



DIVISION OF ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021

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Division of Enrollment Management

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

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Data for this report are provided by each team's data steward. See data notes associated with each graphic for more information about sources and limitations of the data provided. For official, complete totals, visit apir.wisc.edu. Some data may be incomplete at the time of publication. DEM Data Stewards include: John Dreger (Office of Student Financial Aid), Phil Hull (Office of the Registrar), and David Lesczynski (Office of Admissions and Recruitment).

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FROM THE DIVISIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM

In 2020-21, the Division of Enrollment Management continued to meet the challenges created by the global COVID-19 pandemic and its variants. Despite them, DEM team members met and exceeded institutional goals across our Division. In the Office of Admissions and Recruitment (OAR), admissions counselors and supporting teams read a record number of undergraduate applications and helped us welcome to campus an academically prepared and diverse freshman class. The Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) continued its commitment to supporting students impacted by COVID-19 pandemic by disbursing funds from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) established by Congress and institutional funds. The Registrar's Office (RO) worked quickly and tirelessly to de-densify classrooms, facilitate online learning, and collaborate with other academic offices, all while continuing and improving the usual services students rely on.

Despite these challenges, and in some cases because of them, DEM has continued to provide innovative, student-focused solutions to the barriers students might face on their way toward graduation. We have expanded Student Success Services like peer mentoring, success coaching, student workshops, and basic needs support. Our online form connecting students to emergency financial aid is now available year-round. And we have continued to expand and

evaluate Bucky's Tuition Promise, which provides grants and scholarships to cover tuition and fees for all Pell-eligible Wisconsin students and all other Wisconsin students whose families make less than \$60K annually. These initiatives are central to our mission of providing the highest standard of service to enhance student success.

Our achievements this year would not have been possible if not for the dedicated support and partnership of our campus community. In 2020, almost 3,000 individuals donated more than \$11 million to the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association (WFAA) to support financial aid initiatives. This allowed us to create 38 new funds that will disburse funds to students this year. This financial support is essential, as is the research-practice partnership embodied by the Student Success Through Applied Research (SSTAR) Lab, which continues to unite academic research with institutional practice and policy in order to benefit both the field of higher education research and, most importantly, improve the student experience at UW-Madison and around the world.

We would like to thank our campus community for your partnership. Whatever new challenges the next year brings to DEM, we're ready to face them thanks to your dedication to our shared mission of excellence.

Derek Kindle

Vice Provost for Enrollment Management

Nicholas Hillman

Director of the SSTAR Lab

Terry Ruzicka

Deputy Vice Provost and Chief of Staff

Helen Faith

Director of Student Financial Aid

Scott Owczarek

Associate Vice Provost & University Registrar

Cori Splain

Director for Strategic Initiatives & Engagement

Shannon Ghere

Director for Development for Scholarships and Student Support

André E. Phillips

Director of Admissions and Recruitment

Jeremy Traska

Director for Administration and Chief Financial Officer



Meet the Class of 2024

7,306

Within 1% of Target (7,360)

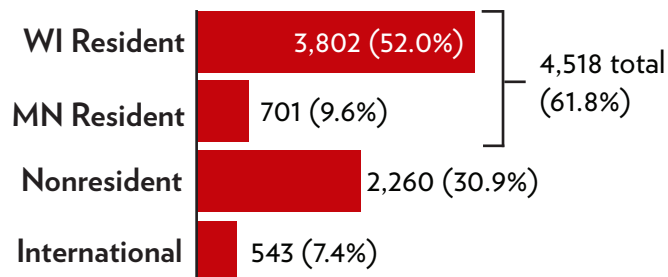
Total Incoming
Freshman Students

1,010

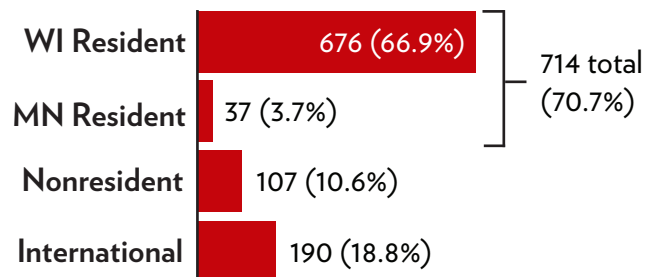
Within 1% of Target (1,000)

Total Incoming
Transfer Students

Summer/Fall 2020 Freshman Students by Residency



Fall 2020 Transfer Students by Residency



5,339

Three-Calendar-Year Rolling
Average of WI & MN Resident
Freshmen and Transfer Students

