



Brochure Last Updated: 27 May 2025

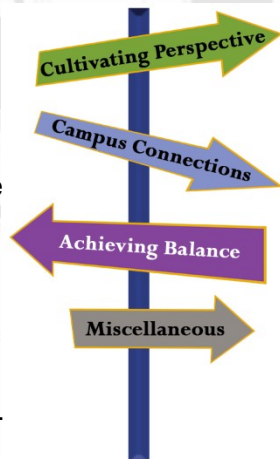
University Staff Professional Development Conference

2025: Spark Innovation

Wednesday, June 4th | UWEC Centennial Hall
Keynote: Schofield Auditorium

This year's Professional Development Conference is an all-day in-person event with the theme "Spark Innovation, Illuminate the Future". In a world of constant change, we are called to face challenges head-on and navigate paths unknown. It is through bold thinking, creative problem-solving, and fearless exploration that we ignite ideas with the power to transform. Together, we light the way forward—turning uncertainty into opportunity and vision into reality.

The University Staff Council (USC)'s Professional Development Committee designs this conference specifically to provide professional development opportunities to University Staff, who have limited options to participate and invest in their own improvement and career advancement. This event is also open to external attendees from UW System, Wisconsin Area Technical Colleges, and other local community partners.



SPARK INNOVATION
ILLUMINATE THE FUTURE

Overview of Events

**REGISTRATION +
LIGHT REFRESHMENTS**
7:00-8:00 AM

**AWARDS LUNCHEON* +
UNIVERSITY STAFF ANNUAL
MEETING**
11:45 AM-1:15 PM

**WELCOME RECEPTION +
KEYNOTE**
8:00-9:15 AM

SESSION III
1:30-2:30 PM

SESSION I
9:30-10:30 AM

BREAK 2:30-2:45 PM

BREAK 10:30-10:45 AM

SESSION IV
2:45-3:45 PM

SESSION II
10:45-11:45 AM

* To be eligible to win a prize award, you must be registered before the day of the Conference.



University Staff Professional Development Conference

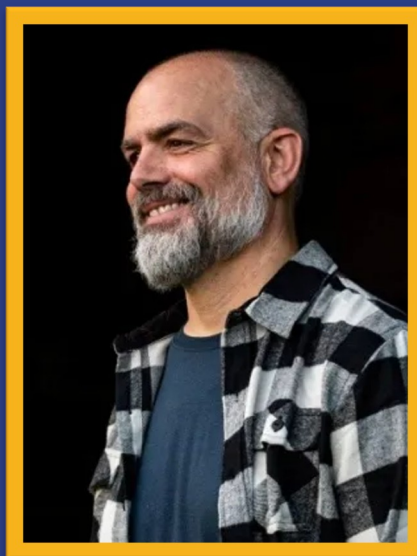


Welcome Reception:
**Dean of Students/
Student Affairs**
Gregg Heinselman
8:00-8:15 AM

Keynote: Michael Perry
8:15-9:15 AM | Schofield Auditorium (155)

Shootin' the Breeze in Times Like These: Humor, Heart and Humanity

Michael Perry is a farm boy turned humorist, New York Times bestselling author, volunteer firefighter/first responder, corporate speaker, and amateur snow plow driver from rural Wisconsin, known for leaving audiences laughing (and nodding, and sometimes getting misty) from his “reflective roughneck” takes on life in rural America.



Perry's bestselling books include the volunteer firefighter memoir *Population: 485* (subsequently adapted for the stage), *Truck: A Love Story*, *Coop*, *Visiting Tom*, and *Montaigne in Barn Boots*. Among his other twenty-plus titles are *The Scavengers* (for young readers), his novel *The Jesus Cow*, the essay collections *Peaceful Persistence*, *Million Billion*, and *Hunker*, and his most recent book, the deeply powerful novella *Forty Acres Deep*. Raised on a small Midwestern dairy farm, Perry put himself through nursing school while working on a ranch in Wyoming, then detoured into writing. He lives with his wife and two daughters in rural Wisconsin, where he still makes an occasional call with the local volunteer fire and rescue service. He performs widely as a humorist (his live humor albums include *Never Stand Behind A Sneezing Cow* and *The Clodhopper Monologues*), tours with his band *The Long Beds*, and lives online at www.sneezingcow.com.

