



Wisconsin Sports Geography: Collegiate Football Recruiting Patterns in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference 2007-2001

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last 150 years, "gridiron football" has cemented itself firmly within the fabric of the American culture. Communities, urban and rural, regional and national, unite Friday nights in high school grandstands and Saturday afternoons at college venues across the country in support of their friends, nephews, brothers, and sons that play on the team. When high school student athletes decide to play football on into college, geographical patterns emerge regarding the migratory path of those students.

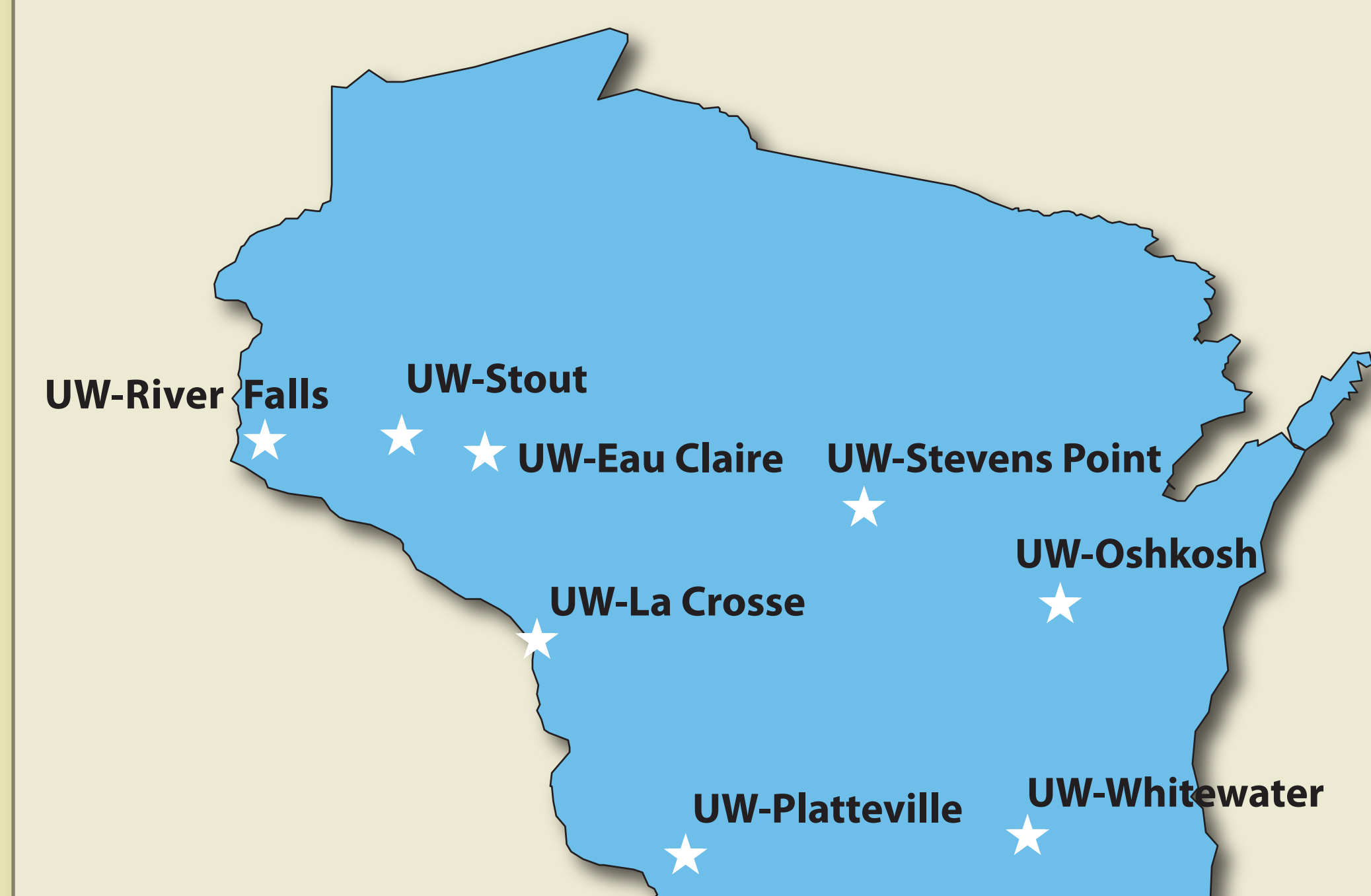
RESEARCH DESIGN

This research focuses on the geographical relationships and landscapes of college football recruiting in Wisconsin as it pertains to the college football programs that operate in absence of athletic scholarships within the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. The research examines Wisconsin's college freshmen football player output by zip code, and compares Wisconsin college freshmen football players as a ratio of the 15-19 year-old population demographic.

The **Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC)** operates under Division III status of the National Collegiate Athletic Association. The WIAC's football members consist of eight Wisconsin universities including the **University of Wisconsin (UW)-Eau Claire, UW-La Crosse, UW-Oshkosh, UW-Platteville, UW-River Falls, UW-Stevens Point, UW-Stout, and UW-Whitewater.**

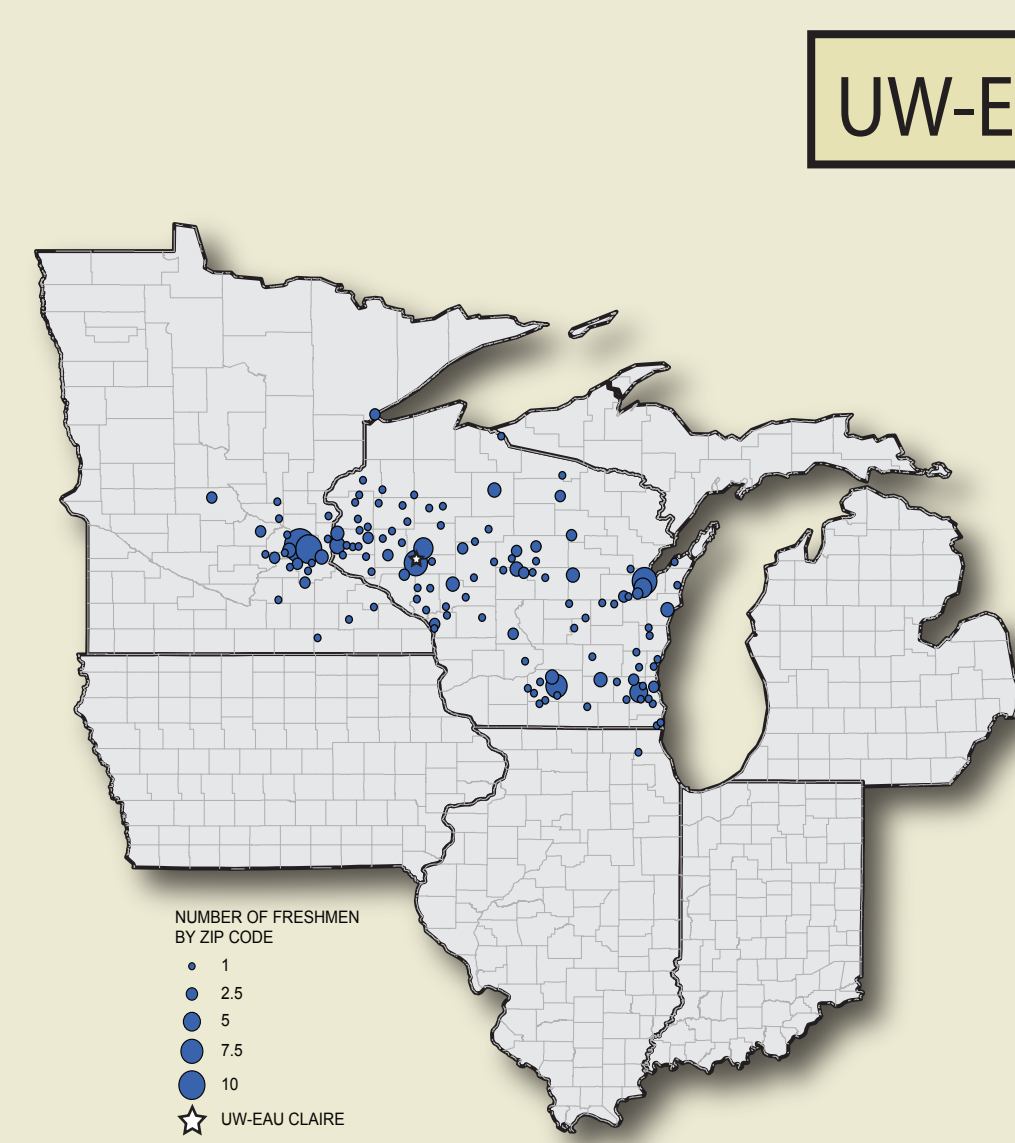
The desired data for this research involved player information found on a typical football roster such as individual player's hometown, high school attended, and academic class. All eight WIAC athletic departments supplied past roster information upon request. A few of the rosters offered less data than others, limiting the focus of the current research to the recruitment of freshmen student athletes to the past seven football seasons. Identification of the high school attended by each football player was not consistently indicated, therefore, the player's hometown was used to represent the place of origin. The research examines the hometowns of all football playing freshmen from 2007-2001 for all WIAC football participating universities, individually and collectively. The overall number of WIAC football freshmen produced at each location is quantitatively evaluated as a ratio of the 15-19 year-old zip code population, respectively. The source for the demographic data is the 2004 United States Census.

