

OVERVIEW

History of Aurora University

Aurora University traces its origins to the 1893 founding of Mendota College in Illinois and the Western Secretarial Institute in Wisconsin, the two organizations that matured into Aurora College and George Williams College, respectively.

Mendota College was established initially as a seminary to prepare graduates for ministry, but it soon adopted a broader mission, moving in 1912 to a new campus in the nearby community of Aurora. With this change came a different name, Aurora College, and a growing enrollment. When World War II ended, the campus population swelled again as veterans enrolled in the college's innovative evening degree program. The 1970s and 1980s saw an expansion of curricular offerings in a number of professional fields and the awarding of advanced degrees in selected disciplines. These changes culminated in the 1985 decision to rechristen the institution Aurora University.

In 1992, Aurora University affiliated with George Williams College, renowned for its emphasis on social work programs. The institutions merged in 2000, with the university serving students on the George Williams College campus in Wisconsin for nearly 30 years. The legacy of the college now lives on at Aurora University through the George Williams School of Social Work.

Today, Aurora University operates in Aurora, Illinois, and through AU Online (<https://online.aurora.edu/>). The university also offers select programs at the University Center at McHenry County College (<https://aurora.edu/about/university-center-mchenry-county-college/>) in Woodstock, Illinois.