2025: Spark Innovation, Illuminate the Future

SESSION I | 9:30-10:30 AM

Microsoft Teams: From Basics to Advanced Collaboration

Eric Stevens

LTS—Technical Services

During this session, you will discover the fundamentals of Microsoft Teams, as well as some advanced tips and tricks for working together with your colleagues at UWEC and elsewhere.

Benefits of Being a Blugold

Curious to learn more about all the benefits that come with being an employee at UW-Eau Claire? This presentation will walk you through the wide range of services, resources, and opportunities that are available to you as a Blugold!

Ella Egeland

Human
Resources



Wills, Trusts, and Legal Documentation

We will review the differences between a Last Will and Testament and a Trust and why Power of Attorney documents are important to have. Q&A time will be allotted.

Mary Beth Gardner

Attorney Gardner is a 1989 graduate of Hamline University School of Law located in St. Paul, Minnesota. She received her undergraduate training at Marquette University where she majored in Business Administration. She is a member of the Wisconsin Bar Association, Elder Law Section of the Wisconsin Bar, and member of the National Academy of Elder Law. Attorney Mary Beth Gardner has practiced in the areas of estate planning, probate, medical assistance planning, and guardianship since 1990. She opened her own office in November of 1991 and continues to focus her practice on estate planning, probate, medical assistance planning, and guardianship.



Boundaries without Guilt: How to Protect Your Time and Energy

Boundaries are not just about setting limits on other people—they require understanding your own needs, seeing the impact of your actions, and not controlling what is outside of your control. Dr. Cindy Halvorson will present a decision-making strategy that can support your well-being and your relationships, both at work and at home.

In this workshop, you'll learn:

- How to recognize when boundaries are needed
- 4-step framework for making healthier decisions
- Clear, effective ways to communicate boundaries

South Bath with Crystal Bowls

Come experience the pure harmonic tone of crystal singing bowls with Bridget as she plays arrangements of seven different tones. The sound of the bowls creates an immersive sound bath; the effect of which is like a 'vibrational massage' or an 'inner tuning'.

Bridget Ellenbecker

Bridget is a Master Reiki Practitioner, Certified Sound Therapist, and a Reflexologist. Services provided at Sacred Space Beauty and Wellness in Eau Claire.



SESSION II | 10:45-11:45 AM

ATP and Me: Preparing for Launch

As UW-Eau Claire and all the schools in the Universities of Wisconsin network prepare for the launch of Workday, learn how you can plan and prepare for a successful transition to this cutting-edge software platform.

Mike Knuth, UW-Eau Claire Communications Director

Cheri Falkner, UW-Eau Claire Director of Procurement and Strategic Sourcing

Dr. Erica Benson, Executive Director of UW-Eau Claire's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs



Yoga (Ariane)

Join Ariane for a slow, stretchy, gentle movement session! There is no experience needed. If you have a mat you'd like to bring, feel free.



Ariane Foster

Ariane has been a yoga teacher since 2015 and a yoga therapist since 2021. Her love for yoga started the very first time she walked into a yoga class when she was 16, and it has grown into an incredible career. She became a yoga teacher because she knows the immediate benefits of a calm nervous system and the profound shifts it can have in your life. She is also a yoga therapist because she has witnessed the gap of accessible and inclusive yoga spaces while working within the disability service sector and the therapeutic approach to yoga will allow you to try things you never thought you could.

Creative Calm: Art Therapy and the Power of the Body Scan

Participants will be provided a brief presentation on Art Therapy and the benefits of mindfulness, as well as being lead through a Body Scan that combines the mindfulness practice of slowing down and attuning to one's body with the use of drawing as a method of reflective processing.



Nancy Xiong

Nancy is a licensed professional counselor and credentialed Art Therapist. Nancy received her Master's Degree in Art Therapy from Mount Mary University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Nancy uses art to help individuals to increase awareness and insight, to express thoughts and feelings through visual means, and to process difficult memories and emotions. Currently, Nancy is a counselor at UW Eau Claire Counseling Services where she supports young people in developing the skills and tools they need to successfully confront challenges and manage their emotions.