LOCATION OF WIAC FOOTBALL SCHOOLS

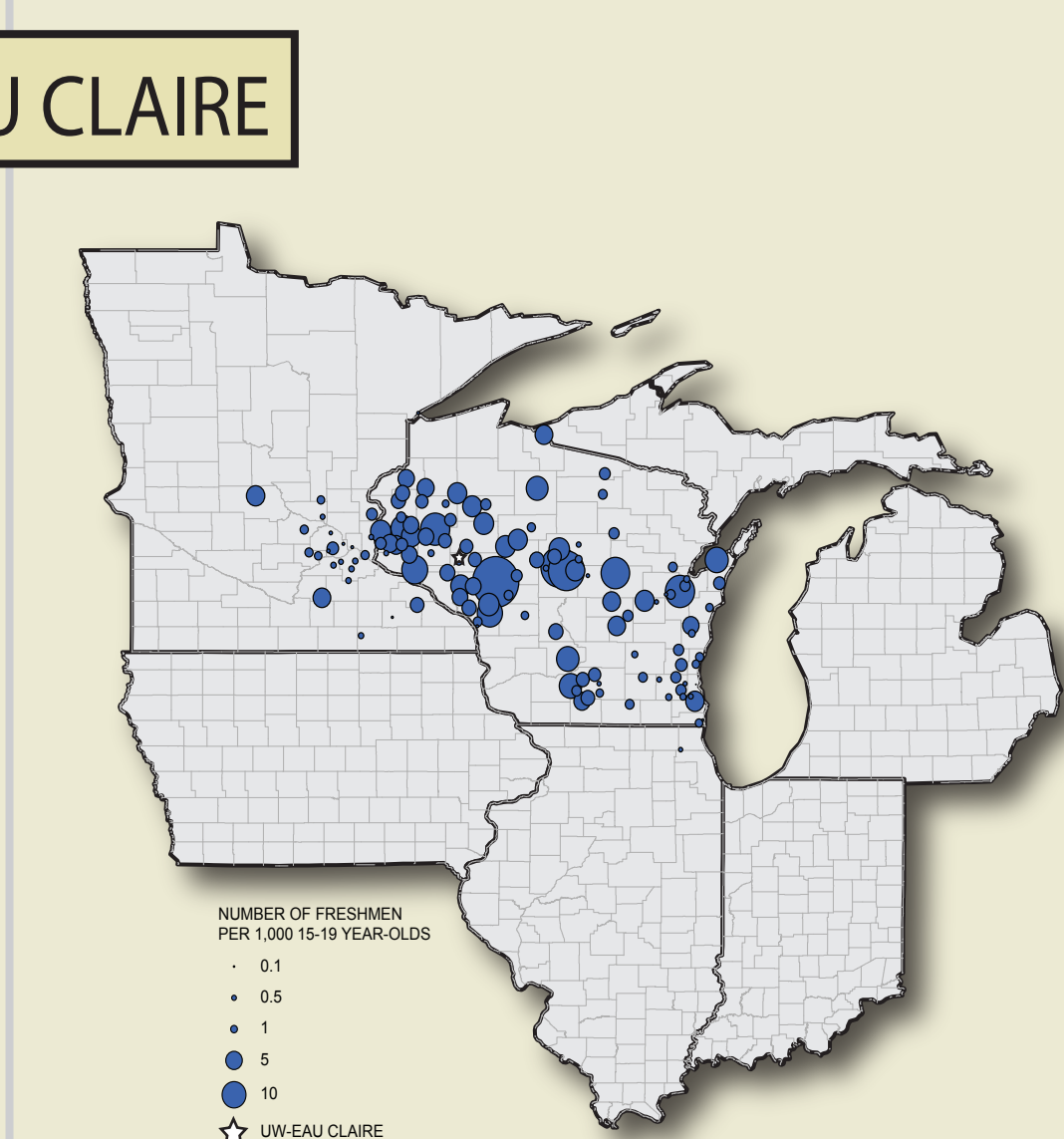


RESULTS

ORIGIN OF WIAC FRESHMEN FOOTBALL PLAYERS 2007-2001

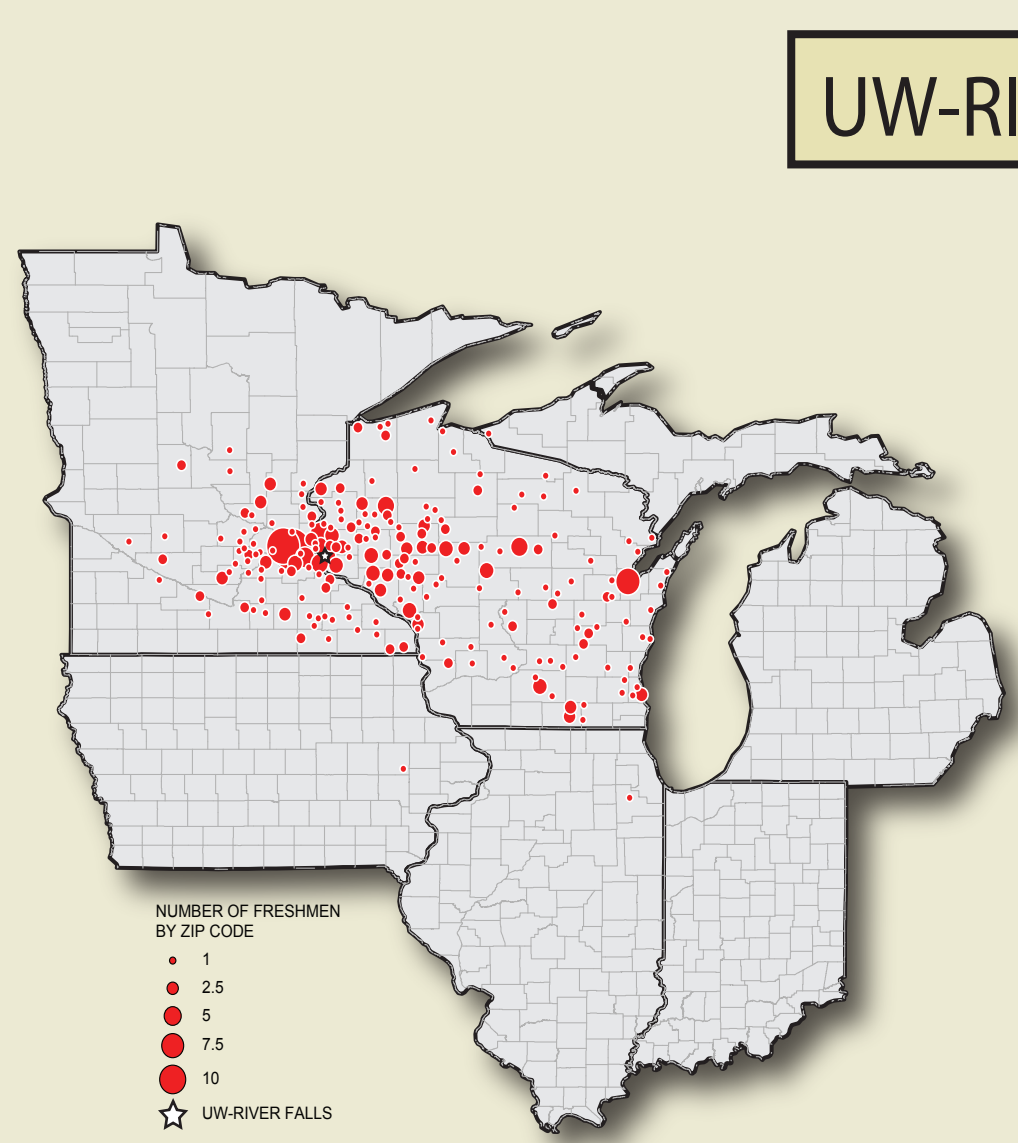


WIAC FRESHMEN FOOTBALL PLAYERS PER 1,000 15-19 YEAR-OLDS BY ZIP CODE, 2003

