

MEQUON MAIN CAMPUS (M)

Concordia University Wisconsin is known for its breathtaking views of Lake Michigan, and in fact, many students will say the campus' location played a big role in their decision to enroll. But a large percentage of Concordia alumni living today—and even a few current faculty—will recall making a very different commute to school.

That's because Concordia's original campus was located in downtown Milwaukee on 31st Street, between State and Highland Streets. From the school's inception in 1881 to 1983, students who attended CUW (then called Concordia College) did so in the city. The inaugural class of Concordians, which was comprised of 13 students, met in the basement of Trinity Lutheran Church in downtown Milwaukee. The next year, the 31st Street property was purchased to start Concordia's first permanent campus.

For the next approximately eight decades, Concordia College offered high school and the first two years of a liberal arts college program, providing classical, technical, and religious instruction for students who desired to prepare themselves for the ministry of the Lutheran Church. In 1978, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod authorized Concordia to become a four-year accredited college that would provide instruction in teacher education, nursing, medical assistant, social work, and engineering.

In a farsighted move in 1982, the LCMS purchased the former campus of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Mequon, Wisconsin, and the college was moved 15 minutes north of its original site.

On August 27, 1989, the Board of Regents approved the move to university status, and Concordia University Wisconsin became the first university among the 10-member Concordia University System.

In 2012, CUW entered into a strategic relationship with Concordia University in Ann Arbor. The university now consists of two residential campuses in Wisconsin and Ann Arbor, and online programs that reach students worldwide, with one president and governing body presiding over all.