



UW-Eau Claire ranked sixth nationally in tally of undergraduate chemistry graduates

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EAU CLAIRE — The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire graduates more students with bachelor's degrees in chemistry than most other colleges and universities in the country that offer only undergraduate chemistry programs, according to the American Chemical Society.

UW-Eau Claire was ranked sixth nationally — the highest of any Wisconsin college or university — in the number of chemistry graduates among the 335 colleges and universities that offer ACS-approved undergraduate chemistry programs, the ACS's Committee on Professional Training determined in its analysis. Colleges and universities that also offer master or doctoral programs in chemistry were not included in the tally.

Forty UW-Eau Claire students graduated with degrees in chemistry during the 2007-08 timeframe used by ACS-CPT to develop its rankings.

"The large number of chemistry degrees is a direct result of UW-Eau Claire's wonderful reputation among many of the Midwest's brightest and most ambitious students," said Dr. Michael Carney, a chemistry professor who also earned his undergraduate degree in chemistry from UW-Eau Claire. "The chemistry department has the luxury of drawing its students from the talented pool of students enrolled at UW-Eau Claire. Some students come here specifically to study chemistry, but many others discover the program once they already are on campus."

Since the 1970s, the chemistry department has used student-faculty collaborative research to teach chemistry, Carney said. Providing undergraduate students with meaningful research opportunities has been a huge draw for students, he said.

"Working side-by-side with a faculty member, our chemistry majors have opportunities to tackle unsolved research problems and use state-of-the-art equipment, comparable to what can often be found only in graduate programs," Carney said. "Along the way, our majors gain a deeper understanding of chemistry and are able to explore scientific research as a career option."

By the time chemistry majors graduate, they are prepared for whatever professional career awaits them, Carney said, noting that UW-Eau Claire also ranks in the top two percent of undergraduate chemistry programs nationwide in the number of graduates going on to obtain chemistry Ph.D.s.

"Whether our majors opt to continue their education or immediately launch their careers after graduation, they have had multiple experiences that will help them stand out and excel," Carney said.

The rankings were reported in a recent issue of ACS's Chemical and Engineering News. For more information, see www.CEN-ONLINE.org.

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