

# DMACC students now have the chance to graduate as Hawkeyes

BY [EMILY BUSSE](#) | SEPTEMBER 10, 2009 7:15 AM

After years in the works, the UI is partnering with Des Moines Area Community College in a program enabling community college students to graduate as a Hawkeye without ever leaving their campus.

The partnership will allow students to get a UI bachelor's degree they might not have had access to otherwise, said Laurie Wolf, the executive dean of student services at the college.

"We have a lot of people who are place-bound, meaning that because of family or employment, they cannot leave the Des Moines area, but they want a four-year degree," she said. "By having this type of partnership ... they can tell people, 'I'm a UI graduate.' "

Students who participate in the program will be able to take UI courses on the Des Moines college campus by using a "blended coursework" method.

Such work consists of online classes that are supplemented by discussion groups with a facilitating instructor on hand to answer questions.

Having the in-person discussion groups and making UI advisers available to the Des Moines college students is something officials hope will encourage students to try the program, said Maureen McCormick, the director of the UI Division of Continuing Education marketing.

"Students may be a little concerned that, 'Oh I don't know if online is right for me,' so this is a good way for you to bridge any concerns," she said. "It's providing support that people need to be successful."

Wolf noted that, in addition to added support, the program offers the location convenience many community-college students need.

Because many community-college students hold jobs and don't live in residence halls, it's more difficult for them to study in groups, Wolf said.

"This way while they're on the computer ... they can be wherever they want to be," she said.

The UI plans to offer two courses on the Des Moines college campus every fall and spring,

McCormick said. Similar partnerships exist between the UI and three other community colleges, she said — Eastern Iowa Community College, Western Iowa Technical Community College, and Kirkwood Community College.

The UI and the Des Moines school plan to continue building on their partnership by adding more tracks, such as justice studies, McCormick said.

The program would also help community-college students financially because attending two years of community college before enrolling in UI classes "saves dollars," McCormick said.

"It's accessibility, it's affordability, it's value," she said. "It's a good value for your time, your commitment and the finances you bring."