



Division of
Enrollment Management
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Annual Report 2024-2025



The Division of Enrollment Management includes nearly 400 team members, many of whom are nationally respected experts in their fields.



The DEM's offices are the Office of the Registrar, the Office of Student Financial Aid, the Office of Admissions and Recruitment, the Student Success Through Applied Research (SSTAR) Lab, and the Office of the Vice Provost.



From the Division of Enrollment Management Team

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Interim Vice Provost for Enrollment Management

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Executive Director of Student Financial Aid

NICHOLAS HILLMAN
Director of SSTAR Lab

ANDRÉ E. PHILLIPS
Executive Director of Admissions and Recruitment

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TAYLOR STOFFLET
Director of Development for Scholarships and Student Support

JEREMY TRASKA
Director for Administration and Chief Financial Officer

BETH WARNER
Interim University Registrar

The Division of Enrollment Management (DEM) is deeply grateful to our campus partners, community leaders, and team members. While we continue innovating our services to attract, enroll, support, and graduate excellent students, it is your commitment to student success and access to education that sustains UW-Madison as a world-class institution in an increasingly turbulent world. Your partnership provides the stable ground for our students to thrive and carry forth the Wisconsin Idea.

Higher education faces unprecedented challenges today. The once-symbiotic relationship between federal government and universities is strained by shifting federal priorities and elimination of financial support. In short, the mission of our institution and access to quality education are at great risk.

Yet at UW-Madison, we refuse to merely react to these challenges. We continue to innovate boldly, leveraging technological solutions to transform how we serve students and their families. From streamlined digital application processes to AI-enhanced advising tools, we embrace such advancements as essential to meeting the needs of our campus community. But technological innovation alone does not distinguish a world-class institution.

What sets us apart is the depth and authenticity of our relationships. This year's annual report illustrates how we weave together bold innovation with human connection; how our relationships with our team members, our campus and community partners, and our students and their supporters lead to student success. Continuously guided by our mission and values, we approach each challenge and opportunity with both strategic vision and genuine care.

As we look toward the future, we remain confident that this combination—innovative practices rooted in authentic relationships—will continue to distinguish UW-Madison, to serve our students exceptionally, and to uphold the Wisconsin Idea, regardless of the uncertainties of our times.

We invite you to explore the stories and achievements detailed in this report, each a testament to the power of human connection in service of educational excellence and public good.

On, Wisconsin! ■



FIND OUT MORE

**Click on underlined text
throughout this report
to learn more.**



Innovation in Technology

In the past year, DEM has made significant strides in leveraging technology to better serve our students and the campus community. Our commitment to innovation is reflected in the policies we implement, the enrollment support we offer, and the technological advancements we embrace.

Below we highlight some key initiatives and achievements in our ongoing journey to integrate cutting-edge technology into our work.



Innovating Through Policy

DEM continues to lead the way in technological advancements by implementing innovative policies that enhance our operations and student experiences. This year, we shared guidelines on responsibly using AI tools with student data and introduced a mandatory generative AI course for all DEM team members to ensure our staff is well equipped to leverage these technologies in their daily tasks.

AI in Action

Artificial Intelligence is revolutionizing how we manage data and streamline processes. DEM utilizes AI to efficiently handle data requests, optimize the Office of the Registrar's (RO) processes, and support various initiatives. This year, DEM began using an AI tool to automate college transcript processing. Advancements like these not only improve our operational efficiency but also enhance the overall experience for our students.

Tech Innovations

Our commitment to technology is evident in the numerous innovations we have introduced. From developing tools that facilitate immediate course registration during Student Orientation, Advising, and Registration (SOAR) events to adapting software for quick access to student data, DEM is at the forefront of technological progress. This year, we launched a new degree audit app for advisors and staff and added functionality to the MyUW Course Schedule app for students. These initiatives ensure that we meet the dynamic needs of our student service teams and provide seamless, accessible enrollment experiences. ■

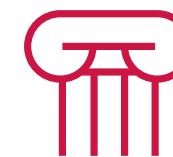
Above: At center, peer advisor Lorena Marrari helps incoming first-year students entering the College of Letters and Science register for fall semester classes during the advising portion of the SOAR program at College Library at the University of Wisconsin–Madison on July 31, 2024.