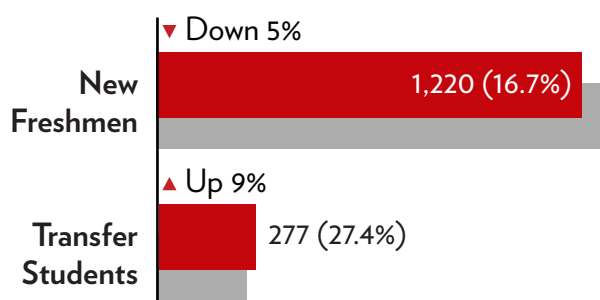
27-32

50% of new freshman who took the
ACT scored within this range

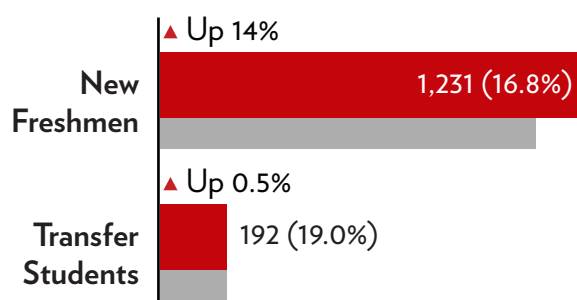
1290-1440

50% of new freshman who took the
SAT scored within this range

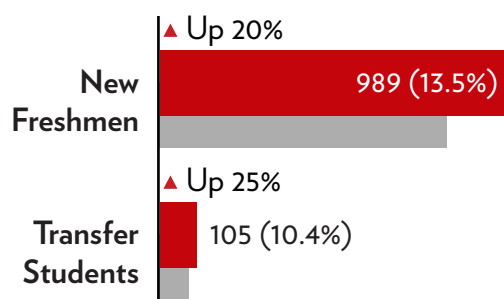
First-Generation College Students



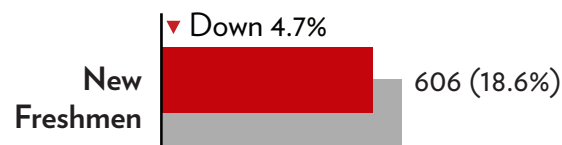
Pell-Eligible Students



Underrepresented Students of Color



Students from Rural Areas*



*Ruralness is based on state classifications for Wisconsin high schools, and is only available for freshmen who attended public high schools in the state. Here, students attending high schools categorized as 'Rural/Town - Remote/Distant' are included as a proportion of all students for whom a classification is available.

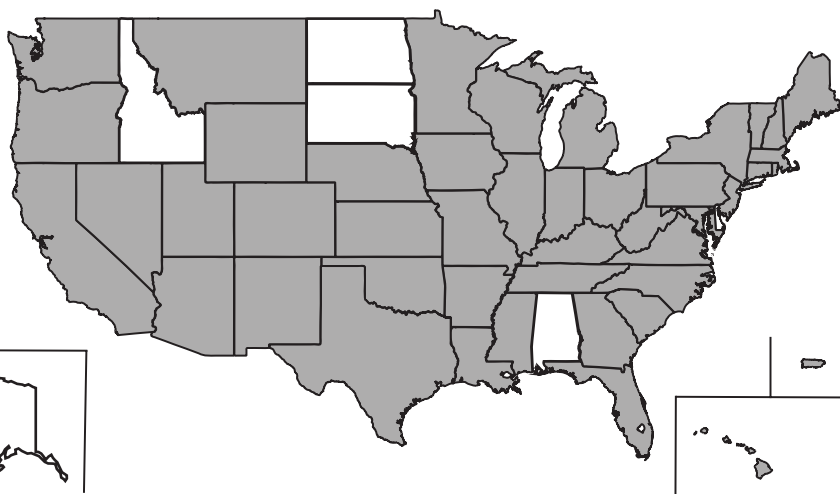
New Freshman Wisconsin Residents

Wisconsin Counties Represented Among All Freshmen*

● Hometown of at least one Bucky's Tuition Promise recipient

New Freshmen Bucky's Tuition Promise (BTP) Recipients

Wisconsin Counties Represented Among BTP Recipients*



Total Minnesota &
Domestic Nonresident
New Freshmen

U.S. States, Puerto Rico,
and Washington, D.C. are
Represented Among All
New Freshmen*

New Freshman International Students

World Countries Represented Among All New Freshmen*



**Number of counties, states, and countries is based on students' home addresses regardless of their residency determination or citizenship status*



ADAPTING TO THE GLOBAL COVID-19 PANDEMIC

(Bryce Richter / UW-Madison)

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued into 2021, so too did the DEM team continue to provide fast, adaptive services to students in the formats they needed. This included disbursing institutional and federal relief funds to eligible students in Spring 2021.

MOBILIZING EMERGENCY FUNDS FOR FINANCIALLY IMPACTED STUDENTS

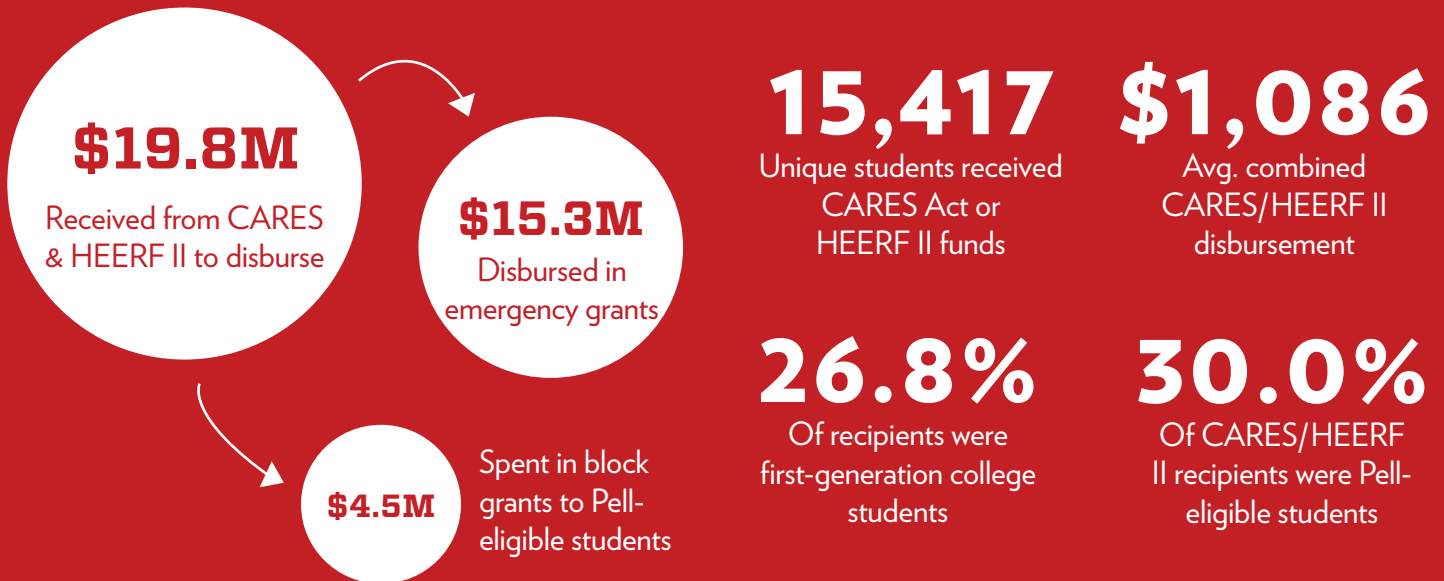
Throughout the pandemic, the university has continued to distribute resources to students including funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020 and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRSSA) Act of 2021 via the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II (HEERF II). As of March 2021, all \$19.8 million from Federal resources was distributed directly to students.

