and in professional positions in other turfgrass related businesses and grounds maintenance operations.

Over two years ago, UMW began taking a closer look at the golf course industry and subsequently the Landscape Maintenance emphasis. The primary reasons for this review were increasing numbers of position announcements, but also the expanding degree of managerial and technical skills that were required of this specialized work force.

The UMW Horticultural Industry Advisory Committee worked with the administration and faculty to further explore the industry and ultimately a decision was made to pursue a major revision of the Landscape Maintenance curriculum to develop a Golf Course and Grounds Management emphasis and a Golf Course and Grounds Mechanization emphasis. UMW is especially appreciative of the liaison work that Advisory Committee members Dale Caldwell, CGCS, Kurt Erdmann, and Fred Taylor did in helping to organize these two new emphases.

Representatives from the USGA and GCSAA were also very helpful in developing the lists of competencies necessary for today's golf course management teams, technicians and course mechanics. These competency lists were eventually formulated into curriculums of existing coursework, redeveloped coursework, and new specialized coursework.

We had several goals in mind as we put the two emphases together. We wanted students to have a blend of Arts and Sciences, Business and Personal Management, Equipment Service and Repair, technical Horticulture, and Turfgrass Science and Management coursework. There are four classes that deal specifically with turfgrass science, management and irrigation.

We wanted a curriculum that would provide part-time and full-time educational opportunities as well as coursework for continuing education units (CEU's). We felt the curriculum should benefit employees already in golf course

management and maintenance as well as those students just beginning their educational experience in the turfgrass industry.

We also wanted a curriculum that would maximize the hands-on educational experience available to students in both indoor and outdoor laboratories as well as a one quarter internship. UMW is proud of a newly developed working relationship with the Waseca Lakeside Country Club. Superintendent Ray Bloemke and Assistant Superintendent Robert Panuska have worked with UMW faculty and staff to develop hands-on educational experiences in maintenance, construction, and the development, justification, and implementation of the annual budget.

Finally, we wanted a curriculum that would involve the expertise of many faculty, staff and industry specialists. We have had tremendous participation from the national turfgrass equipment industry and most importantly, the Minnesota equipment and supply distributors. Their support with equipment and parts for the mechanic classes and new equipment for field operation classes is paramount to the success of the emphases. They have been and will continue to be a very important source of guest speakers and demonstrations.

Once the emphases were developed and approved by the University Education Policy Committee, course descriptions and outlines were reviewed by golf course superintendents from South Dakota and Minnesota. The Minnesota Review Committee currently consists of Keith Scott, CGCS, Andy Lindquist, CGCS, and Randy Nelson, CGCS. This formal review process has proved very beneficial in the continued refinement of both curriculums.

At present there are three individuals in program coordinating roles. Joan Barrett is Business/Industry Program Coordinator at UMW. Joan will oversee the development and scheduling of on-and off-campus technical and managerial coursework for adults currently employed in the turfgrass industry and/or interested in Continuing Education Units (C.E.U.'s). Duane Schindler, Assistant Professor of Mechanized Agriculture will oversee the Golf Course and Grounds Mechanization emphasis. I will be coordinating the Golf Course and Grounds Management emphasis and the UMW/Lakeside laboratory arrangement.

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