The Other Side of Cancer: A Journey of Healing, Empowerment, and Personal Transformation

Discover the untold side of the cancer experience—where healing goes beyond medicine, and empowerment becomes the foundation for transformation. In this inspiring session, Cancer Coach Stephanie Miller shares powerful insights into the emotional journey of cancer, the impact of natural integrative therapies, and how anyone—whether facing cancer or not—can embrace a more proactive, empowered approach to wellness.

Stephanie Miller

Stephanie Miller is a Cancer Doula, integrative cancer coach, Reiki practitioner, and cancer survivor with nearly 30 years of experience in healthcare and patient care. Her professional background in medical imaging and cancer screening, combined with her personal journey through cancer—both her own and her husband's—gives her a unique perspective on healing that bridges science, spirit and self-empowerment. Today, she supports women affected by cancer through coaching, emotional support, and natural therapies like Reiki, essential oils, and mindfulness. Stephanie helps her clients navigate the unknowns of diagnosis, treatment, and survivorship with compassion and clarity—empowering them to reconnect with their inner wisdom, make confident choices, and advocate for their well-being. She is the founder of a holistic wellness practice in western Wisconsin, a Red Letter Grant recipient, and co-host of an annual Women's Cancer Retreat.



Stress Management

We will be discussing ways to cope with stress in and out of the workplace, as well as ways to prevent burnout. Attendees will have the opportunity to practice and share stress management and mindfulness skills.



Bri Miller & Kate Lewis

Bri and Kate are master's level counseling interns at UWEC in their second year of UW-Stout's Clinical Mental Health Counseling program. Both believe in the importance of a strong client-counselor relationship and that sharing one's story leads to healing. Their goal is to empower others to grow and live more authentically, and help clients develop a better understanding of self.



SESSION III | 1:30-2:30 PM

Getting to Know Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

This presentation will provide an overview of the EAP, highlighting the wide range of confidential services available to support employees' mental, emotional, and financial well-being. By offering resources such as counseling, legal and financial advice, and work-life support, the EAP helps employees navigate personal and professional challenges, ultimately fostering a healthier, more productive workplace.

Kelly Rissky

Kelly Rissky has over 20 years of specialized EAP experience, wearing many different hats over the years. Kelly is the Account Manager for the State of WI & Universities of WI Systems. Kelly provides top notch customer service by anticipating clients' needs before they arise and having a proactive approach to communication and problem-solving. Kelly lives in Sussex, WI and received her Master of Science in Educational Psychology from UW-Milwaukee and undergraduate degree in Human Services and Sociology from UW-Oshkosh.



Self-care Isn't Selfish and Well WI Program Overview

Discover why self-care is important for our well-being and how practicing it is not selfish. Identify activities to implement into your routine and develop a customized self-care plan for your lifestyle. We'll also review some of the Well Wisconsin Program offerings.



Alexis Krause

Alexis Krause is a Program Manager for the Well Wisconsin Program. Alexis attained her Masters of Public Health from The University of Colorado- Anschutz Medical Campus, and received her Bachelors of Science in Community Health Education from UW La Crosse. She has 10 years of experience working in community health throughout the great state of Wisconsin, and loves empowering people to use health information to better their own lives.

Spark Your Joy: Using Your Happiness Quotient to Transform your Workplace

Discover how tuning into your personal Happiness Quotient (HQ) can ignite powerful, positive change at work. In this session, you'll learn how to assess your HQ, understand its influence on your environment, and use small emotional shifts to transform a defensive climate into a supportive one—one spark at a time.

Karen has been teaching in the Communication and Journalism Department for the past 28 years and loves engaging with her students in classes such as Interpersonal Communication, Communication Theory, Communication and Conflict just to name a few. Karen has a true affinity for the first-year student as they navigate their way through adulthood and college life. When not teaching, Karen is a true soccer mom, as she and her husband follow their only son as he finished up his senior year playing for Stanford University.

Karen Morris



Re-Train your Metabolism

In this presentation, we'll share simple ways to enhance your health and metabolism. We'll debunk myths and provide actionable tips for lasting changes. Get ready to feel motivated and equipped to improve your vitality.

Emily Boudreau

Emily is the proprietor of Dragonfly Fitness and Training, founded in 2013. She derives immense satisfaction from witnessing clients' holistic transformations, encompassing physical, mental, and emotional aspects. Her journey commenced at Gold's Gym, starting with a Zumba certification and expanding into personal training and nutrition qualifications. Continuously dedicated to learning and growth, Emily remains attuned to evolving trends and practices. Her primary objective is to empower individuals to achieve peak well-being, vitality, and enjoyment of life through sustainable approaches.