The CARES Act provided \$14 billion to colleges and universities for emergency relief. Of this, UW-Madison received \$9.89 million for direct student support funding. Students applied using a centralized online form and emergency grants were provided within 48-72 hours on average. In total, 9,163 students received CARES Act funds, representing 21% of our students across all schools, colleges and levels (undergraduate, graduate and professional). The Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) continues to collect emergency aid requests and connect requestors to institutional grants and loans where available.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison again received and disbursed \$9.89 million of federal funds to students in emergency grants. Of this total spend, \$4.5 million was designated as \$1,000 automatic block grants to Pell-eligible students. The remaining \$5.4 million was made available to students requesting emergency relief via an online form.

WHO RECEIVED RELIEF FUNDS?

Meet the students who received \$19.8 million thanks to the CARES Act and HEERF II



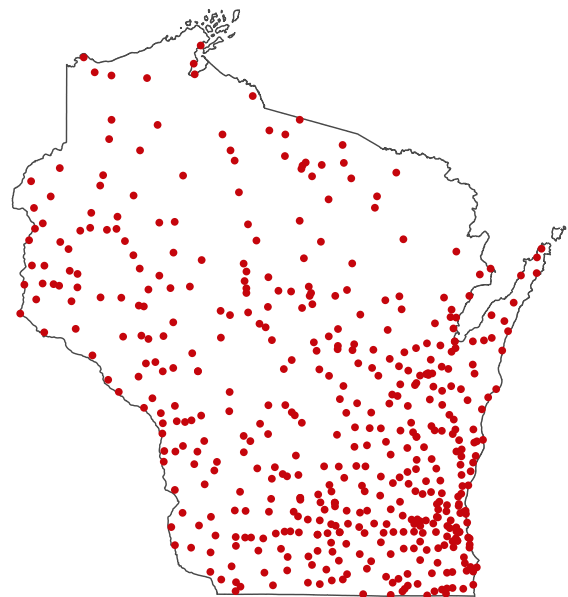
Students who received support...



...are mostly
Wisconsin residents
(67.2% of recipients)

...come from all over the state of Wisconsin
(71 of 72 counties represented)

...come from a variety of
household income levels
(\$65K median income of recipients)



...are primarily
undergraduate students
(92.0% of recipients)

...requested funding
for rent and utilities
(87.2% of recipients)



Source: Student Information System and records maintained by the Office of Student Financial Aid. All data are current as of April 20, 2021. 12 disbursements total were made to eligible students who were not enrolled for long enough to capture in enrollment snapshots. These awards total \$12,757 and these students have been excluded from demographic statistics.



OFFICE OF ADMISSIONS & RECRUITMENT

(Jeff Miller / UW-Madison)

As the first point of contact for many future badgers, the Office of Admissions and Recruitment (OAR) is proud to have received a record number of admissions applications for the 2021-2022 academic year. OAR is constantly in the process of improving the recruitment and application experience for our prospective students.

RECRUITMENT AND VIRTUAL EVENTS GO VIRTUAL

The Office of Admissions and Recruitment (OAR) designed a fully virtual recruitment program for Fall 2020 and Spring 2021. Team members worked diligently to revise processes and materials and invest in resources that enabled the successful recruitment, admission and enrollment of the largest class ever to the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

OAR focused on the challenges and opportunities of territory management in a virtual space and offered trainings to address gaps in knowledge and prepare team members.

Both access to OAR and outreach to students and their families were also expanded during this time. The OAR hosted evening and weekend events to accommodate evolving schedules and to connect with students and their families during non-school hours. The international team participated in school visits and fairs in 23+ time zones across the world. New virtual connections were established such as Instagram Live “Ask Me Anything” Q&A sessions and one-on-one virtual appointments with our transfer student population.

After an evaluation of Fall 2020 events and in consideration of Spring 2021 admission and recruitment goals, offerings of virtual events were redesigned. Events were shortened in duration and continued to be offered on nights and weekends. Flexible pathways were developed for OAR’s main audiences of Prospective Students, Admitted Students, and Counselors that allowed each audience to choose events to attend from a variety of general and specialty/targeted sessions. By Summer 2021, OAR events moved to a fully virtual format to supplement the virtual recruitment season and continue increasing accessibility.

New Pathways include:

- Stand-alone panels – featuring specific, unique content unavailable and unduplicated elsewhere
- Audience-focused admissions information sessions (for Freshman and Transfer students)
- Campus partner sessions – schools and colleges, in partnership with OAR developed their own yield efforts and empowered other campus partners (e.g. OSFA) to offer events/sessions that contributed to and complemented OAR's event schedule
- Online resources for exploration, including the Open House Campus Directory and a virtual resource fair. Visitors can browse the directory to learn more about our campus partners
- Virtual campus tour - College Confidential named UW–Madison The Best Virtual Campus Visit in the Midwest with praise for the virtual campus tour map, information session, and opportunities to connect with current Badgers.

