

INTRODUCTION

PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

Michigan has 15 public 4-year universities located throughout the state. Three institutions — the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan State University in East Lansing, and Wayne State University in Detroit — have large undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs and conduct varied and complex academic and research activities. Five institutions — Western Michigan University at Kalamazoo, Eastern Michigan University at Ypsilanti, Central Michigan University at Mt. Pleasant, Oakland University near Rochester, and Northern Michigan University at Marquette — offer primarily undergraduate programs, but also offer some graduate programs and doctoral programs. Programs in specialized areas are emphasized at 2 institutions: engineering at Michigan Technological University at Houghton and vocational-technical programs at Ferris State University in Big Rapids. Five institutions offer primarily undergraduate programs in the liberal arts — they are Grand Valley State University at Allendale, Saginaw Valley State University in University Center, Lake Superior State University at Sault Ste. Marie, and the branch campuses of the University of Michigan at Dearborn and Flint. Together these institutions of higher education offer diverse programs, including vocational-technical, adult education, general academic, and professional training in law, medicine, veterinary medicine, optometry, and dentistry. While the diversity of programs at these institutions is great, similar programs within the general liberal arts curriculum are offered at all schools, providing residents with convenient access to nonspecialized educational programs.

Higher education enjoys a relatively autonomous structure in Michigan. The Constitution of 1963, which created the current State Board of Education, authorizes the boards of control of the individual public universities to supervise their respective institutions and to control expenditure of institutional funds. Three of the public 4-year universities are supervised by individual boards of control elected by the voters of Michigan while each remaining public university is governed by a board of control appointed by the governor.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Michigan's 28 community colleges provide: 1) higher education opportunities to citizens for whom the cost, location of state universities and private colleges, or academic entrance requirements are barriers to attendance; 2) job training and retraining opportunities, including vocational, avocational, and nondegree courses and programs that may not be offered by other institutions; and 3) services that enhance the economic, cultural, intellectual, and social life of the community.

The Constitution of 1963 provides: "The legislature shall provide by law for the establishment and financial support of public community and junior colleges which shall be supervised and controlled by locally elected boards." This constitutional provision also established an 8-member State Board for Public Community Colleges to advise the State Board of Education in its general supervision and planning for community colleges. The creation and operation of community colleges are governed by Act 331 of 1966.

Students attend classes, either part time or full time, at one of Michigan's 28 public 2-year colleges, which are located throughout the state, with 2 located in the Upper Peninsula, 6 in the northern Lower Peninsula, and the remaining 20 in southern Michigan. Over 80% of Michigan's 9.9 million citizens live in a community college district.

Curriculum offerings at Michigan's community colleges include pre-professional, liberal arts, occupational, and vocational courses responsive to the needs of both the student who will transfer to a 4-year institution and the student who will be directly entering or reentering the labor force.

INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Michigan's independent colleges provide a variety of specialized education opportunities and environments that complement public education offerings. They offer certificate and associate degree programs; church-affiliated programs; baccalaureate programs, including liberal arts and teacher education; and graduate/professional programs leading to postgraduate degrees in many disciplines. Independent colleges are required to offer programs leading to a degree or offer 2 or more years of courses for transfer to a degree-granting Michigan institution of higher education

recognized by the state. In addition to traditional course offerings for students, independent colleges provide special programs ranging from weekend courses for professionals to seminars for senior citizens. Special and continuing education courses often are held on weekends, evenings, and early mornings at locations both on and off campus.

Independent colleges and universities are recognized by the State Board of Education when they have been incorporated under Act 327 of 1931. The State Board of Education ensures that the articles of incorporation clearly define the educational activity of the proposed corporation and that specific limits are defined. Any unincorporated nonpublic colleges are also brought under the authority of the State Board of Education to establish minimum requirements for degrees or awards.