Letter From The Dean

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At the start of the spring semester, I asked student leaders to tell me what they valued the most about their CALS education and experiences. I wanted to add their thoughts to many ongoing discussions about current budget challenges and shrinking state resources over the last decade. Specifically, I asked them what about CALS they’d most want to protect. Here were some of their responses:

- High-quality faculty who teach in the classroom.
- Advisors who have an open-door policy.
- Beneficial hands-on learning experiences.
- Programs like Science With Practice, where you earn credit while earning a wage working with faculty mentors, and the Ag Entrepreneurship Initiative, in which students’ entrepreneurial spirit is kindled.
- Study-abroad programs, especially as employers continue to say they look for international experience.
- Career services to help make jobs and internships possible.
- Student recruitment to attract even more bright minds from Iowa, nation and the world.
- Extension to connect science-based information with Iowans.
- Learning communities to get new students off to the best start.

The students’ message was clear: Maintain the high-quality education, advising and opportunities that are our hallmark. It is a hallmark made possible by excellent faculty, who truly are molding the future in their classrooms and labs. Our faculty continue a stellar record in research, extension and teaching on national and international levels. They continue to demonstrate outstanding success as they step up to new opportunities and new frontiers.

Our students made us think hard about difficult decisions we need to make to match our vision to fiscal realities. You — our alumni and friends — continue to support us in so many ways. Our alums certainly are at the top of what makes us proud. Often we hear how your roots at Iowa State have meant the world to you. You truly are our legacy.

We continue to plan for the future. I recently read an early draft of the new university strategic plan. I clearly see CALS in the center of ISU’s vision and goals. We are committed to advancing science-based knowledge, educating the future generation of leaders in agriculture and life sciences and making Iowa and the world an even better place to live.

Wendy Wintersteen
Endowed Dean of Agriculture and Life Sciences