In May 2021, the OAR Events Team partnered with the Center for the First-Year Experience (CFYE) and Campus and Visitor Relations (CAVR) to launch a return to in-person tours and in-person programming for incoming students, Badger Jumpstart.

In ongoing efforts to build relationships and widely expand access to those interested in learning about and attending the University of Wisconsin–Madison, OAR will continue to offer a mix of in-person and virtual events, resources and engagement.

Strengthening Leadership and Teamwork through DiSC

Over the last several months, OAR has focused on expanding leadership capacity and strengthening the ability to work together effectively by engaging DiSC 363 for Leaders and Everything DiSC Catalyst, online tools for evaluation and feedback, in collaboration with International Coaching Federation of Certified Coaches. There were two tracks for engagement: Leaders (Director, Associate Directors, Assistant Directors, Managers) and Team Members, and activities included assessments, professional coaching and interactive group workshops.

With the support of a professional coach, twenty leaders completed profiles on DiSC 363 with a focus on better understanding how they saw themselves as leaders and how others saw their strengths and opportunities for growth. The assessment then identified the similarities and differences in responses. Several leaders participated in subsequent coaching sessions to set goals, develop an action plan, gain self-awareness, and locate opportunities for accountability.

Leaders also took part in a DiSC 363 workshop to review aggregated leadership strengths and growth areas and generate ideas for charting a path forward for leadership. The takeaways from the workshop continue to inform OAR's future planning, organizational assessment and leadership development.

Team members engaged Everything DiSC Catalyst Workplace Assessment, a platform that empowers learners to explore their own and their colleagues' work styles and communication preferences. Team members learned ways to strengthen communication skills for more effective workplace interactions. The process included a self-assessment and two interactive workshops in which team members developed action plans for building more effective relationships.

OAR's Administration & Engagement Team facilitated team engagement of DiSC. Special thanks to Cari Anderson and Mallory Oller for their administrative and logistical support.

Introducing A Strategic Framework

This year, the OAR launched a new Strategic Framework as part of an Organizational Assessment. The Framework was developed with internal and external research and input solicited from members of OAR leadership.

Internal research for the framework included voices from across our office — leadership, managers, counselors, technology, operations, and administrative staff, as well as remote readers and other temporary staff who shared ideas in meetings, through surveys, and via OfficeVibe,

a team member engagement platform. External research included the review of strategic planning frameworks and other references from other campus units, peer institutions and the National Association for College Admissions Counseling (NACAC).

The Strategic Framework is anchored by an organizational purpose, mission, vision, and values for the office. It is a living document and will evolve over time. In the near-term, as the Framework provides scaffolding for the 2020-21 Organizational Assessment. The Organizational Assessment reviews all major aspects of our organization, including: processes, structures, team wellness, internal communication, partner engagement, and core skills development and professional growth plans. The Strategic Framework provides guidance and identifies areas of strength, opportunities for growth and improvement and highest priorities.

The Strategic Framework is a foundation for long-term strategic planning and continues to guide OAR.

UW System E-app Changes

Over the past year, UW Higher Education Location Program (UW HELP) redesigned the UW System Electronic Application (E-app). The first E-app launched in 1998, and while it has had many updates, it had not been redesigned since its inception. UW HELP led the charge and met with each of the system campuses' admissions offices to discuss business processes and needs. UW-Madison's experience as a Common Application member helped provide guidance and advice both from the user perspective and from the technology side for suggested improvements.

The goal of the E-app redesign was to increase greater ease from the user perspective. The redesign helps students complete the application faster — in a single sitting — and eliminated unnecessary questions that might prevent a student from completing their application. Students are now able to apply to multiple UW System institutions at one time without updating any information except the selection of the academic program and adding the essay for each new institution.

Right: Members of the OAR team discuss their DiSC profiles in a virtual meeting.



The overall look and feel of the redesigned E-app intends to be more modern, attractive, and appealing to students—a dramatic upgrade from the previous E-app, which resembled technical design from the early 1990s. The new E-app includes vibrant graphics and easy-to-follow information buttons that are more intuitive and easier to navigate.

- The more streamlined and efficient application features an easier account set-up, which includes the ability to use an email address as a username (rather than creating a username) and password re-set options. A live-agent chat tool is also now available to assist with questions applicants may have.
- Applicants now also have the ability to upload documents. Students can upload a PDF of their unofficial transcript for both “courses in progress” and grade reporting. They can also upload their resume. The “courses in progress” section too was streamlined to require significantly less information to make the entire application process faster and easier for students.
- Another feature that lowers barriers to the UW application process is the ability to simply choose one of four situations that makes them eligible for an application fee waiver and self-report this financial need. In the past, students had to request an official report from a school counselor.
- Additional upgrades includes allowing applicants to skip partial or entire modules that does not apply to them. For example, a transfer applicant can skip providing a list of activities if it is not relevant to their situation. Or a student who does not need to claim Wisconsin residency does not have add parent information to prove residency.
- The residency section was revised to collect more generalized forms of information. Residency questions regarding tuition from previous versions of the E-app were eliminated to both streamline the application and review process and to remove challenges for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

- The revamped E-app’s new residency section provides several additional benefits. The total number of questions was reduced and now accepts multiple-choice responses rather than free-form text responses. The E-app uses smart logic to minimize the collection of non-essential residence information.

The updated data structures limit the amount of residency information applicants must provide, but it still allows reviewers to determine which students clearly qualify as residents and which require additional questions to gather more information.

OAR Promotes Anti-Racism

OAR is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. To that end, time, energy, and resources are devoted to broadening our stance against racial injustice through learning, growth, and development. OAR is assessing all changes necessary to remove barriers in the Office, in education at large, in the field of Admissions, and across the UW–Madison campus. OAR has held sessions such as:

Bias & Inequity in Education: Foundations of Our Educational System

Part 1: Gain a better understanding of the systemic issues within our educational systems (domestic) that perpetuate achievement gaps and under-representation of racial and ethnic minorities, those from working-class families, and first generations to attend college.

