



MICHAEL POELLINGER

BS., MS.

Associate Dean of Integrated Technologies

Western Technical College

La Crosse, Wisconsin

Facilitator Since: 2019

Foundation Academy Graduate: WLDI 2016

Foundation Academy Graduate: WLDI 2019

Michael built his personal and professional life on the foundation of creativity, adaptability and the commitment to help others succeed. With this base, he has navigated a diverse career and is currently the Associate Dean of the Integrated Technology Division. In this position, he guides academic programs in Advanced Manufacturing, Agriculture, Construction, and Electronics sectors through the uncertainty facing Higher Education.

Michael's professional career began as an architectural designer for a small, family owned and operated lumberyard. As is the case in most small businesses, each employee is required to assume multiple roles. From purchasing and material handling to sales and marketing, Michael adapted to the various responsibilities and recognized the connection each area had to the design process. Using this insight, he helped 1000's of people move into their dream homes and developed 100's of relationships across the community.

Through a fortuitous connection, Michael joined an advisory committee to support the development of an Architectural Technology program at Western Technical College. An unexpected faculty departure in the program led him to an opportunity to teach as an adjunct instructor that evolved into a full time faculty position. His early years in teaching uncovered a fascination with the art and science within education. He also noticed the similarities between architectural design and curriculum development.

Inspired by this connection, Michael transferred into a position as Curriculum Services Manager, overseeing academic scheduling, curriculum documentation, and program development. In this role, he successfully led college-wide strategic initiatives such as, career pathways integration and a re-envisioning of Western's college core abilities. From this position, he transitioned into his current role of Associate Dean.

With family spread out across the country Michael and his wife Katherine, appreciate the time they get to spend with family – sons Colten and Zach, and grandsons Silas and Quintin. When not at work, you will most likely find Michael on a basketball court, a volleyball court or golf course all depending on the season.