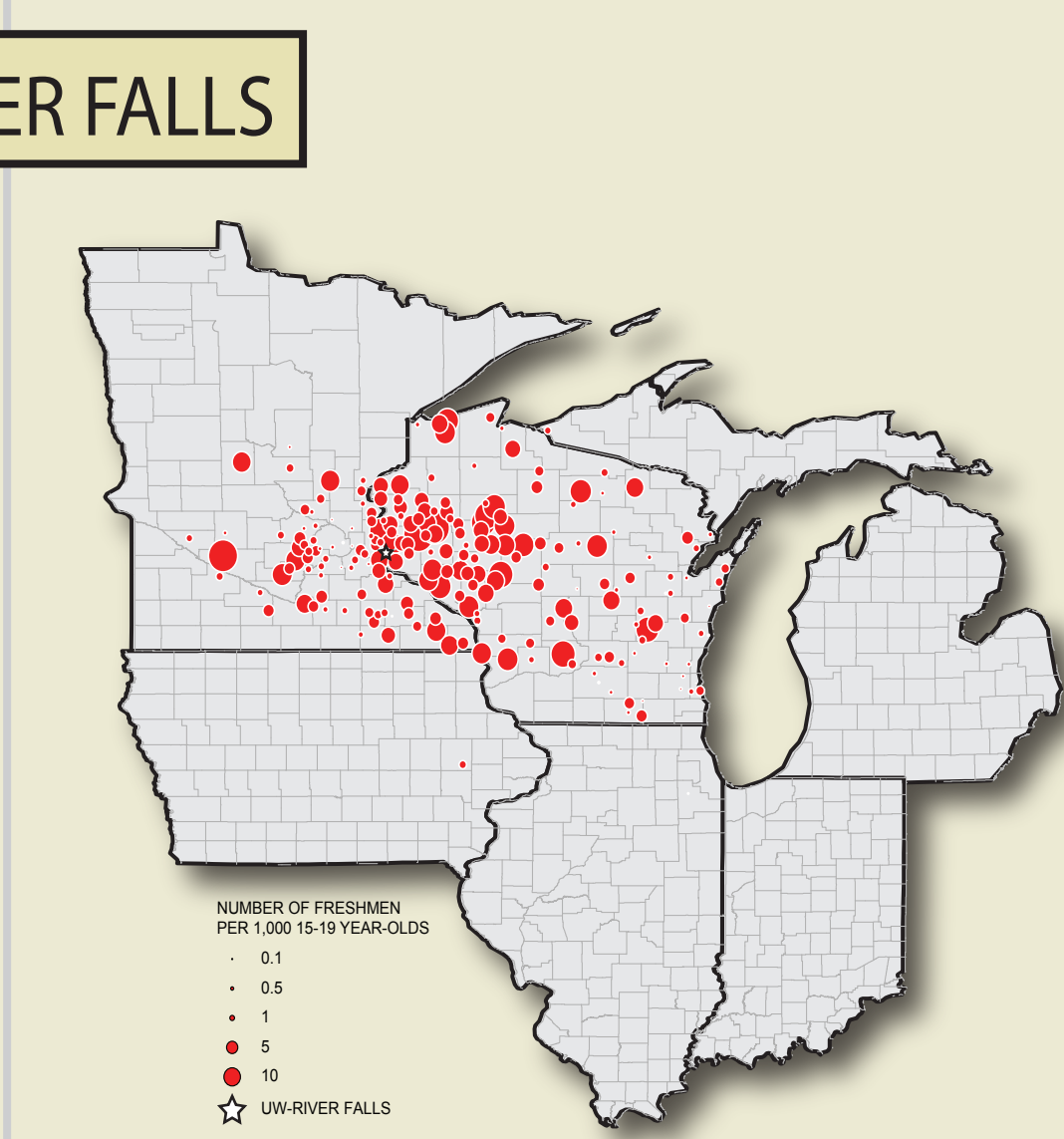


UW-EAU CLAIRE

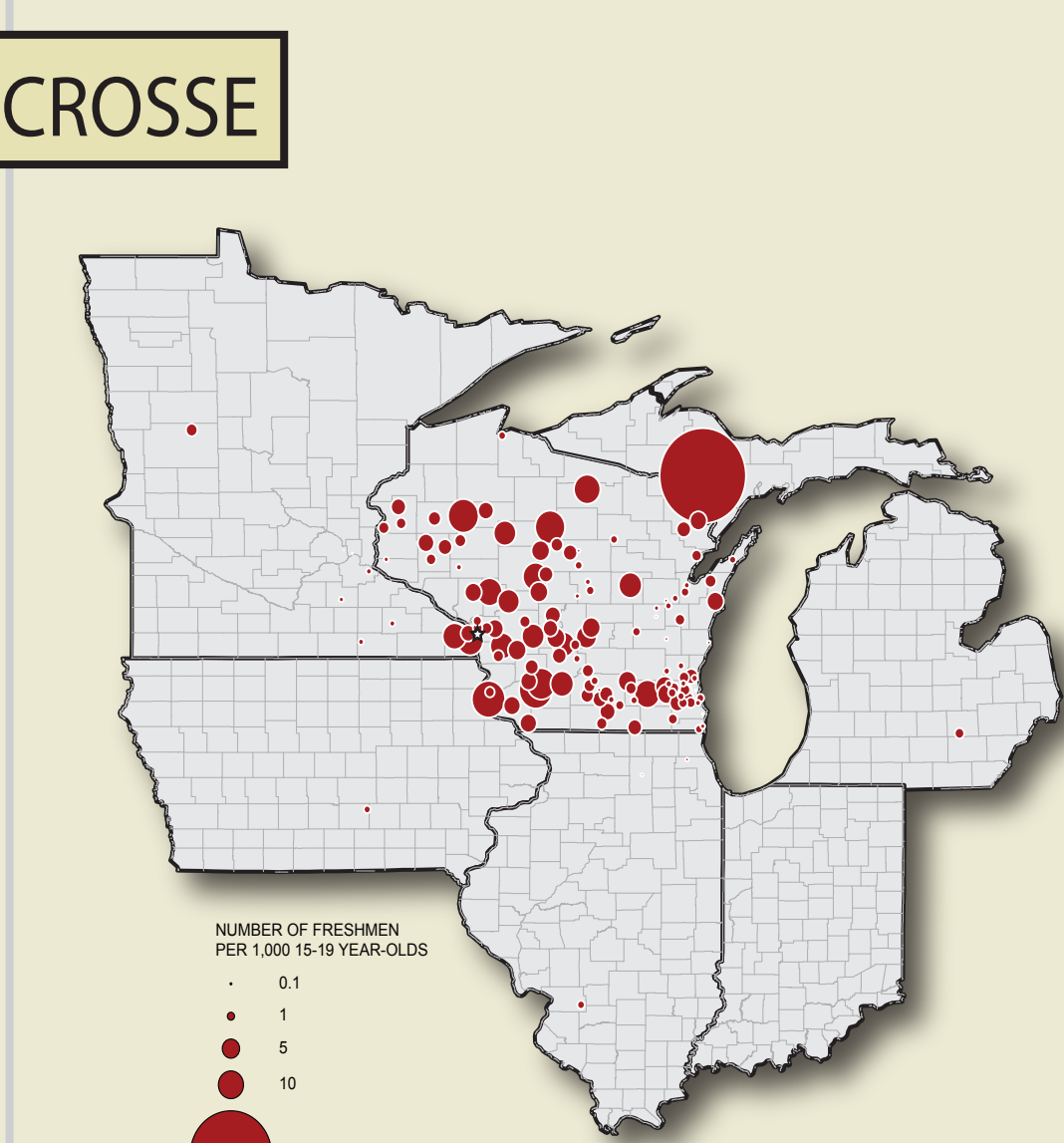
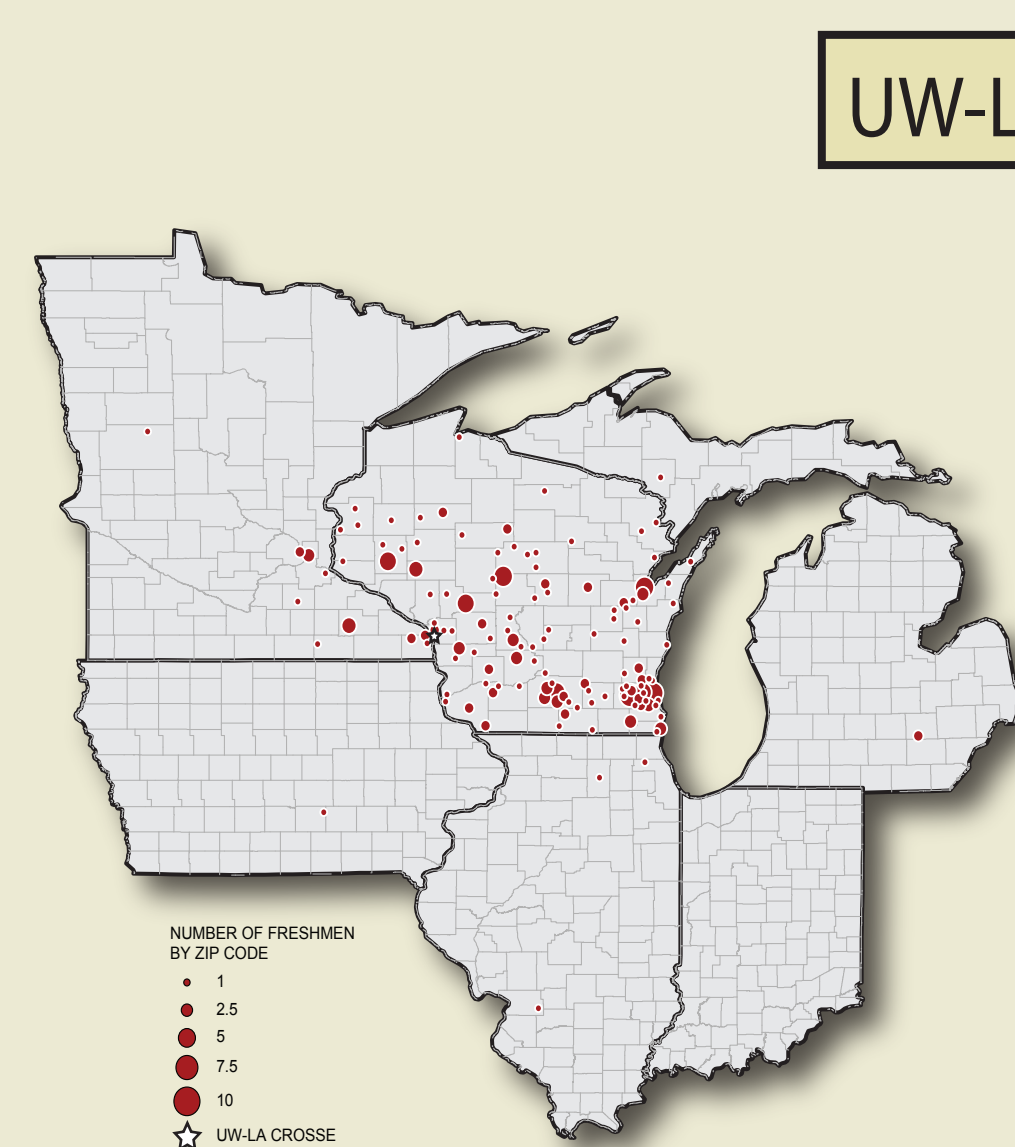
ORIGIN OF WIAC FRESHMEN FOOTBALL PLAYERS 2007-2001