Bias & Inequity in Education: Understanding UW–Madison Data

Part 2: This session will contextualize Part 1 by providing insight into UW–Madison and how our work can directly impact progress.

Bias & Inequity in Education: How UW–Madison Students are Supported and Build Community

Part 3: Gain an understanding of how UW–Madison supports successful outcomes for underrepresented students.

Underrepresented Voices

Engage with the students comprising the most diverse class in history of UW–Madison.



OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

(Jeff Miller / UW-Madison)

The Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) disburses many types of financial aid including grants, scholarships, loans, and work study opportunities from state, federal, institutional, and private sources. To accomplish this, OSFA partners with a variety of campus and community partners and provides administration for several marquee scholarship programs.

OSFA OFFERS A WARM (VIRTUAL) WISCONSIN WELCOME

The Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) and the Center for the First-Year Experience (CFYE) kicked off the annual Wisconsin Welcome with a virtual activity for students. The Search for Success Scavenger Hunt prompted students to discover and explore important services, including Student Jobs, Office of Student Financial Aid Success Services, and the Wisconsin Scholarship Hub (WiSH), while searching for specific answers to conquer the virtual scavenger hunt.

Students navigated this challenge to record answers to various clues written in the form of a question on

campus websites. Clues included:

1. Which Be Engaged Workshop are you most interested in attending or viewing on demand this Fall Semester?
2. Which Success Service would you be most interested to learn more about or become connected with?
3. Please write down the 4- or 6-digit job number of the Student that you are interested in.

After successfully providing the answers at each clue, students completed the scavenger hunt by submitting the WiSH General Application, making them eligible for a prize and future scholarships.

A total of 52 students completed the scavenger hunt. Each student received either a gift basket or \$10 restaurant gift card. Students also had the opportunity to meet with a professional staff member during a virtual office-hour session to receive additional information on student resources.

DEI Work in Student Employment

In alignment with the UW-Madison Institutional Diversity Statement, OSFA's Student Employment team places a deep value and importance on diversity, equity and inclusion and continues to look for ways to enhance the student employment experience and to boost resources and opportunities available to hiring managers and students for a more equitable, inclusive and diverse workplace.

As a part of this work, the Student Employment Diversity forum was held in the first week of October 2020. The week-long forum consisted of eight sessions on inclusive leadership, discovering your identity, microaggressions, and privilege and white identity—the most attended session. Over 120 students employees from over 20 departments across campus participated. They engaged in thought-provoking discussions with their peers and worked towards creating an inclusive Badger community for all.

Hiring managers were also provided opportunities for examination and conversation. In July 2020, the Student Employment team created the Student Employment Podcast Series. The monthly event features a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) podcast episode followed by an hour-long virtual discussion on the topic. These monthly gatherings are a great space for hiring managers to share thoughts and ideas on the work of ensuring diversity, equity, and inclusion in the student employment experience. In October, we discussed Activism on College Campuses featuring the podcast The Long, Bloody Strike for Ethnic Studies and were joined by an incredible panel of guest facilitators which included:

- Dr. Louis Macias, Executive Director of Recruitment, Diversity and Inclusion for the UW-Madison Police Department
- Dani Barker, Associate Director for College Student Life Operations and Staff Development at UC-Santa Cruz
- Garry Morgan, Special Assistant for Diversity and Inclusion Education at Auburn University
- Nalah McWhorter, UW-Madison Student and President of the Wisconsin Black Student Union

The team continues to brainstorm different resources and opportunities that we can provide surrounding this important topic. Visit the website to explore our resources and learn about our exciting upcoming events.

Trying Something New – The Estimated Financial Aid Offer

The information about Federal Pell Grants that OSFA requires from the Department of Education is not available until February typically, but the incoming freshmen class are admitted in December. In the past few years, OSFA provided students their financial aid offers in December, but as new information came to light, original offers often changed multiple times. This created a conundrum for the OSFA and challenges around planning for students and their families.

In response, the OSFA has introduced the Estimated Financial Aid Offer. OSFA sent a communication to the incoming 2021-22 class admitted in December that clarifies whether a student has been offered FASTrack, BANNER, Bucky's Tuition Promise, Bucky's Tuition Promise PLUS, or Badger Promise and provides solid estimates of both students' costs to attend and their grants, scholarships, work-study, or loans. Although, the Estimated Offer does not provide a complete breakdown of available financial aid by eligibility, it provides the opportunity to give admitted students timely reminders and next steps, and encouragement to connect with OSFA.

The Estimated Financial Aid Offer was sent to students by email and is also available in their MyUW Student Center.

OSFA met its goal to send all financial aid offers to admitted students in February, after the release of the Federal Pell Grant chart.

Please note that students admitted during the regular decision timeline do not receive the Estimated Offer. They will receive their Financial Aid Offer as they are finalized.

Admitted students who do not have a FAFSA on file with our office (excluding international students and

those with rejected FAFSAs), are sent a reminder and encouragement to submit the FAFSA online. OSFA welcomes feedback as team members continue work to make costs of attending UW-Madison and financial aid available as clear and as transparent as possible to students and their families.

Working Group to Improve Enrollment with Stopped Out Students

Dean of Students Christina Olstad and Vice Provost/Director of Academic Planning and Institutional Research Jocelyn Milner convened a working group that seeks to give cross-college attention to undergraduate, degree-seeking students who have stopped out (or appear to be on the cusp of doing so). Greg Offerman, Associate Director in OSFA, and Beth Warner, Associate Registrar, from the Division of Enrollment Management are members.

