

ETC.**STCC, Worcester form partnership**

Beginning this fall, Springfield Technical Community College will offer a new urban studies program to prepare students for careers that can help the growth of gateway cities such as Springfield and Worcester.

After graduating from the program, STCC students can transfer credits to Worcester State University where they can pursue a bachelor's degree in urban studies.

STCC and Worcester State presidents John B. Cook and Barry M. Maloney signed an agreement earlier this month to create the partnership between the schools.

"With appreciation to our talented faculty, it is very exciting to now have an urban studies pathway with Worcester State University, which has a well-established program," Cook said. "With a Springfield to Worcester option, we are excited to offer Western Massachusetts students with an affordable way to develop skills that will transform their communities. This agreement with Worcester State is truly unique, and opens doors to an important set of career choices."

Maloney said, "We seek partnerships that align with our strategic mission which benefit the student and serve the community. This urban studies pathway accomplishes both."

As part of the agreement, students who enroll in the two-year urban studies program at STCC and earn their associate degree can transfer to Worcester State. At Worcester State, students can pursue



Springfield Technical Community College President John B. Cook, left, and Worcester State University President Barry M. Maloney signed an agreement earlier this month to create a partnership between the schools.

a bachelor's degree in urban studies, which typically takes two years. They will have the option to continue their education and pursue a master's degree, which typically takes one year in a 4 + 1 track.

Richard Greco, interim dean for the School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at STCC, said the urban studies curriculum prepares students for careers in areas such as civic engagement, municipal planning, public policy, community organization and nonprofit management.

"The idea for urban studies grew out of the need to solve problems within the city of Springfield such as socio-economic hardships and public health disparities," Greco said. "Most of our students come from Springfield and stay here after graduation. This is an opportunity for them to help create positive changes in their community."

While students in the new STCC urban studies program can choose the pathway to

Worcester State, they have other options after graduation. They can transfer to another four-year institution in Massachusetts and pursue a bachelor's degree in sociology, said Matthew Gravel, dean of Academic Initiatives at STCC.

lum meets the requirement for the "MassTransfer" associate-to-bachelor's pathway in sociology, Gravel said. MassTransfer gives students the choice to begin their academic career and then transfer to a state university or public college at a significant cost-savings. Go online to stcc.edu to learn more about MassTransfer benefits.

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