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A Monthly Insight into the USDA's Food and Agricultural Education Information System

FAEIS News

Minority trends for undergraduates in colleges and departments of agriculture and natural resources

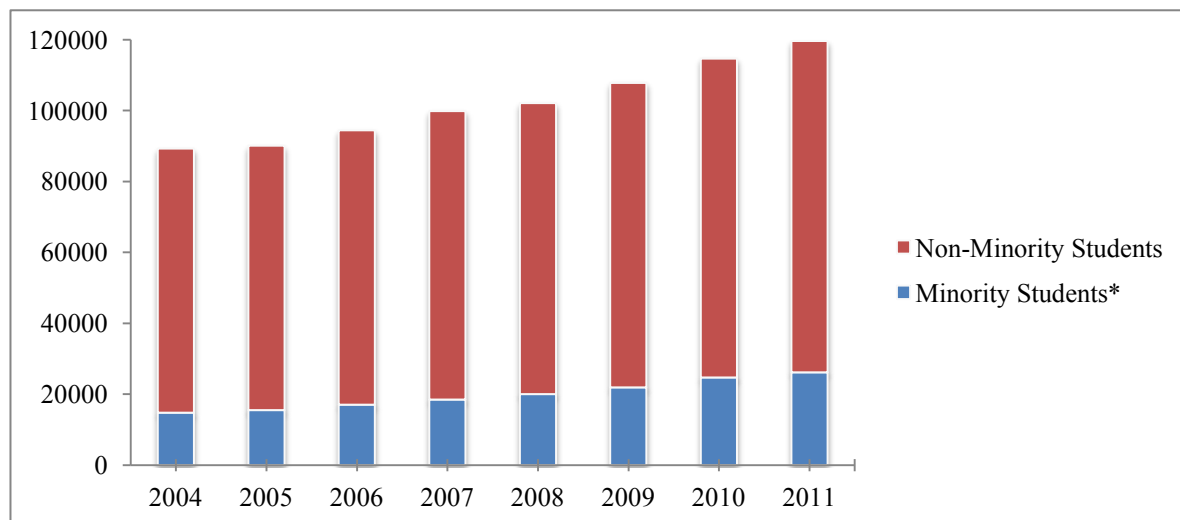
For the September newsletter we explored trends for minority students enrolled in colleges and departments of agriculture and natural resources at higher education institutions across the United States. We investigated the growth of undergraduates of different ethnicities from 98 higher education institutions. Undergraduate students who were reported as having two or more ethnicities or as non-U.S. citizens were not included in the study. Institutions who have not reported consistent ethnicity enrollment were not included in the analysis.

Overall trends in minority baccalaureate student enrollment in agriculture and natural resources programs

We first explored the trends for undergraduate minority students compared to the general population of undergraduate students from 2004 to 2011 in colleges and departments of agriculture and natural resources. Figure 1 offers the baccalaureate enrollment for minority and non-minority students. Minority students were considered to be students that were reported as non-Caucasian, including students reported as African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, and Native Hawaiian. Based on our analyses we found the following results.

- From 2004 to 2011, the baccalaureate enrollment for non-minority students increased by 18,915 students or **25.4%**.
- During that same time, the baccalaureate enrollment for minority students increased by 11,440 students or **77.5%**.

Figure 1. Baccalaureate Enrollment for Minority and Non-Minority Students (n=98 institutions).