Long-term, this group is charged with exploring and making systemic changes, including consideration and implementation of policy and process changes that will build on UW-Madison's already strong retention rate. In advance of Fall 2020, and in light of enrollment volatility due to ongoing COVID-19 disruptions, the group implemented short-term strategies to communicate with potential stopouts in the Fall 2020 continuing undergraduate population and to encourage them to enroll.

In late July 2020, the group monitored lists of students who were eligible to enroll but had not yet done so, investigated holds preventing enrollment, sought options for resolving those holds, and communicated with students who had enrolled in Fall 2020 courses but dropped all of their courses. From there, the following actions occurred:

1. The Bursar's Office released Tuition Balance Due (TUB) holds under \$500;
2. The Office of Student Financial Aid connected with all students with tuition balance holds to discuss options

“Long-term this group will be charged with exploring and making systemic changes, including consideration and implementation of needed policy and process changes in an effort to build on UW-Madison's already strong retention rate.”

for paying past due balances. This work included contacting the students and ensuring student FAFSA information for 2020-2021 was accurate, and sending reminders to students to follow up on plans to pay their tuition bills;

3. The Office of the Registrar connected with units who had placed advising holds and asked for flexibility in removing those holds in an effort to encourage students to enroll;
4. The Office of the Registrar shared student lists with the Academic Advising Policy Leaders;
5. The Dean of Students' Office reached out to students with a Mandatory Major Declaration hold in Letters and Science (L&S);
6. The Dean of Students' Office sent an email and survey to students who were enrolled but had subsequently dropped courses; and,
7. The Dean of Students' Office utilized the CYFE texting application to send a message targeting eligible students, encouraging them to enroll.

Every year, a subset of students wait until the last month possible to enroll in fall courses. In August 2020, the number of eligible continuing students who had not yet enrolled dropped by 246 students from August 2019. While this may not be a direct effect of the working group's efforts, the results are encouraging.



DEVELOPMENT AND PARTNERSHIP WITH WFAA

This year, DEM and the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association (WFAA) continued our partnership to fund existing need-based scholarships for our students, and both teams acted quickly to generate donations to support the COVID-19 emergency student support fund.

\$11.4M

Total Donations Supporting
Financial Aid/Admissions Initiatives
(2020 calendar year)

2,724

Individuals who made a gift
(2020 calendar year)

38

Newly awarded financial aid/
admissions scholarship funds
(2020-21 academic year)

SUPPORTING SCHOLARSHIPS & ACCESS PROGRAMS

Despite the uncertainty of the last year, the Division of Enrollment Management saw tremendous generosity from UW alumni and friends who wanted to give back and support UW students. In total, \$11.4M was raised for Admissions and Financial Aid Initiatives, namely scholarships to attract and support a diverse and talented undergraduate class, remove financial barriers to success, and support on time graduation.

In March 2020, UW launched the Raimey Noland Campaign, including lead gifts by generous families, Phill & Elizabeth Gross and Elzie & Deborah Higginbottom, to provide compelling scholarship offers to talented students from underrepresented backgrounds. The Division was excited to award the first set of scholarships for the upcoming Fall 2021 semester.

The Emergency Student Support fund continues to be a popular support option for students and gift option for donors. This fund allows resources to be available for students beyond COVID-19-related emergencies.

A special thank you was sent to campus faculty and staff at the end of the school year to honor their contributions to student financial wellbeing amongst the many things they do to support our students.

The Development team saw continued growth with the addition of a Digital Gift Officer and Stewardship Program Manager, both focused on working with donors to key scholarships. The team is slated for continued growth into the new year.

This year we renewed our commitment to transparent communication with alumni and supporters. We delivered over 200 impact reports to scholarship supporters sharing information about their student recipients and updates from the Division. We also adapted some reports to an interactive, digital format which we'll continue to explore in the future. Finally, we launched the Badger Bulletin, a quarterly newsletter to keep supporters updated on topics related to access to education, enrollment topics, and the impact of scholarship support.

STUDENT SUCCESS THROUGH APPLIED RESEARCH (SSTAR) LAB

Housed within the Office of Student Financial Aid, the SSTAR Lab, led by Dr. Nicholas Hillman, uses applied academic research to guide, support, and partner with practitioners whose work aims to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for current and future college students.

EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

Opened in February 2019, the Student Success Through Applied Research (SSTAR) Lab includes a 14-person interdisciplinary team dedicated to using academic research to guide, support, and partner with practitioners whose work aims to improve the educational opportunities and outcomes for current and future college students.

In the past year, the SSTAR Lab has grown significantly in both the size of the team and the scope of work undertaken. In 2020-'21, we continued progress on grants from three partners: Ascendium, Arnold Ventures, and the Foundation for California Community Colleges, totaling nearly \$400,000 in external support. We also initiated a multi-year program evaluation project with the School of Education. These successes in funding partnerships have produced promising leads for continuing this work and starting new projects in the future. For example, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Joyce Foundation invited us to submit a multi-year grant proposal to study how states can better support student success efforts at public colleges and universities.

Within the Division of Enrollment Management (DEM), we have several ongoing partnerships including an ongoing evaluation of “test optional” admissions, a mapping tool showing college-going rates among Wisconsin’s “economically disadvantaged” high school students, and analyses of various student success efforts undertaken in the Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) and Office of Admissions and Recruitment (OAR).

For example, we evaluated Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements to see who is most likely to successfully appeal and be retained. We have also explored retention rates for students with administrative holds and examined the effects of Bucky’s Tuition Promise on enrollment yield. These tools and analyses will inform DEM’s approach to student services in the upcoming school year.