AI for Work and Learning: Exploring Microsoft Copilot

Microsoft's Copilot AI is now available to all UW-Eau Claire faculty and staff! In this practical workshop, we'll explore some Copilot "quick wins" that you can start using right away. Whatever your role is at UWEC, you'll learn new ways that AI can make your important work easier and even more effective.

Evan Sveum

Evan Sveum is a Teaching Assistant Professor of Information Systems in the Business Communication and Information Systems Department at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. With over 22 years of experience in higher education and a background in both business and education-focused IT, he brings a practical, real-world perspective to the classroom and campus initiatives. Evan is passionate about using AI tools like Microsoft Copilot to improve student learning outcomes and support faculty in integrating technology effectively and ethically. In addition to his academic role, he has served as a consultant to both business and education sectors, helping organizations leverage technology for meaningful impact.



SESSION IV | 2:45-3:45 PM

Thinking on Your Feet! Developing Presentation and Listening Skills through Improvisational Theatre



This interactive session will explore how Improvisational Theatre and games enhance presentations. Participants will learn the basic rules of improv and how to apply those to various other situations. While participation is not mandatory, it is definitely encouraged!

Arthur Grothe

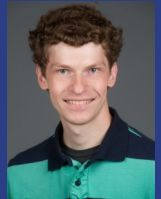
Arthur Grothe received his M.F.A. in Acting from the University of Florida and has both a B.A. in Communications and Theatre Arts as well as a B.A. in English from Heidelberg University. He has also had additional training from the Stanislavsky Summer Institute, The Lessac Summer Institute, and in Meisner Technique. Prior to joining The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Music and Theatre Department, he worked as Director of Theatre and Fine Arts Department Chair at the University of West Alabama. A native of Cleveland, OH Arthur has worked on stage with The Cleveland Playhouse, the Cleveland Shakespeare Festival, Dobama Theatre, Cleveland Public Theatre, convergence-continuum, The Theatre Ninjas, and Bad Epitaph Theatre Company. He is currently the Wisconsin State Chair for the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival and the Director of the Midwest Artist Academy.

Introduction to Digital Accessibility

In April 2024, the Department of Justice implemented new rules incorporating digital accessibility into the ADA. Learn about the impacts of this rule on UWEC faculty, staff, and students; get basic tips on how to improve your websites, documents, course materials, and presentations, with hands-on exercises; and discover campus resources for further learning and training.

Josh Bauer

Josh Bauer is User Experience Architect in Learning & Technology Services. He has 15+ years of experience in web development and design and is a firm believer in learning as an ongoing, collaborative process where students and instructors are co-learners.



Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges: Mental Health First Aid on Campus

In this interactive workshop, participants will gain essential skills and strategies in recognizing and responding to students and colleagues experiencing mental health challenges. Through practical scenarios and guided discussion, attendees will develop confidence in providing initial support during mental health crises and connecting individuals to appropriate resources through learning the ALGEE action plan. No prior mental health training required—just bring your compassion and willingness to learn.

Randi Goettl

Randi Goettl is a licensed Advanced Practice Social Worker and educator with extensive experience in mental health services, disability resources, and higher education. She currently teaches Mental Health and Substance Use courses at UW-Eau Claire and has recently become a certified Mental Health First Aid instructor, combining her clinical expertise with her commitment to accessible education.



Overview of WRS Benefits (Virtual Session)

Are you new to the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS)? We'll let you know what to expect.

By the end of this presentation, you will be able to:

- Identify and explain the elements of the WRS
- Explain how the WRS Pension works
- Identify Benefits available through the WRS
- Find resources for more information

Carlene Kellermann

Carlene Kellermann is an Outreach Benefits Specialist with the Department of Employee Trust Funds. She currently works in the Member Services Bureau in the Retirement Planning & Outreach section. Carlene has a degree in Education and currently applies her teaching background to help members understand and feel empowered about their benefits through webinar presentations, and in one-on-one retirement appointments – in person and over the phone. Her goal is to present information in a clear and easy-to-understand manner. Carlene is committed to creating an engaging, fun learning experience to ensure members are confident in navigating their personal retirement benefits.