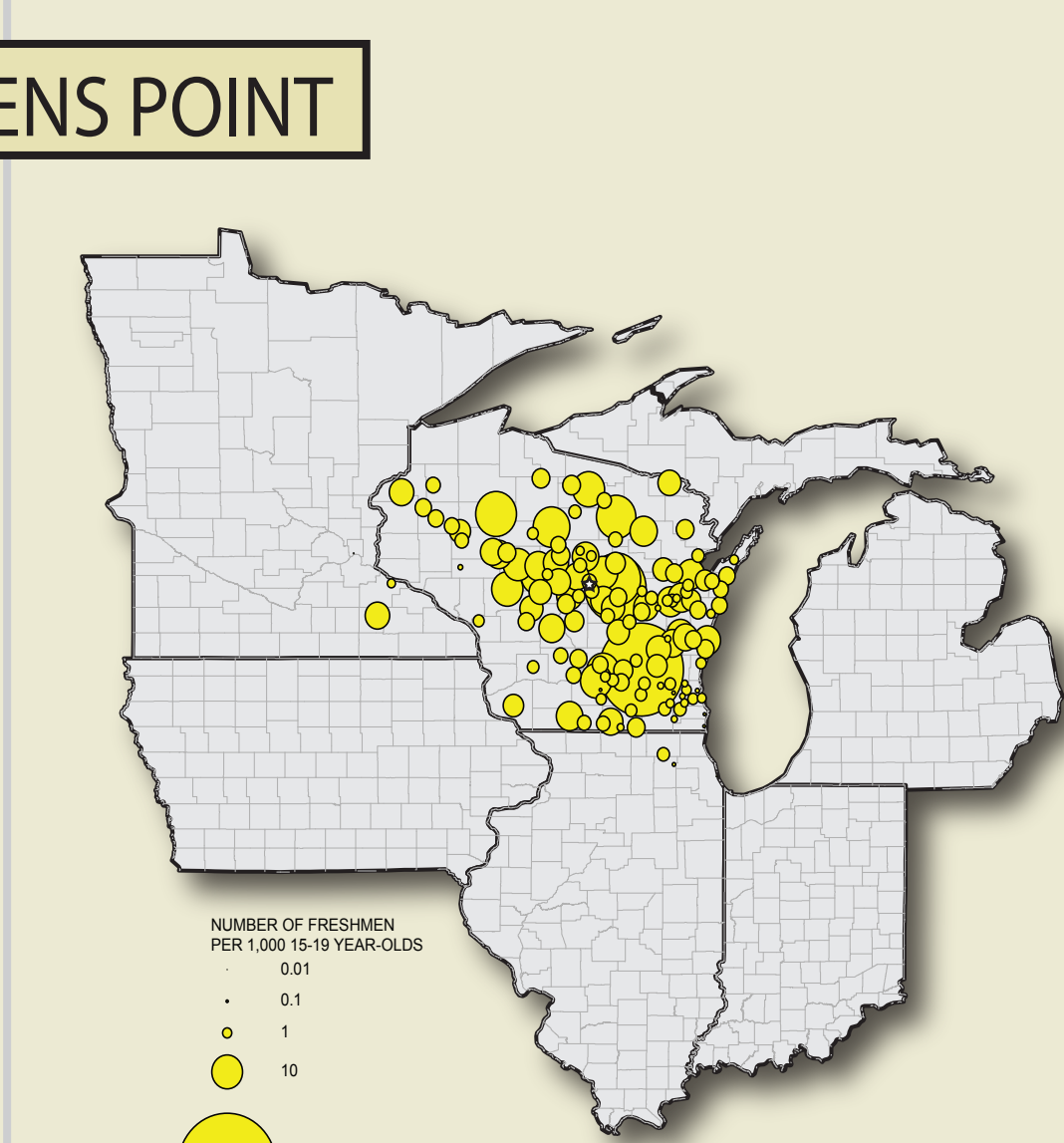
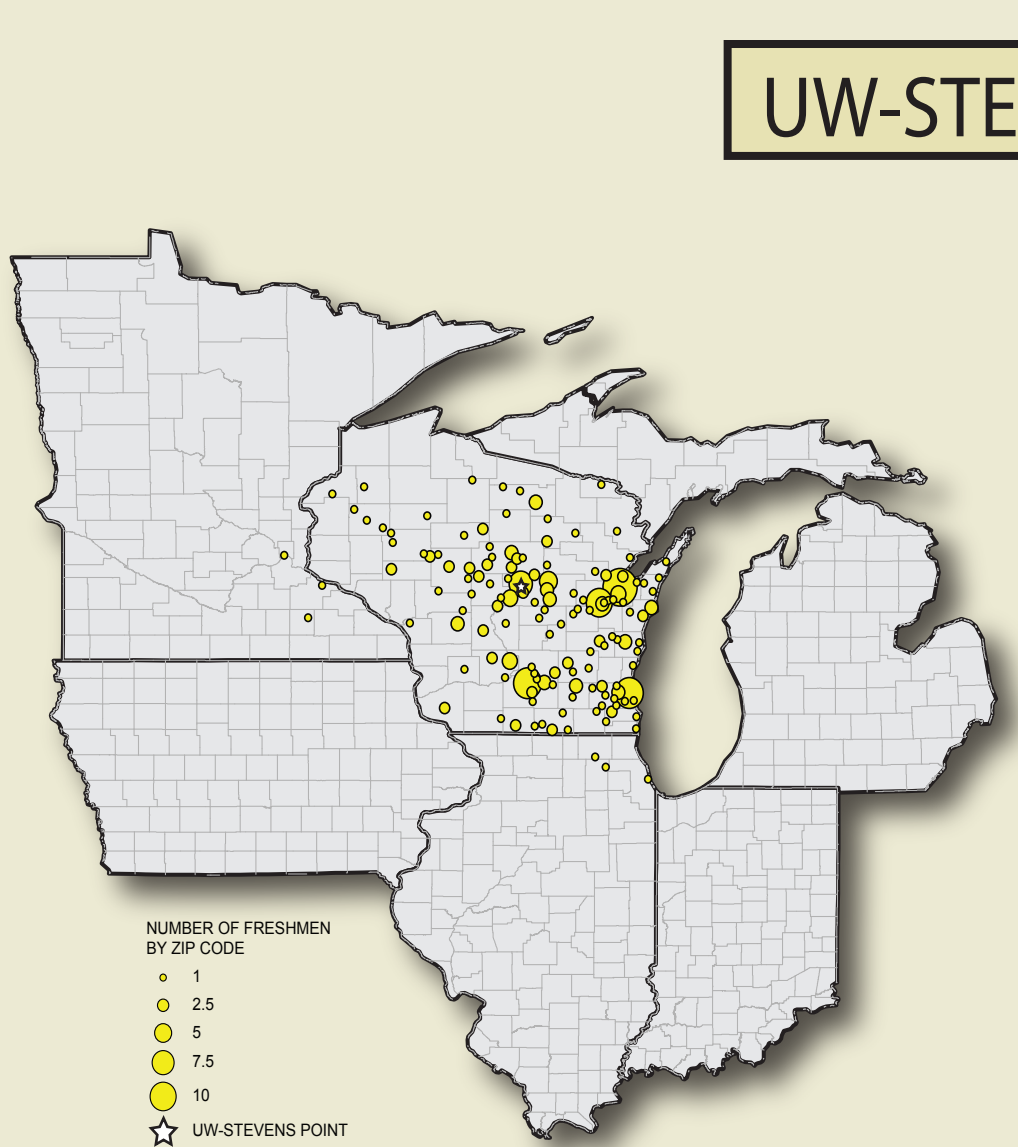
WIAC FRESHMEN FOOTBALL PLAYERS PER 1,000 15-19 YEAR-OLDS BY ZIP CODE, 2003