Other partnerships have helped us build new relationships around the campus community and the state of Wisconsin. Dr. Hillman is serving on the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institution (DFI)’s FAFSA Task Force to improve filing rates in the state. We facilitated a book club for analysts in our campus community to come together and reflect on strategies for incorporating anti-racist practices into data analysis. We hope this trend continues as more decision-makers see the SSTAR Lab as a valuable resource.

Students in the Lab are gaining invaluable experiences working directly with practitioners on projects that have meaningful consequences for students. Students in the lab develop hands-on skills related to data management, research design, and applying findings to practice. These enriching learning experiences are exactly what the Lab wants to facilitate. Thanks to their work and dedication, researchers outside UW-Madison are starting to see the Lab as an innovative place to link research with practice. We will continue to be leaders in this field.



OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

(Tony Fumo / UW-Madison)

Having successfully helped students and instructors transition to online instruction due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an equal amount of care went into the team's preparation for a safe return to campus.

WHAT WENT INTO PREPARING FOR SPRING 2021

As with the Fall 2020 semester, the Office of the Registrar (RO) anticipated that Spring 2021 would be different. Many campus partners – Academic Advising and Policy Leaders (AAPL), Academic Affairs Continuity Team (AACT), Deans, Department Curricular and Enrollment Representatives – worked with the RO to adjust while maintaining the usual high quality of work and normal business practices.

In response to COVID-19 disruptions, the Faculty Senate voted to revise the academic calendar. In response, the RO made several quick, necessary changes to several dates and deadlines in the schedule of preparations. Academic Services and Student Services also responded by adjusting the schedule-

build timeline, enrollment timelines, and other correlated processes. Crucially, these changes as well as changes regarding rooms being used as General Assignment rooms, revised modality changes, and filtering improvements to the Computer Science and Engineering (CS&E) building, were made quickly and efficiently to allow campus partners to finalize the Schedule of Classes and begin enrollment.

Alongside all of the continuous change, the RO maintained and enhanced business practices by continuing preparations for Spring 2021 enrollment and collaborations from the previous semester to support virtual learning spaces and the use of Remote Instructional mode.

Despite the increased workload, the RO delivered on high standards of service. RO team members met the challenges of the year by increasing collaborations with campus partners, increasing communications both internally and externally, and creating a variety of resources. The RO held virtual office hours for curricular representatives, worked with the Department of Information Technology

(DoIT) to get Canvas course shells out to instructors prior to the release of the Schedule of Classes, and collaborated with the Office of Undergraduate Advising (OUA) to solicit feedback on the release of enrollment appointment times. RO staff continued to go above and beyond during this stressful time to reach out to campus partners and ensure they were included and their expertise was accounted for.

This work and collaboration yielded various, and increased, communications to aid campus audiences. The AACt and RO drafted and sent emails to students to communicate and facilitate enrollment adjustments and to encourage students to meet with advisors and use available resources. The dissemination of this information was also a collective effort, relying on many deans, curricular representatives, advisors, and other campus offices. In addition to email communications, there were many forums for advisors, curricular and enrollment representatives, and associate/assistant deans to share information and gain feedback about changes and communications in anticipation of their involvement answering questions and circulating information more directly with students.

The RO created a Spring 2021 Enrollment webpage for one, included step-by-step information and FAQs to help with enrollment. Additionally, a course preview visualization and instructional KnowledgeBase were implemented to help students prepare for course enrollment when section level information was not available.

As the spring term begins, it is nice to reflect on and take pride in how much work was done to prepare for and continue to adapt to the changes, especially as we continue our work preparing for the Summer and Fall 2021 terms. We hope to take advantage of all that we have learned and adapt for the future to enhance our processes.

Advancing De-densification and Preparedness for Fall

Over the course of July 2020 the Curricular and Academic Management Services team in the RO implemented changes to the Schedule of Classes. Schools, colleges and departments had until July 3rd to make updates to the schedule of classes, including determining room assignments for in-person classes and deciding which sections will be remote. Once changes to the schedule of classes were completed, the RO worked with DoIT to activate scripts to make batch updates to the modes of instructions, where around 6,400 class sections were transitioned to remote instruction.

Then, over a two week period, class sections were assigned to classrooms. The university plans for 55% of its fall courses to be delivered online, 37% will be delivered in-person, and 8% are a hybrid of the two modes. Campus had to develop innovative solutions to utilize both traditional and non-traditional spaces for classrooms.

To capture this change in mode of instruction and indicate building density, RO staff developed a data visualization of how many individuals will be in a building at a given time. It also provides building managers with crucial information to ensure proper PPE and cleaning equipment are available.

Outside of working on classroom spaces, the RO has also been working with schools/colleges and support services to find other spaces for virtual learning on campus. These spaces are necessary to students on campus who participate in virtual learning and other instances such as e-proctoring. Staff are working to repurpose nearly 1,000 seats for reservable and drop-in student use.

In addition to inventorying usable spaces on campus, efforts are being made to catalog and inventory audio/visual (A/V) and other technical needs. For any classroom that can hold over 20 students, the space is being assessed for speaker systems and microphones.



Eligibility Team Completes Graduation Success Reports

Each June, the Eligibility team in the Office of the Registrar (RO) compiles, analyzes and completes the annual National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Graduation Success Rate report on behalf of the Chancellor. This report requires the review of the Chancellor.

The report measures two types of graduation rates. The first is the Federal Graduation Rate (FGR), which indicates the percentage of first-year students who entered and received athletic-related aid and graduated within six years. The second rate is the Graduation Success Rate (GSR), which adds those student-athletes who entered mid-year with those who transferred to UW-Madison and received athletic aid in their first term. The GSR also subtracts student-athletes who left prior to graduation with athletic eligibility and were academically eligible to compete.