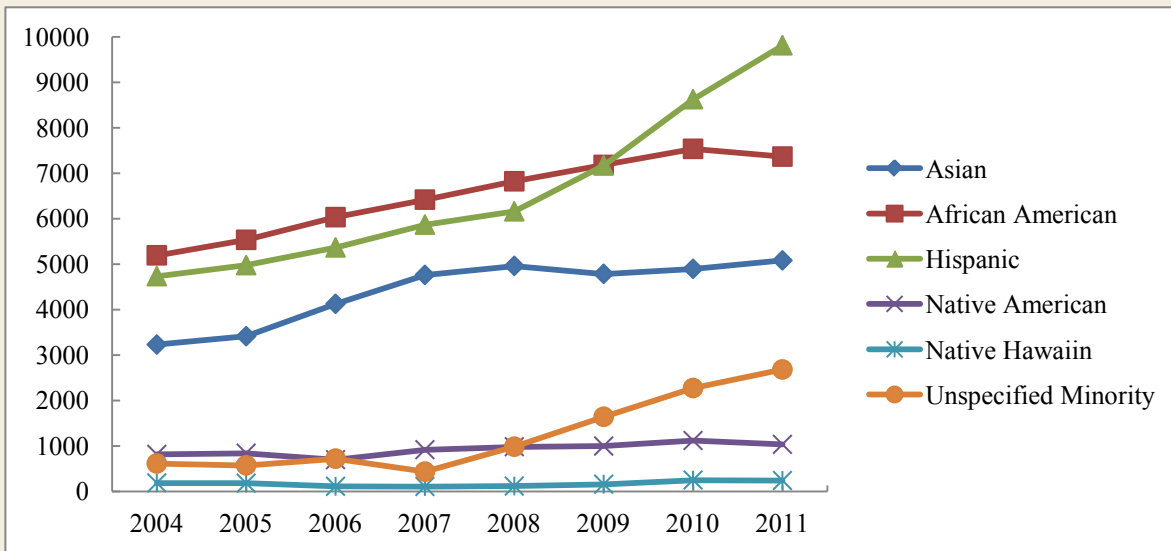


* Minority students include students reported as African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, Native Hawaiian, and unspecified minority.

Minority undergraduate student enrollment by ethnicity in agriculture and natural resources programs

We investigated the minority undergraduate student enrollment by ethnicity in colleges and departments of agriculture and natural resources from 2004 to 2011 (Figure 2). The baccalaureate enrollment for Hispanic students had the highest growth in the number of students between 2004 and 2011 with an increase of **5,077 students** or 107.2%. The baccalaureate enrollment for African American students had the second highest growth in student numbers with an increase of **2,171 students** or 41.8%. The baccalaureate enrollment for Asian students had the third highest growth in student numbers with an increase of **1,851 students** or 57.3%.

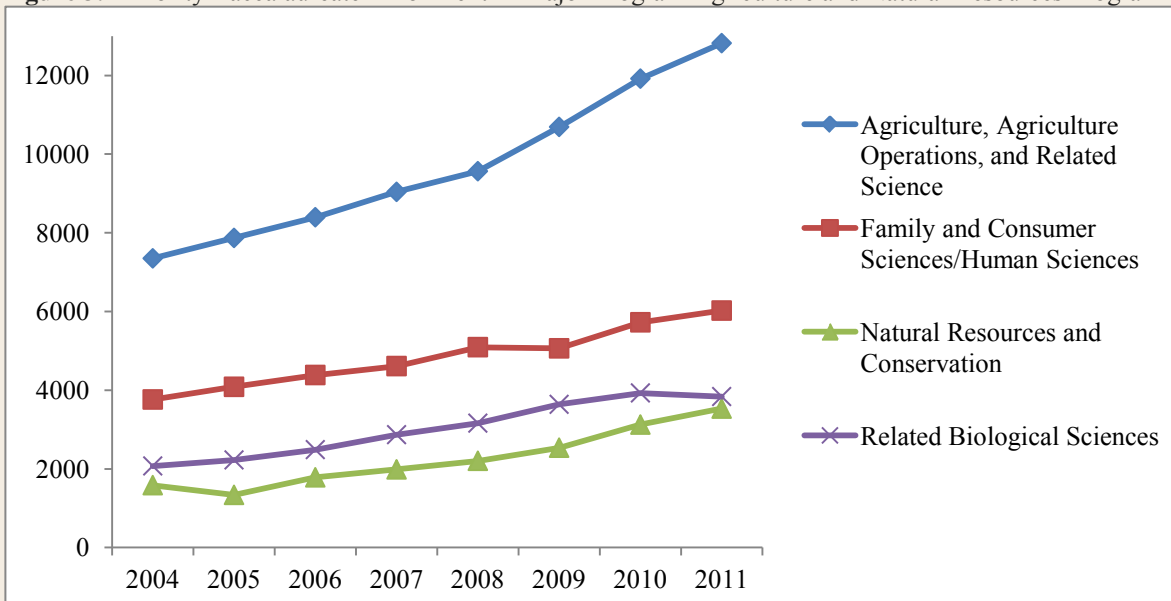
Figure 2. Minority Baccalaureate Enrollment by Ethnicity.



Minority undergraduate enrollment in the major agriculture and natural resources program areas

We also investigated the enrollment of minority students within the major program areas (Figure 3). The program areas included 1) Agriculture, Agriculture Operations, and Related Sciences, 2) Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences, 3) Natural Resources and Conservation, and 4) Related Biological Sciences. The program area with the greatest growth in the number of minority students was Agriculture, Agriculture Operations, and Related Sciences with an increase of **5,470 students** or an increase of 74.4%.