A Practice Informed by Our Partners in Research

In September 2025, the Student Success Through Applied Research (SSTAR) Lab was awarded a \$1.2 million federal grant in partnership with MDRC, a research organization focused on rural issues, to support the National Rural Higher Education Research Center. As collaborators on this initiative, Lab researchers will establish national and statewide benchmarks for rural college-going and completion rates. The project will also explore rural students' attitudes toward postsecondary education, examining their aspirations, expectations, and decision-making processes. These insights will help inform efforts to better serve rural students in Wisconsin and across the country.

GRANTS MANAGED
BY SSTAR LAB

\$5.7M



OPEN RESEARCH
PROGRAMS

8

Guided by a research-practice partnership model, the SSTAR Lab emphasizes real-world impact. Embedded within DEM and working in close collaboration with the Office of Student Financial Aid, the Lab engages with practitioners and policymakers at the state, national, and global levels. Through these partnerships and original research, the Lab addresses urgent challenges in college access and student success.

Today, the Lab oversees a dynamic portfolio funded by \$5.7 million in grants from the U.S. Department of Education, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Ascendium, All-In Milwaukee, and partners such as the UW–Madison School of Education and the Universities of Wisconsin. In addition, the Lab invests in future scholars through student internships, hourly roles, and graduate assistantships, cultivating the next generation of practitioner-oriented researchers. ■

Celebrating 20 Years *of Excellence*

Since its establishment in 2004, DEM has transformed how UW-Madison attracts, enrolls, and supports students through the power of innovation and collaboration. From pioneering digital student records to launching groundbreaking financial aid programs like Bucky's Tuition Promise, we have partnered with dedicated campus colleagues, community leaders, and team members to remove barriers and expand access to world-class education. Over two decades, we've grown applications by 250% while maintaining the Wisconsin Idea through the work of meaningful relationships that put students at the heart of everything we do.





Our *Human* Approach

Building Relationships to Improve Access for Promising Students

UW-Madison is committed to lowering financial barriers for students to access top-ranking education. To that end, the university operates a nearly \$440 million financial aid portfolio, which includes support for initiatives such as our Promise and Pathway commitments to Wisconsin residents, described at right. These financial commitments not only help students graduate debt-free, they allow students to graduate in less than five years. A UW-Madison education is more than a degree; it is an **investment in our state and transformative impact** on our communities.

To provide meaningful support through comprehensive financial aid initiatives, DEM relies heavily on our relationships with thoughtfully engaged donors, academic advisors and academic affairs specialists at our schools and colleges, our community and tribal relations colleagues, and our partners at the SSTAR Lab. Our in-house research enterprise evaluates the efficacy and impact of our financial aid initiatives and helps identify overlooked populations with need. Our campus colleagues work with students to illuminate these sources of support, and our passionate alumni and donors contribute funds to help secure the life-changing experience of attending UW-Madison. These key collaborations build strong, supportive relationships with our students and foster an academic community that embodies the Wisconsin Idea. ■

KEY SOURCES OF FINANCIAL AID

Bucky’s Tuition Promise (BTP): Pays for tuition and fees for incoming Wisconsin residents in an on-campus program whose household adjusted gross income is \$65,000 or less.

Bucky’s Pell Pathway (BPP): Offers additional financial aid to incoming Wisconsin resident, Pell Grant-eligible students to meet their financial need.

Wisconsin Tribal Education Promise (WTEP): Supports Wisconsin resident students that are enrolled members of a federally recognized, Wisconsin American Indian tribe by funding their full cost of attendance.