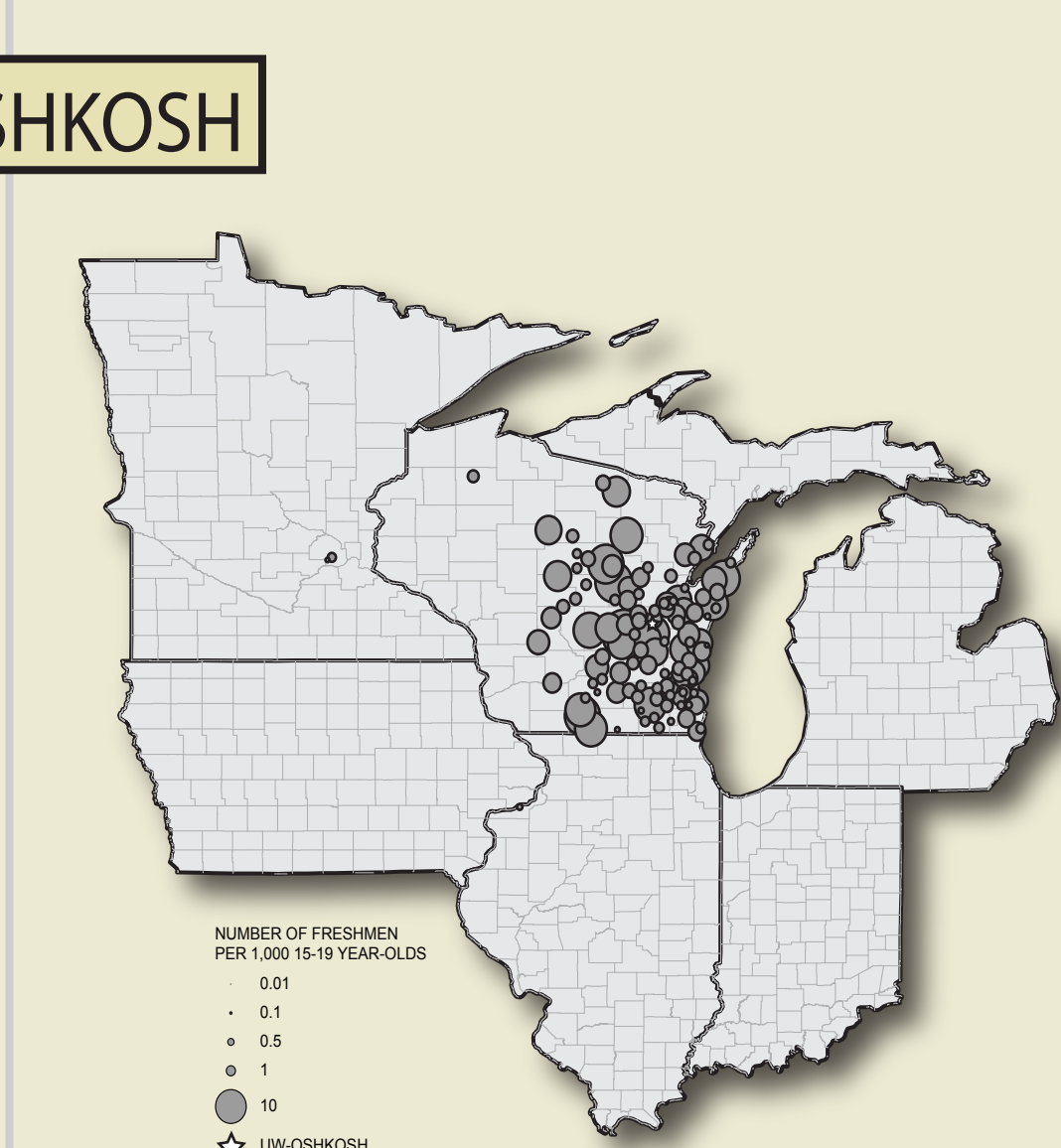
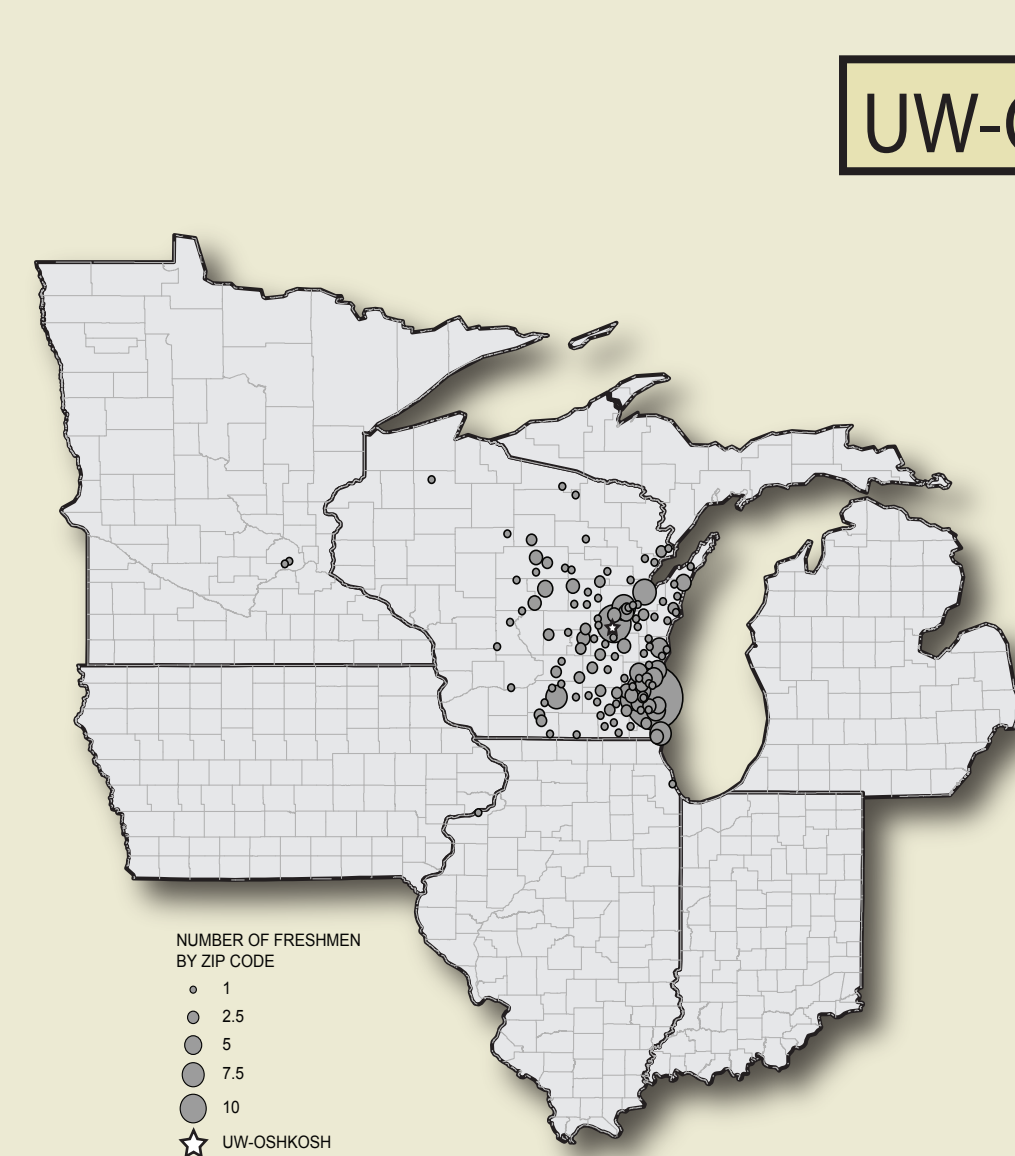
UW-RIVER FALLS



