

962-D1-419

**Scott R. Herriott\*** ([herriott@mum.edu](mailto:herriott@mum.edu)), 1000 N. Fourth St. #1070, Fairfield, IA 52557-1070.

*College Algebra as a Preparation for Students' Majors.*

Nearly all College Algebra students take the course because it is required for their major. The client disciplines expect that college algebra will provide students with the mathematical skills necessary to solve quantitative problems in their discipline. A study of students' intended majors and actual mathematics registrations at the University of Nebraska showed that only a small minority of College Algebra students would enter a mathematically intensive field, and many—perhaps the majority—would hardly use calculus at all. This suggests that the primary goal of College Algebra is not “preparation for calculus,” even incidentally. The mathematical skills needed in the future majors of College Algebra students are likely to emphasize modeling using functions, the solution of equations, and the representation of relationships through graphs, tables, and equations. A focus on these core skills should supplant “preparation for calculus” as the primary goal of College Algebra. (Received September 13, 2000)