



April 26, 2010

CALS Academic Affairs Visioning Committee  
Attn: Dietram Scheufele, Chair  
309 Hiram Smith Hall  
1545 Observatory Drive  
Madison, WI 53706

Dear Members of the Academic Affairs Visioning Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Board of Visitors in favor of adding an undeclared undergraduate major option to the current CALS curriculum. The Board unanimously endorsed this action at its spring meeting on April 16, 2010.

As undergraduate education increasingly becomes a priority focus for the university, it is vital that the College take an active role in strengthening our undergraduate enterprise to maintain and strengthen our relevance to this campus and the state. In 2008, CALS provided an extremely high quality education to 7.15% of the total undergraduate population. We believe the College can do better. While CALS already has many outstanding academic programs and opportunities to offer undergraduate students, several of our majors have exhibited small, stagnant enrollment.

The Board believes that adding an undeclared major option will enhance the College's ability to recruit new students—students that may be interested generally in the life sciences, but who may also be intimidated by an initial choice among majors or who may simply want some time to explore what program might be the best fit. By creating an undeclared major, CALS will facilitate access to our existing academic programs and enable undecided students to select majors that best suit their interests and abilities, allowing these students to be more successful in the College and beyond.

We view creating an undeclared major as an opportunity to attract and better communicate with students about the outstanding programs and opportunities we have here in CALS and fully support its addition to the curricular structure.

Sincerely,

Peter D. Giacomini  
Chair, CALS Board of Visitors