The NCAA GSR Report is broken into two parts: the graduate rate of all students and student athletes, and the overall undergraduate enrollment of the current academic year. The cohort we just completed entered UW-Madison during the 2014-2015 academic year. The results are shown by gender, ethnicity, and sport – broken down further by specific sports, including football, basketball, and cross country.

As with other institutional reports, the NCAA GSR is a team effort. The eligibility team in the RO worked closely with colleagues in OSFA, APIR, Athletic Compliance, and Athletic Academic Services. Everyone worked together to ensure an accurate up-to-date report about our student-athletes. This report is published in the spring and helps tell the story of our student-athletes' graduation rates and how they compare to other Big Ten institutions in addition to the UW-Madison population.

Supporting Students with a Food Drive

We all noticed the effects of the pandemic in our work and personal lives, and we know that students were no exception to these effects. The pandemic unfortunately heightened the hardships of food insecurity for students. In March 2021, the Office of the Registrar (RO) worked to minimize that hardship by working with Open Seat. Open Seat is a campus student organization, which aims to alleviate the stress of such food insecurity for UW-Madison students.

Normally there are physical donation bins in the office, but this year Will Lipske, Katie Free and Katie Block led the RO in launching a virtual food drive using Open Seat. This optional opportunity allowed the team to continue to support students in need while away from campus. While Open Seat reported they would receive any non-perishable, non-expired cans and other unopened packages, there were also items that were of particular interest to students: crackers, cereal, granola bars, peanut butter, cleaning supplies, and more.

Those who wanted to participate could use a contactless drop-off point to contribute to the cause. A secure link was also provided for those who preferred to contribute monetarily. Many in the RO participated and the turnout was a success. Will Lipske reported that, “the students working at Open Seat were literally jumping up and down and clapping as I approached their suite.”





STUDENTS IN THEIR OWN WORDS: Financial Aid

Students are the heart of what we do at the Division of Enrollment Management, and so no annual report would be complete without including their voices. Collected here are several responses written by students who received grants and scholarships thanks to generous private donations.



Tehya Crego
Animal Sciences

Financial independence has been a goal of mine since I've been in high school. I've had jobs ever since I can remember and immediately getting a job at the Vet School on campus made not only a huge difference in my financial situation, but has also helped me in my path in the veterinary field. Working has allowed me to gain income while also giving me the critical experience I need to apply to vet school. Scholarships and loans are what made it possible for me to pay for my housing and graduate with lower loan totals. I feel more confident than ever in managing my own money and I am extremely fortunate to have been given so many opportunities to find my own financial independence.



Ananda Deacon
Political Science/Spanish

Had I not received the Chancellor's Scholarship, I would not have been able to afford this university. Even with my own tuition being fully paid I had to take out several loans, so I am very appreciative for the financial aid that was offered. I became especially grateful for the financial aid office right when COVID struck and I lost my job in campus housing, as I was able to receive grant money to make up for the loss of income at a time when my parents' job security was also up in the air. The financial aid office gave me one less thing to worry about, and I am eternally grateful for that. I hope donors choose to invest in the future of youth as their success is intertwined with all of our success. Donors have the potential to be a reason a student is able to stay and pursue higher education, and I urge them to recognize that as a sound investment.



Alejandro Gonzalez-Cibria
Political Science

Financial aid opened the doors for me to be able to thrive educationally on campus. My experience and overall journey at UW-Madison would not have been possible without financial aid support. It means the world to me because I come from a low-income background, and now I can impact my family's socioeconomic status. Financial aid opens doors of opportunity for students who have the knowledge and capacity to thrive but are blocked by financial barriers. Education is the key to advancing our state through the Wisconsin Idea and humanity through the betterment of society. On Wisconsin!



Devin Grant
Personal Finance

Financial aid allowed me to pursue my education and get a degree in Personal Finance from UW-Madison. Being from a first-generation college family, my parents had no experience with college and weren't able to save any money to help put me through college. I had to work 30 hours per week throughout my college career to be able to support myself, and receiving financial aid lifted some of that burden off my back. Because of scholarships and grants, I was able to take out fewer loans, lowering the burden of repayment for the rest of my career. The loans I did take enabled me to attend this university that otherwise would have been out of reach for me. Because of donors' generosity, thousands of students are able to explore majors and careers that would have been unobtainable without their help. Financial assistance allows students to take more time studying and doing well in their degree, alleviating some of the stress associated with working long hours to support their living and tuition costs.



Damitu Hamda
International Studies

If it weren't for the financial aid services, I wouldn't have had the opportunity to do study abroad programs in Costa Rica, Denmark, and Botswana, which are all experiences I will cherish forever. If not for financial aid, I wouldn't even have the opportunity to afford school and relieve my financial anxieties. The university offers so many opportunities to get funding and it has helped me get the most out of my college experience. As a student who doesn't receive outside aid from family or other institutions, financial aid has been integral for my educational journey.

“My experience and overall journey at UW-Madison would not have been possible without financial aid support. It means the world to me because I come from a low-income background, and now I can impact my family's socioeconomic status.”



Britany Osterman
Industrial Engineering

When I got my acceptance, I thought “how can I ever afford my education?” I was uncertain if I could afford to attend UW-Madison. However, I was able to receive some financial aid that gave me the opportunity to be a Badger engineer. When I received financial aid it alleviated a lot of financial stress and the obstacles that I would have had to overcome to receive my education. Now I am a proud Badger on campus where I successfully completed my degree. I've been able to lead student organizations, take part in campus-wide activities, support diversity in STEM, and further my career through healthcare engineering internships. This wouldn't have been possible without the help of financial aid. I work two jobs on campus to be able to pay my student loans. Financial aid is critical in helping students that face financial hardships. Especially since it allows us to focus on our education and to take all the opportunities UW-Madison has to offer without the pressure of knowing whether or not you can afford to be here.





THE DIVISION OF ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT





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