

**Update**  
College of Agricultural and Life Sciences  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
July, 2004

1. Enrollment: CALS undergraduate enrollment in 2003-04 was 2226, up about 1.6% from the previous year, while UW-Madison declined by about 0.3%. Graduate enrollment was 1015, up about 3.9% from the previous year. The number of new freshmen in Fall 2002 was 374, up about 1.9% from the previous year but considerably less than the all-time record 470 in Fall, 2001. The number of new freshmen for Fall 2004 is uncertain: we may well be down by 10% or more, but it is too early to make any very clear judgment.
2. Student demographics: The College and most of its majors are majority female. In 2003-04 about 56.33% of CALS undergraduates were female compared to 53.0% for the UW-Madison. The percentage female by area of study are: basic sciences 57%; social science 66%; production agriculture 54%; food and nutrition 87%; and natural resources 43%.
3. The largest majors are Biology (380), Genetics (342), Biochemistry (247), Nutritional Sciences (177), Landscape Architecture (157), and Animal Science (133). The majors most frequently chosen by new freshmen are: Biology, Genetics, Biochemistry and Animal Science.
4. A major concern is the relatively low numbers of students interested in production agriculture. In some majors, such as agronomy, the number of majors has been stable over the past 20 years but the interests of the students have changed from production to environment and sustainability. Animal Science curriculum has been traditionally organized on the assumption that most students have on-farm production experience and that is no longer the case. A group of department chairs is discussing changes and adaptations to this new reality.
5. Our long-run effort to encourage undergraduate research is paying dividends. Recent estimates are that, every semester, about 15% of undergraduates are enrolled in an independent study course for research. About 50 undergraduates publish in scientific journals every year. Another very large but unknown percentage of undergraduates work in laboratories as part-time employment.
6. A student-led initiative to create learning opportunities for leadership development has found very strong, widespread and deep support among faculty. We are talking with faculty and departments and it is clear that we will emerge with a leadership program for undergraduates combining, at a minimum, retreats, courses, practical experiences and reflection. A certificate is under discussion.
7. We are revisiting assessment to raise the level of rigor and sophistication of department assessment. We will maintain our "Peace Corps Assessment" philosophy that assessment must be faculty defined and driven, appropriate to departmental needs and sustainable in the long run with resources available to the department.