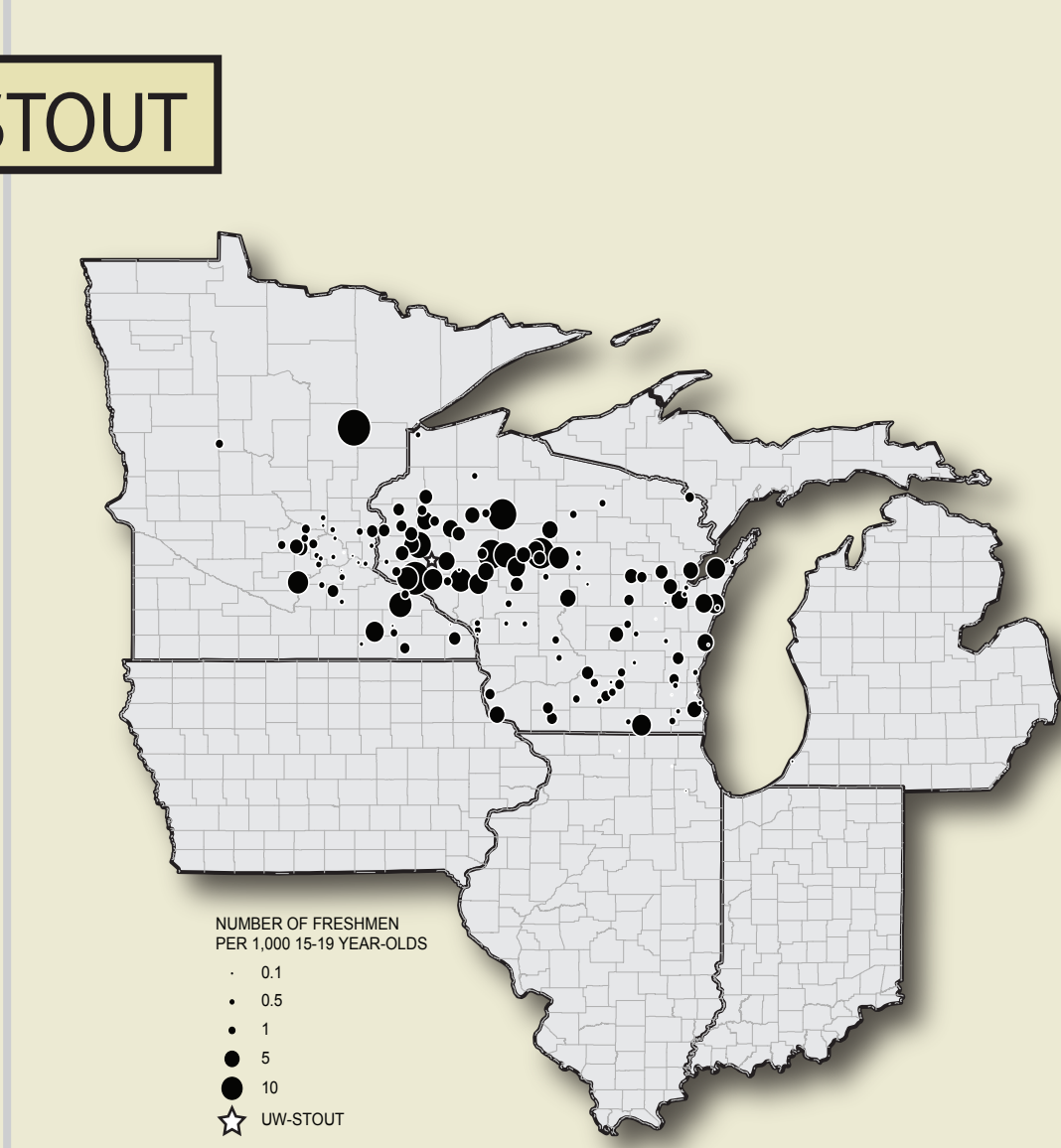
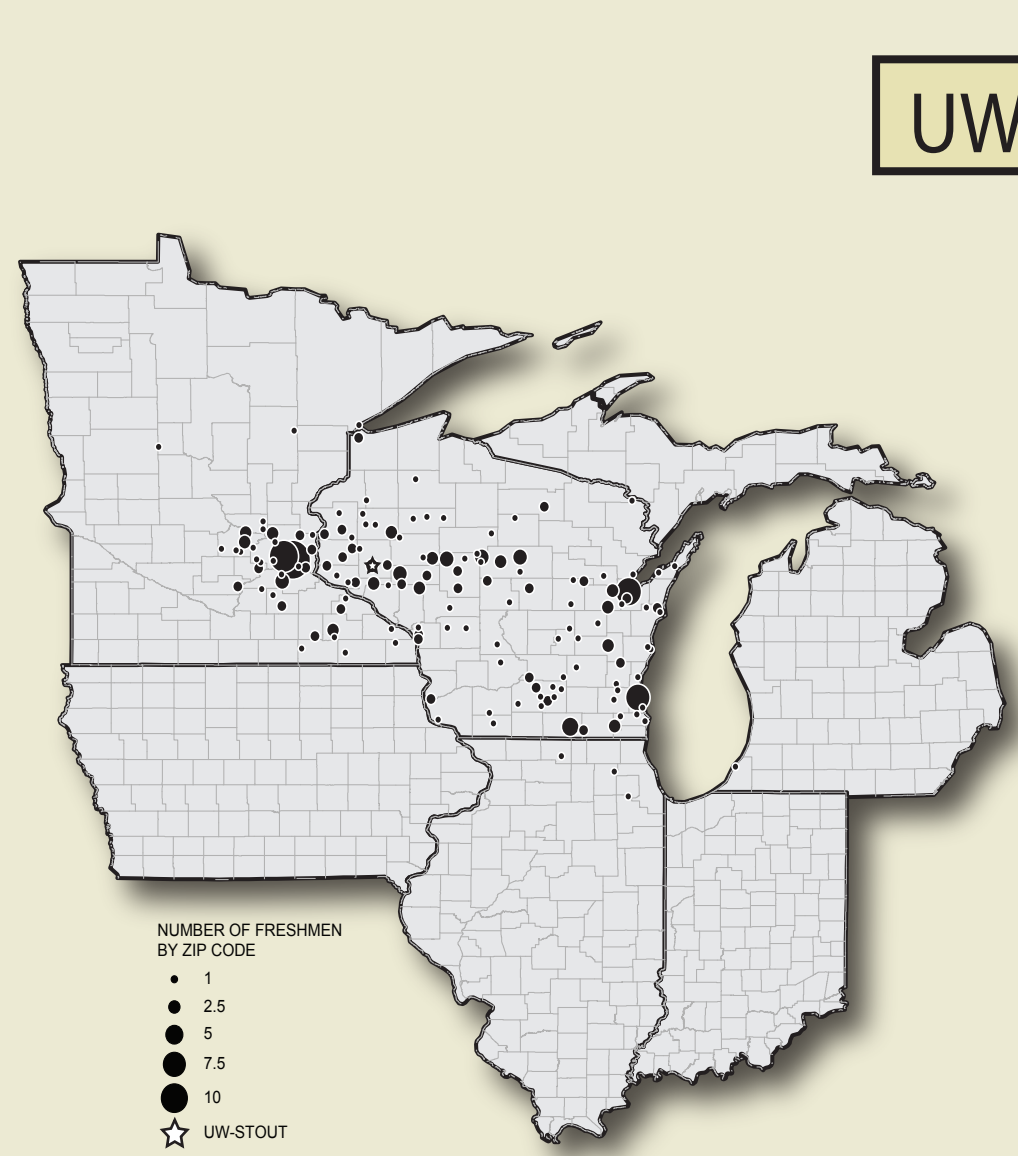
UW-LA CROSSE