Thank you to our event sponsors and prize donors!

Event Sponsors

University Staff Council
UW-Eau Claire Foundation
University Centers
Sodexo
University Staff Council
Advancement Fund

Prize donations for the Conference come from the following community businesses:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| ⇒ <i>Ambient Inks</i> | ⇒ <i>Crimpers Hair Design & Nail Salon</i> | ⇒ <i>Texas Roadhouse</i> |
| ⇒ <i>Ashley Furniture</i> | | ⇒ <i>UWEC Athletics</i> |
| ⇒ <i>Avon—Tina Wolfgram</i> | ⇒ <i>Mancino's</i> | ⇒ <i>UWEC Bookstore (Follett)</i> |
| ⇒ <i>Azul Tequila</i> | ⇒ <i>Massage Envy</i> | ⇒ <i>UWEC Foundation/Alumni</i> |
| ⇒ <i>Bowl Winkles</i> | ⇒ <i>Micon Cinemas</i> | ⇒ <i>New Donors Added Daily!</i> |
| ⇒ <i>Cabin Coffee</i> | ⇒ <i>Olson's Ice Cream</i> | |

Would you like to endorse this annual event?

Donate to the [University Staff Council Advancement Fund](#) and indicate "Professional Development Conference" in the comments.

We appreciate your support!

University Staff Professional Development Conference

This event brought to you by
University Staff Council

There are many different committees which promote ongoing education and a positive professional environment for all University Staff. They support professional development activities and encourage informed communication among the University Staff and with the broader university community. If you are interested in becoming a member of any of the following committees or Council itself, please contact any member of the University Staff Council.

UNIVERSITY STAFF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

- **Bylaws Committee** - [Learn More](#)
- **Communications Committee** - [Learn More](#)
- **Compensation Committee** - [Learn More](#)
- **Employee Appreciation Committee** - [Learn More](#)
- **Funding Committee** - [Learn More](#)
- **Grievance and Personnel Committee** - [Learn More](#)
- **Nominating Committee** - [Learn More](#)
- **Professional Development Committee** - [Learn More](#)

UNIVERSITY STAFF REPRESENTATION

University-Wide Committees

- **Administrator Review Committee** - [Learn More](#)
- **Excellence in Performance Award Selection Committee** - [Learn More](#)
- **University Planning Committee** - [Learn More](#)
- **University Safety Committee** - [Learn More](#)

University Senate Committees

- **Compensation and Budget Committee** - [Learn More](#)
- **Physical Plant Planning Committee** - [Learn More](#)
- **Technology Committee** - [Learn More](#)

Other

- **Liaison to Commission on the Status of Women**

UNIVERSITY STAFF COUNCIL, 2024-25

Nicole Owen
Deavon Puck
Sally Eckwright
Tracy Drier
Shelby Butteris
Heidi Decker-Mauer

Sheryl Gonzales
Dan Hillis
Jim Jenneman
Sue Kleusch
Lindsay Kroll
Tammy Perzichilli

Aimee Rehberg
Tonya Simpson
Libby Welch
Terri Thill
Kari Vanden Busch



The 2025 University Staff Professional Development Committee has organized this conference. Members of the committee include:

Debra Baier
Kristi Bergstrom
Shelby Butteris, Chair
Hayley Clark

Audra Connell
Bobbie Gillett
Sheryl Gonzales
Dan Hillis
Cindy Nevin

Nicole Owen
Aimee Rehberg
Cathy Sievert
Katy Teska, Vice Chair

The Professional Development Committee plans a variety of sessions for the Conference to provide a wide breadth of options. Each session falls under the purview of one of the following categories:

GREEN | Cultivating Perspective

Learn various skills and abilities for working in an equitable, diverse, and inclusive environment.

LIGHT BLUE | Campus Connections

Explore and engage with campus peers and information leaders to improve network ties and vocational knowledge.

PURPLE | Achieving Balance

Pursue a high quality of life by developing talents and interests to complement campus experiences while valuing personal health and wellbeing.

GREY | Miscellaneous

Collaborate and learn distinctive topics from assorted presenters to enhance your career and personal goals.



SPARK INNOVATION
ILLUMINATE THE FUTURE

2025: Spark Innovation, Illuminate the Future