At center, first-year student Jake Leismer listens during Path-Bio 210 in the Sewell Social Sciences building at the University of Wisconsin–Madison on Sept. 4, 2024. (Photo by Althea Dotzour / UW–Madison)

Recruitment *Roundup*

In recent years, DEM has made significant investments in regional, national, and global recruitment teams, whose work has been instrumental in identifying talented students from Wisconsin and all corners of the nation and world; and in securing record-breaking increases in applications to UW-Madison. This work has been especially vital in emerging student markets where pools of promising students remain untapped.

This strategic investment has also increased our capacity to meet unprecedented global interest in UW-Madison. Our recruitment and outreach team members are embedded across the US and travel extensively across the globe to meet with students, families, and their schools to share information about UW-Madison. These efforts have directly led to building a geographically diverse student body that is both globally minded and exemplifies the Wisconsin Idea.

OFF-CAMPUS RECRUITMENT

1,675 Total Recruitment Events

31 States visited, plus Washington, DC

406 Wisconsin-based events

27 World countries visited

ON-CAMPUS EVENTS

2,692 Open House Attendees

210 In-Person Admissions Information Sessions

8,905 Admitted Student Event Attendees

“Coming from Washington, DC, UW-Madison has easily become a new home for me as I have learned the ins and outs of living in a college town that seamlessly blends into the greater city of Madison. UW-Madison offers so many student resources that have allowed me to explore all of my interests, from psychology to Chinese to teaching.”

MACKIE BOONE | WASHINGTON, DC





Fall 2024 Incoming Students

Applications	Geography	Pell Grants
70,449	70 of 72	21%
Total undergraduate applications	Wisconsin counties represented among new students in fall 2024	First-year student Pell grant rate
▲ +4% from 2023	48	1,777
9,891	States plus 5 U.S. territories and the District of Columbia	Total Pell grants awarded to first-year students
Total new first-year and transfer students	58	▲ +35% from 2023
▲ +9% from 2023	World countries	

2024-2025 Undergraduate Financial Aid



\$203 Million
Institution funded



\$23 Million
State funded



\$44 Million
Federal funded



\$35 Million
Private funded

\$304 Million in Grants and Scholarships Awarded in AY 2025

UW-Madison’s Commitment to Wisconsin’s Talented Badgers

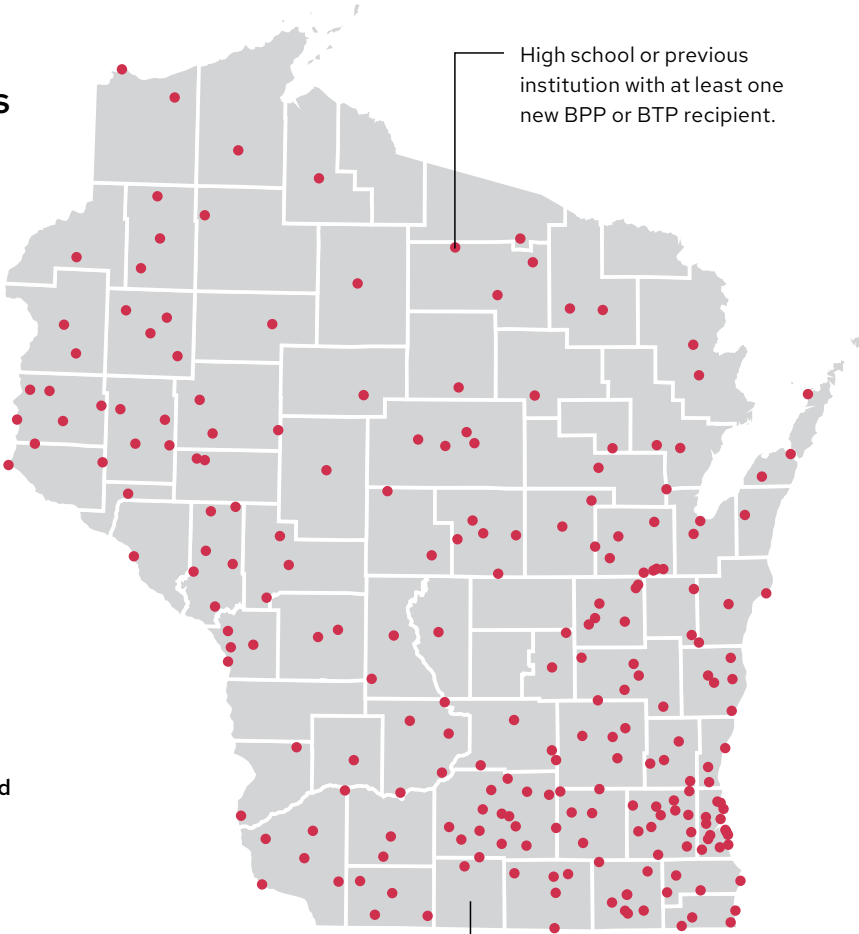
Bucky’s Tuition Promise (BTP) covers tuition and fees for incoming Wisconsin residents enrolled in an on-campus program whose household adjusted gross income is \$65,000 or less. In addition, Bucky’s Pell Pathway (BPP) provides further financial aid to incoming Wisconsin resident students who are eligible for the Pell Grant, helping to fully meet their financial need.