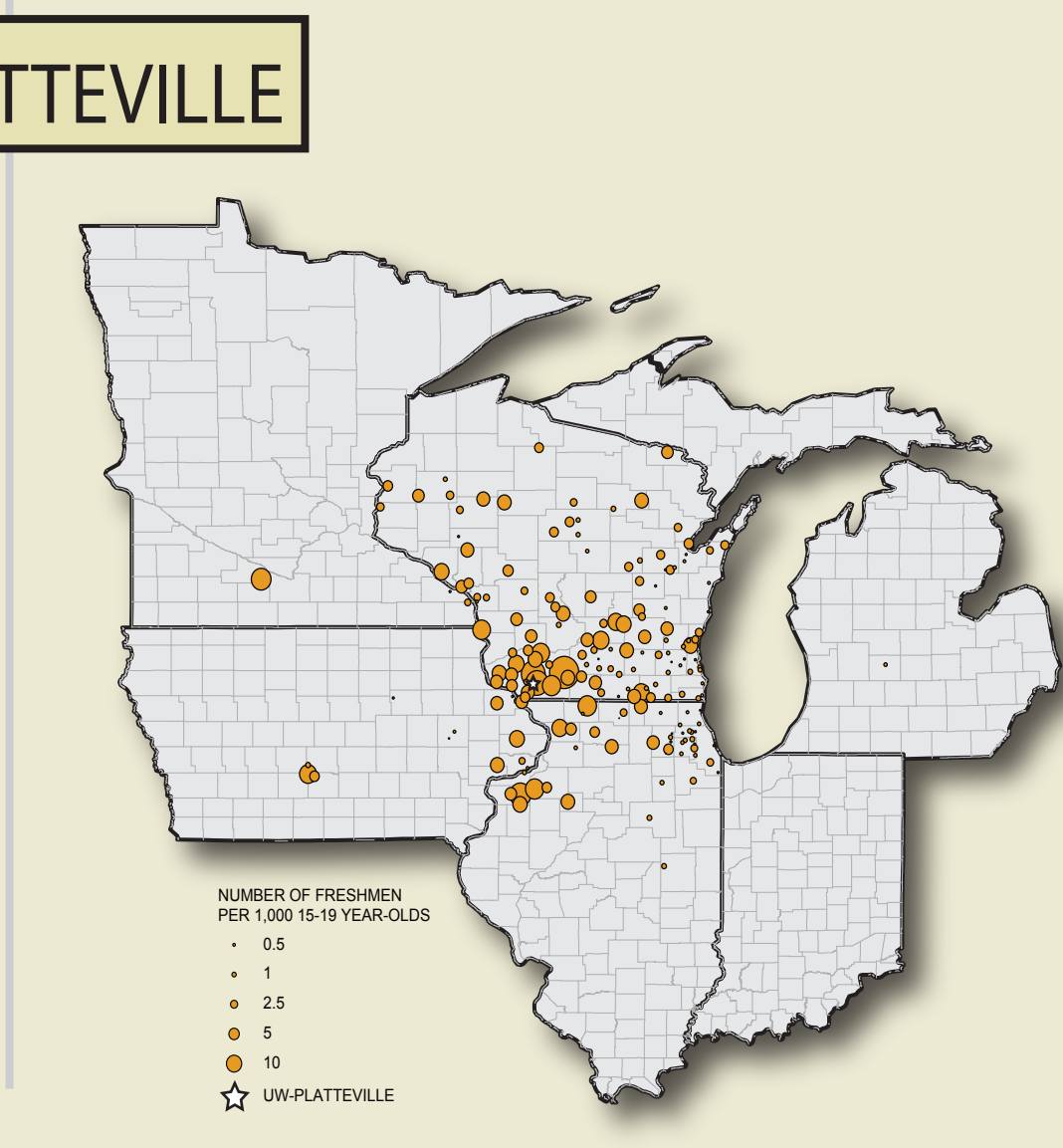
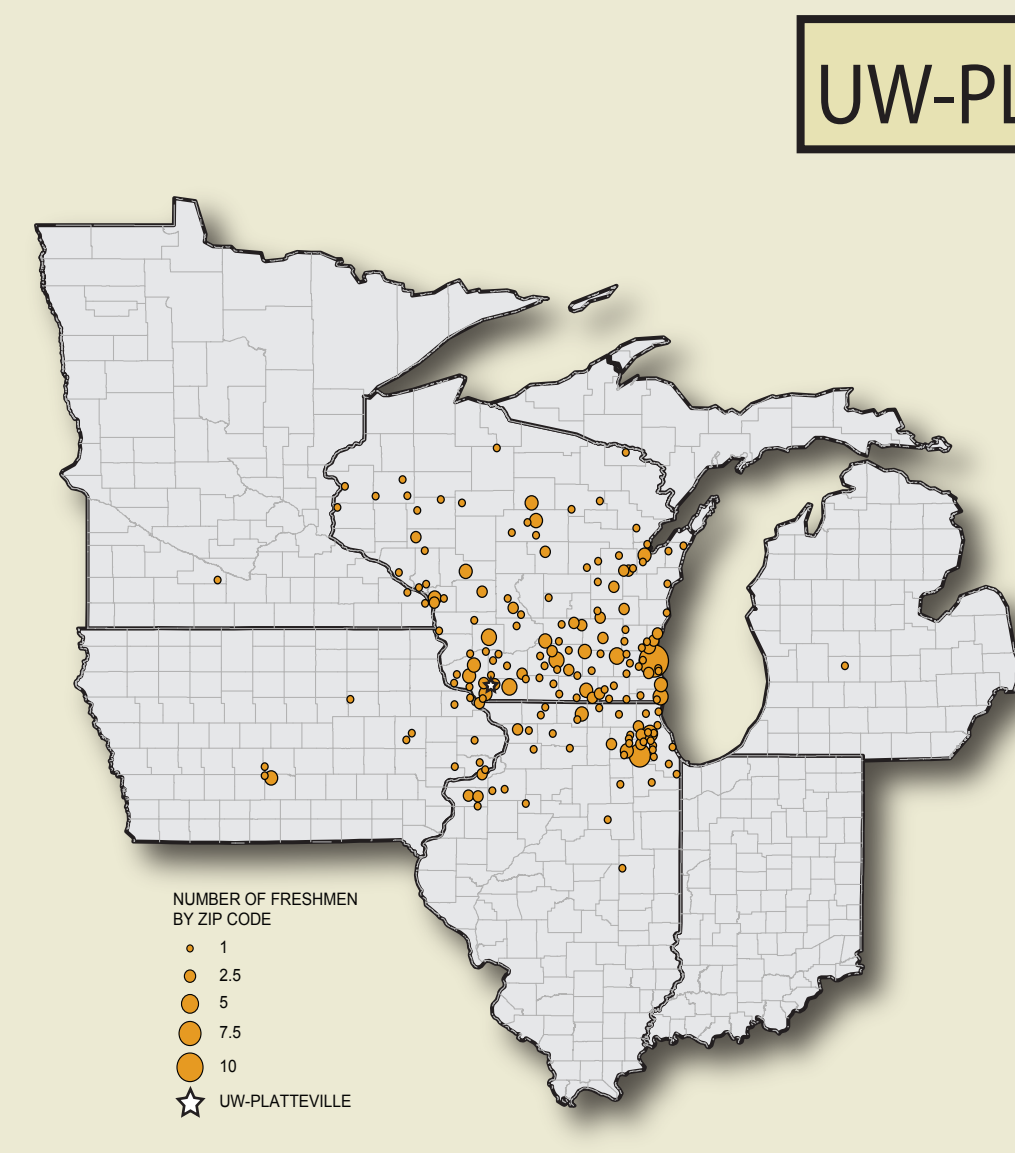
UW-STEVENS POINT



