



Institute for Cross-college Biology Education Annual Report

Academic Year 2005-2006

Biology is a multidisciplinary science and is found in many different colleges at UW-Madison. To enhance the undergraduate experience in biology, the Institute for Cross-college Biology Education catalyzes the involvement of faculty from all across campus in undergraduate advising and teaching. The institute is overseen by a small Steering Committee and also has a larger Advisory Committee.

Participation in Interdepartmental Biology Programs

For the academic year, the aggregate participation by faculty in each of these areas in interdepartmental programs is given in Table 1.

	<i>Advising</i>	<i>Teaching</i>	<i>Steering</i>	<i>Advisory</i>
College of Agricultural and Life Sciences	43	8	2	7
ICBE	0	8	1	2
College of Letters and Science	29	18	2	11
School of Medicine and Public Health	22	6	1	3
School of Nursing	0	0	1	1
School of Veterinary Medicine	9	3	0	1

Table 1. Participation in advising is the number of faculty advising in the Biology major, Molecular Biology major, or Biological Aspects of Conservation major. Some faculty advise for two majors and this is counted twice. Teaching is nominally five weeks of lecturing and associated activities in Biology/Bot./Zoo. 151/2 or Biocore. Again some professors will have more than one unit of involvement and each is counted separately. In addition to the colleges listed above, one faculty member from the School of Education serves on the Advisory Board. Teaching on overload, when funded by ICBE, is listed under ICBE.

http://www.biology.wisc.edu/images/Participation_in_biology_for_undergraduates.pdf

Institute for Cross-college Biology Education

Undergraduate Biology Advisor, Introductory Biology Courses, Biology Core Curriculum,
Majors: Biology, Molecular Biology, & Biological Aspects of Conservation, Center for Biology Education

Thomas D. Sharkey, Director

445 Henry Mall, Madison WI 53706

tsharkey@wisc.edu, Phone: (608) 265-2600, FAX: (608) 262-7509

Milestones

- First registrations for courses under the “Biology” Timetable number
- The Biology Major exceeded 1000 declared students for the first time in Spring 2006

Reports

- Report on the Growth of Undergraduate Biological Sciences Courses and Majors at UW-Madison

There have been significant changes in the opportunities for undergraduate students in biological sciences over the past 10 years. An analysis of core biological science majors showed that small departments, large departments, and interdepartmental majors all increase in size between 1995 and 2004. The increase in the number of students majoring in biological sciences was 50% of the 1995 number.

Similarly, the number of students taking introductory biology courses increased 50% between 1995 and 2004.

http://www.biology.wisc.edu/images/Growth_of_Bio_Courses_and_Majors.pdf

- Report on Grading

In response to concerns that students might be avoiding Biocore because of a perception that their GPA would suffer grades in Biocore and Biology 151/2 were analyzed. Biocore is intended to be highly selective and the entering ACT scores of the students selected for Biocore reflect this (Students were not selected on the basis of ACT scores but it was found that the selection criteria used does correlate with entering ACT score).

The average grades given in Biocore 303 were higher than those given in Biology 152 (the second course in each sequence) and the difference reflected university-wide differences attributable to student preparation as judged from entering ACT scores.

http://www.biology.wisc.edu/images/Grading_in_Bio_Courses.pdf