1,200+ Newly enrolled first-year and transfer students eligible for BTP, BPP, or WTEP in fall 2024

67 of 72 Wisconsin counties represented among newly enrolled students eligible for BTP, BPP, or WTEP

“The relief of not having to carry a financial burden through college has made it possible for me to fully focus on my education and make the most of every opportunity.”

BROOKE MERCIER | UNION GROVE, WI



High school or previous institution with at least one new BPP or BTP recipient.

County with at least one BPP or BTP recipient.



Community Relationships *Set Us Apart*

DEM builds and fosters meaningful relationships beyond the university, reaching out to Wisconsin organizations to create partnerships that benefit our students and our communities.

Our Own Student Programming

DEM offers a variety of programs designed to engage and support our students throughout their academic journey. From mentorship and employment opportunities to workshops and resources, we strive to create an inclusive environment where every student feels valued and supported.

Our programs include an orientation and Wisconsin Welcome Week events for our BANNER, Promise, and Pathway program students to ease their transition onto campus and meet fellow students. Throughout the year, the Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) offers Success coaching, Basic Needs support, and workshops in collaboration with both campus partners (Housing, UW Study Abroad) and community partners (UW Credit Union, local non-profits) to provide information on a variety of topics that address all aspects of wellbeing.

Our partnerships aim to support a student's ability to thrive. We help students locate resources on and access to campus organizations, physical and financial wellness information, and mental health support to facilitate belonging on campus, success in their studies, and overall wellbeing.

All-In Milwaukee

Our partnership with [All-In Milwaukee](#) exemplifies our commitment to community engagement. This partnership focuses on strengthening ties between UW-Madison and the Milwaukee area, providing students with opportunities to engage in career exploration through learning opportunities with employers, intentional internships, and collaborative research with local organizations.

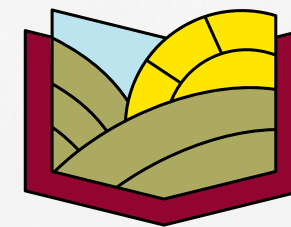
Federal Work Study Partners

Beyond our on-campus student employment partners, DEM collaborates with a diverse range of local municipalities, small businesses, and community-based non-profits in Wisconsin to provide valuable off-campus work-study opportunities for our students. ■

This page: Students attend the All-Campus Career and Internship Fair at the Kohl Center on Sept. 18, 2024. (Photo by Paige Valley / UW-Madison)

Opposite page: Rural Wisconsin farm land northeast of Madison near Baraboo is pictured in an early morning aerial taken from a helicopter. (Photo by Bryce Richter / UW-Madison)

SPOTLIGHT ON...



