Biotechnology at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls infuses diverse sciences into one major and is a perfect fit for students with versatile science skills. This interdisciplinary program combines coursework through Biology, Chemistry, Animal and Food Science; and Plant and Earth Science. It also happens to be one of the highest demand biological fields.

Students looking for flexibility in a major can find it in biotechnology. As part of an interdisciplinary program, students will take part in an array of courses. Critical-thinking, problem-solving and laboratory skills are emphasized. Students can design their own specialization area, building on core curriculum offered in the program. Medical, production animal, business, forensic and pharmaceutical biotechnology are just some of the areas students have selected to specialize in. Internships are encouraged in this program and River Falls students have gained valuable experience at such companies as BioDiagnostics, Diasorin and Ohly Americas.

**Undergraduate Research**

All students, regardless of their majors, conduct undergraduate research in the freshman biology class. This exposes students to research opportunities in their first semester of college. Biotechnology majors count the credits for that project toward the degree program. As seniors, students participate in a seminar class where they develop a research project in their area of specialization. Recently, River Falls students have researched such areas as alternative energy options, bioinformatics, plant viruses, cancer research and drug development.

Biotechnology students also gain valuable insight through a seminar series, which include guest speakers from colleges and companies. Juniors and seniors in the major are invited to participate in the series to learn about a variety of opportunities in the biotechnology field. In addition, students may network through the campus’ Biotechnology Club.

**Global. Innovative. Excellent.**

Biotechnology students put their classroom knowledge to the test through internships offered through Ohly Americas. An international corporation, Ohly Americas is a food production company with three types of products – baker’s yeast extract, food seasoning and a pantry line.

River Falls biotechnology students regularly intern for the company. “We have them do general research and training. We have them operate fermentations through the summer,” said David Goshaw, Ohly Americas Research and Development Manager. The students are then required to complete a research report.

According to Goshaw, the interns gain the skills needed to work independently, which is common in lab work. Having also graduated from UWRF, he credits the Biotechnology program for offering career flexibility. “The directions that people can go from that program are diverse.”

**Biotechnology**

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