

The following are official numbers for semester two.

### ENROLLMENT

#### UNDERGRADUATES

**589** Undergraduates,  
representing **27** states  
and **6** countries



#### EDUCATION

*Includes Staff Ministry*

**123** First-year  
**107** Sophomore  
**73** Junior  
**96** Senior  
**28** Fifth-year  
**9** Other  
**436** Total

#### PRESEMINARY

*Year of graduation*

**45** 2027-28  
**32** 2026-27  
**45** 2025-26  
**31** 2024-25  
**153** Total

### NONTRADITIONAL EDUCATION

**25** Competency-Based Theology students

### CONTINUING ED / GRADUATE STUDIES

**1,017** Continuing Education students



**123** Graduate Studies students

**13** MA Theological Studies

**56** MS Educational Admin

**17** EC Director

**37** Principal

**2** Technology Director

**41** MS Education

**7** Ed Tech

**13** Instruction

**12** Leadership

**9** Special Ed

**13** MS Special Education

### NEW TEACHER INDUCTION

**204** Beginning Teachers

**156** Schools

**145** Mentors



### EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING CENTER



**80** Children

**4** Lead teachers

**9** Student teachers

**4** Student workers

**7** Full-time staff

## "MLC RECOGNIZED BY WALL STREET JOURNAL AS SHREWDEST COLLEGE IN THE COUNTRY!"

by Rich Gurgel, MLC President



No, that headline isn't real. Yes, in 2024 the *Wall Street Journal* listed MLC as the #1 college/university in the country for career preparation. But there's no shrewdness listing.

Would we strive to top that list if it did exist? Jesus does urge us in that direction.

In a shocking turn in one of Jesus' parables, a dishonest steward receives commendation from his defrauded master "because he had acted shrewdly" (Lk 16:8). Neither the master (nor Jesus) commends dishonesty. The master commends his servant's focused use of temporary resources to reach his goal of being welcomed into debtors' homes (Lk 16:4).

Then comes a second shocker. Jesus looks each of us in the eye and speaks these words: "For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light. I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friend for yourselves so that when it is gone you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings" (Lk 16:8-9).

There it is! Jesus longs for us "people of the light" to prove ourselves as shrewd as those "people of this world." And we get to do that without frantic fear and for a greater purpose. We don't act in fear as if only our shrewdness ensures that our needs are met. That's how pagans operate (Mt 6:32). Our Father gives us everything we need since he's already given us Jesus (Ro 8:32). And we act shrewdly with a far greater purpose. The world pursues shrewdness to enhance temporal bottom lines. We pursue shrewdness with "worldly wealth" to "gain friends" who in thanks to God will be a heavenly welcoming team!

Now, back to that imagined headline. This is a very challenging time for higher education in our country. About one college a week closes its doors. In that setting, MLC seeks, under God's blessing, to be A-list shrewd in handling "worldly wealth." We aren't fearful that our doors will close—God provides us with synodical support and many generous individual donors. Instead, we seek top-level shrewdness to help us raise up a new generation of messengers who will be gaining friends for heaven!

That's why, in 2024, in partnership with synod leaders, we engaged experienced higher ed consultants to analyze where we can be shrewder in how we operate as a college. Now, in 2025, we are implementing those recommendations, which will lead to stronger fiscal stability and operational efficiency—not primarily for a better bottom line, but for a mission that matters forever.

So, pray for God's blessings as MLC embarks on an aggressive effort to be "the shrewdest college in the country." The *Wall Street Journal* may never notice. Heaven's welcome party will.

# COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION CONTINUES TO MOVE FORWARD

MLC continues to move forward with the Competency-Based Education initiative to meet the need for more teachers in our elementary schools. The data from our first term of CBTE (Competency-Based Theology Education) Minor affirms that the coursework has had a powerful impact on the scriptural and doctrinal foundations of the learners in the program.

Feedback from stakeholders, including the learners, has been instrumental in shaping our admissions, enrollment, and financial processes to support individuals in this new modality. We are also preparing to launch two new cohorts in January, one online with virtual meetings and one online with in-person meetings in Milwaukee.

We are also excited to share that our Alternative Pathway to Professional Licensure Eligibility (APPLE) - Elementary Education is in the final stages of our accreditor's approval process. Once approved, MLC will offer courses beyond the CBTE Minor to support returning adult learners who are studying to serve as teachers at their local Lutheran schools.

If you have questions about or interest in either program, please contact Dr. Nichole LaGrow, director of Nontraditional Education, at [lagrowna@mlc-wels.edu](mailto:lagrowna@mlc-wels.edu)/ 507.354.8221.



## SAVE THE DATE MLC DAY IS MAY 7, 2025!



Join MLC supporters across the globe in celebrating and promoting ministerial education on MLC Day.

### What can you do to participate in MLC Day?

You can pray, share, and give to support the training of future called workers.

- Use MLC's Project Elijah classroom materials to have your own ministerial education recruitment week.
- Write a prayer for our students and staff.
- Submit photos and videos to celebrate MLC students and graduates.
- Download signs and materials.
- **Give to your College of Ministry. Your gifts on MLC Day will help fund the Congregational Partner Grant Matching Fund, directly supporting MLC students.**

**MLC Day is part of a year-long effort to raise just over \$776,000 for the CPGP Matching Fund.**



## EXCITING NEWS FOR OUR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS!

**Our online Associate of Science (AS) in Early Childhood Education (ECE) degree for preschool teachers has been approved by our accrediting agency!** This program is intended for adult learners, and we are enrolling them right now!

This 67.5-credit AS-ECE degree program is the final tier in our 4-Tier "Support at Every Step" program for early childhood educators. It qualifies individuals to receive a divine call to WELS early childhood ministries, though it does not provide licensure for public school teachers.

The course of study includes general education courses, early childhood professional courses, and ministry certification (theology) courses. All professional and theology courses are available online through MLC, and we can also help you earn your required general education credits.

As early childhood ministries continue to grow in churches across the country, they need more teachers—teachers who understand the fundamentals of early childhood education and who are well grounded in biblical theology. Our AS-ECE can prepare these teachers—yet another way Martin Luther College is *Pursuing Excellence Under the Cross* as we meet the ministry needs of the WELS.



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**NATIONAL BAND FEST**—March 7 - 9

**COLLEGE CHOIR SPRING TOUR**—March 15 - 23

Missouri, Tennessee,  
Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin,  
and Minnesota



**MLC FORUM PRESENTS**

- **ASK ANY GIRL**—February 28 - March 1
- **ONCE UPON A CRIME: THE TRIAL OF GOLDBLOCKS**—May 3

**MLC DAY**—May 7

**MLC GRADUATION**—May 17

**WIND SYMPHONY TOUR**—May 18 - 25

*Destinations to be determined.*



If you have any questions related to this report or other matters related to our ministry, contact us at [mlcinfo@mlc-wels.edu](mailto:mlcinfo@mlc-wels.edu).

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