COLLEGE *for* RURAL WISCONSIN

Campus Community-Building

Over 60 current rural UW students participated in networking events, held across campus in three schools and colleges, to enhance rural students' sense of belonging at UW-Madison.

Outreach Events

The program hosted and attended 12 workshops and information sessions in rural communities, providing students and their families with essential information about college readiness and financial aid.

Near-Peer Mentoring

Over 450 rural students were connected with current UW-Madison students who serve as mentors, offering guidance and support throughout their college journey.

“College for Rural Wisconsin was a chance for undergraduate students to create resources for rural students by rural students... It's about holding the door open for them too.”

AVERY SIMPSON, COLLEGE FOR RURAL WISCONSIN PEER ADVISOR | BROOKLYN, WI





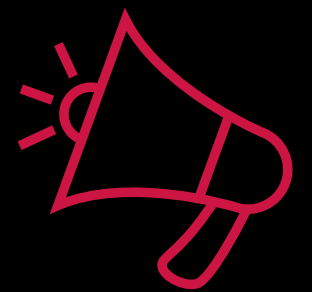
12,534
DEGREES CONFERRED
IN 2023-2024



Connections, Celebrations, *and Commencement*

“The fact that I'm able to access a place like that in the state I've lived in for the past few years is something I feel very fortunate for.”

VASH ALLEN | EAU CLAIRE, WISCONSIN



66.3%

UNDERGRADS GRADUATED
WITHOUT DEBT IN 2022-2023

96.1%

2023 1-YEAR
RETENTION RATE

3.86 Years

AVERAGE TIME TO DEGREE
FOR 2024 GRADUATES

89.5%

6-YEAR GRADUATION
RATE FOR 2017
FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS



There's an unmistakable magic that fills Camp Randall Stadium during commencement ceremonies—a powerful blend of achievement, anticipation, and pure Badger pride. Every May and December, DEM celebrates alongside our exceptional graduates and their loved ones and witnesses the culmination of countless meaningful connections forged throughout their UW-Madison journey. From initial application to diploma conferral, our teams build lasting relationships with each student, providing personalized support that extends beyond graduation. These connections—between students, families, faculty, and staff—form the foundation of our work and ensure graduates carry both their degree and the Wisconsin Idea forward into the world. ■



Future Landscape

The higher education landscape ahead will be defined by those institutions that can master the essential balance between technological innovation and authentic human relationships. As we navigate continuing FAFSA complexities, shifting legislative priorities, and evolving student expectations, our path forward is clear.

We will maintain strategic enrollment balance across resident, non-resident, and international students while exploring new partnership territories. Through responsible stewardship of diverse funding sources and innovative financial aid strategies, we will improve access for all talented students. Our expanding network of college-going partnerships and community relationships will deepen and broaden educational pathways.

Yet our greatest competitive advantage remains unchanged: the authentic relationships and experiences that distinguish UW-Madison in an increasingly commoditized higher education market. While others may prioritize efficiency over connection, we recognize that relationships powered by innovation create transformational educational experiences that technology alone cannot deliver.

The future landscape may be uncertain, but our response is grounded in mission, values, and an unwavering commitment to one another. We will continue adapting boldly while preserving what makes UW-Madison exceptional—our dedication to serving each student through genuine human connection and innovative excellence. ■



On the cover: Graduates celebrate during UW–Madison's spring commencement ceremony at Camp Randall Stadium at the UW–Madison on May 11, 2024. The outdoor graduation was attended by more than 7,500 bachelor's, master's and law degree candidates, plus their guests. (Photo by Bryce Richter / UW–Madison)

On page 10: A group of students have an informal meeting outside on a warm day among the colors of the fall leaves on Bascom Hill. (Photo by Bryce Richter / UW–Madison)

This page: The Bucky on Parade statue, "Honor the Air, Land, and Water," at the Memorial Union Terrace. (Photo by Althea Dotzour / UW–Madison)

Mackie Boone and Avery Simpson provided their photos.

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