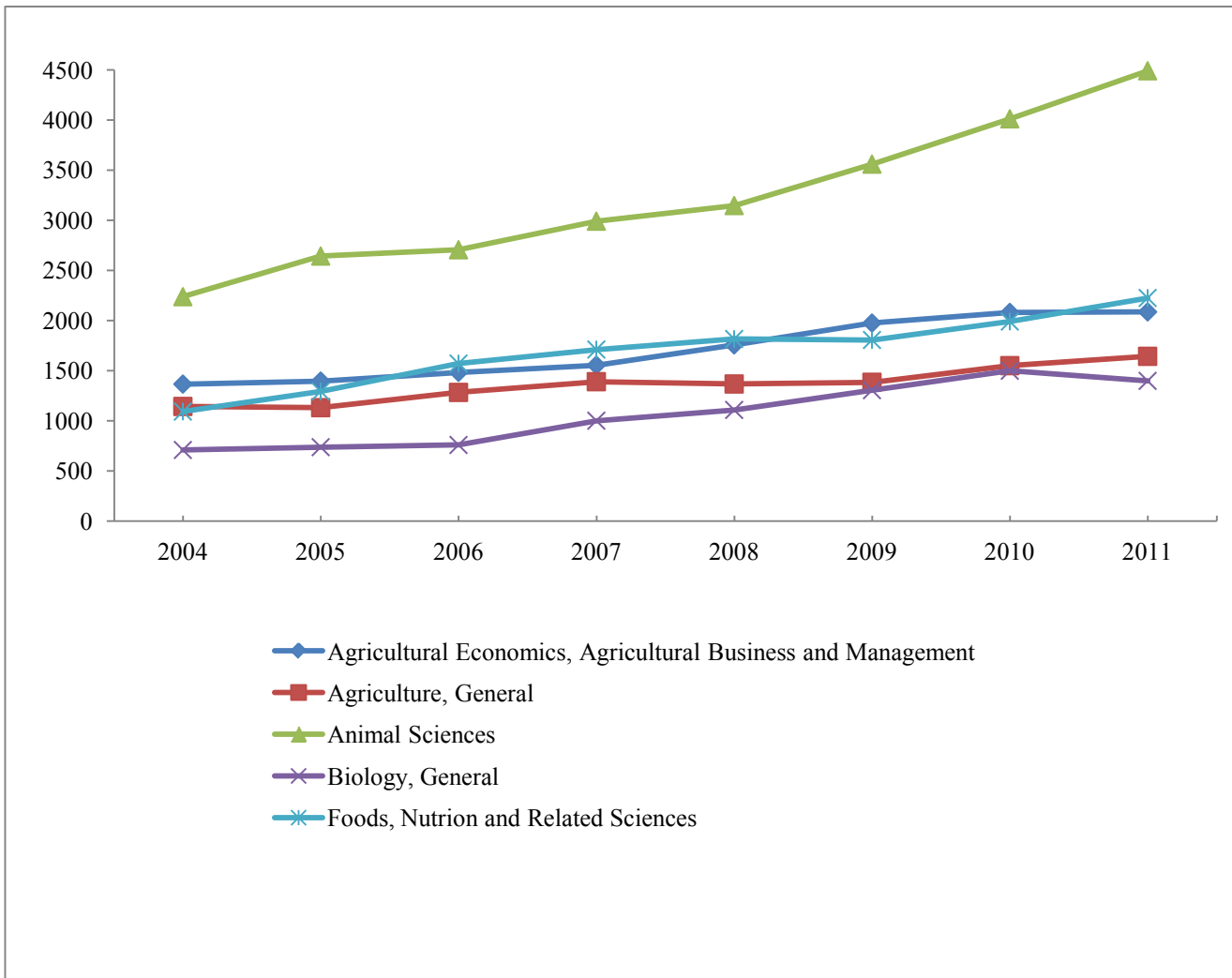
Figure 3. Minority Baccalaureate Enrollment in Major Program Agriculture and Natural Resources Program Areas.



Disciplines with the highest minority student enrollment in agriculture and natural resources programs

We also investigated the five academic areas (groups of disciplines) with the highest minority student enrollment in colleges and departments of agriculture and natural resources from 2004 to 2011 (Figure 4). Of the five academic areas, the academic area with the largest growth in the number of baccalaureate minority students was Animal Sciences with an increase of **2,253 students** or 100.6%. The second academic area with the largest growth in baccalaureate minority students was Foods, Nutrition and Related Sciences with an increase of **1,133 students** or 103.7%, followed by Agricultural Economics, Agricultural Business and Management with an increase of **720 students** or 52.7%, Biology, General with an increase of **689 students** or 97.0%, and Agriculture, General with an increase of **500 students** or 43.7%.

Figure 4. Enrollment for the Five Academic Areas with the Highest Minority Student Enrollment.



Overall, the baccalaureate enrollment of minority students in colleges and departments of agriculture and natural resources at higher education institutions across the United States has increased at a higher rate (77.5%) to baccalaureate enrollment of non-minority students (25.4%). Among minority baccalaureate students, the highest increase in enrollment was found among Hispanic students with an increase of over 5,000 students, followed by African American students with an increase of over 2,000, and Asian students with an increase of over 1,800 students. Minority baccalaureate enrollment is highest for programs in the area of Agriculture, Agriculture Operations, and Related Sciences.



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