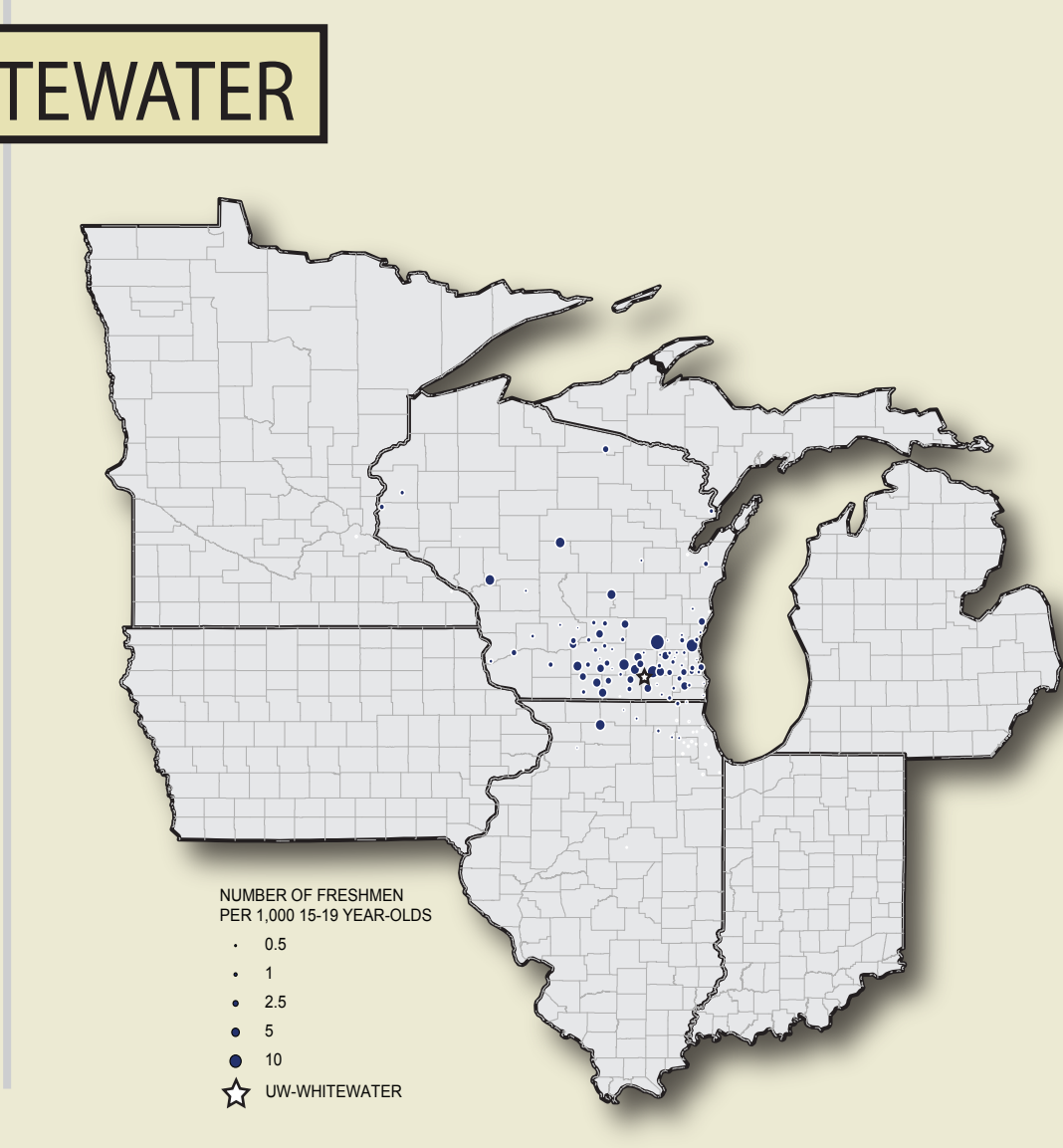
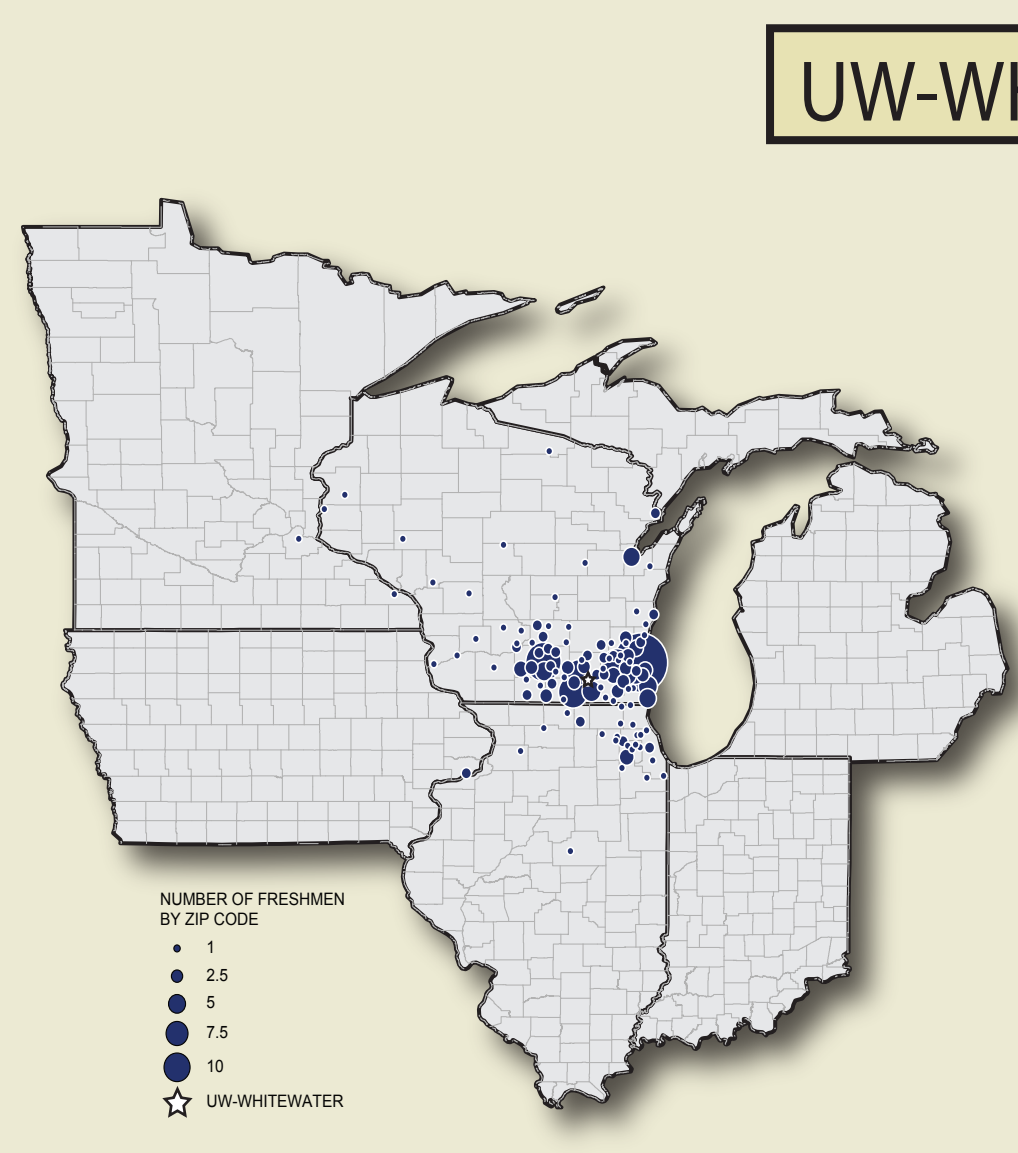
UW-OSHKOSH



UW-STOUT



UW-PLATTEVILLE

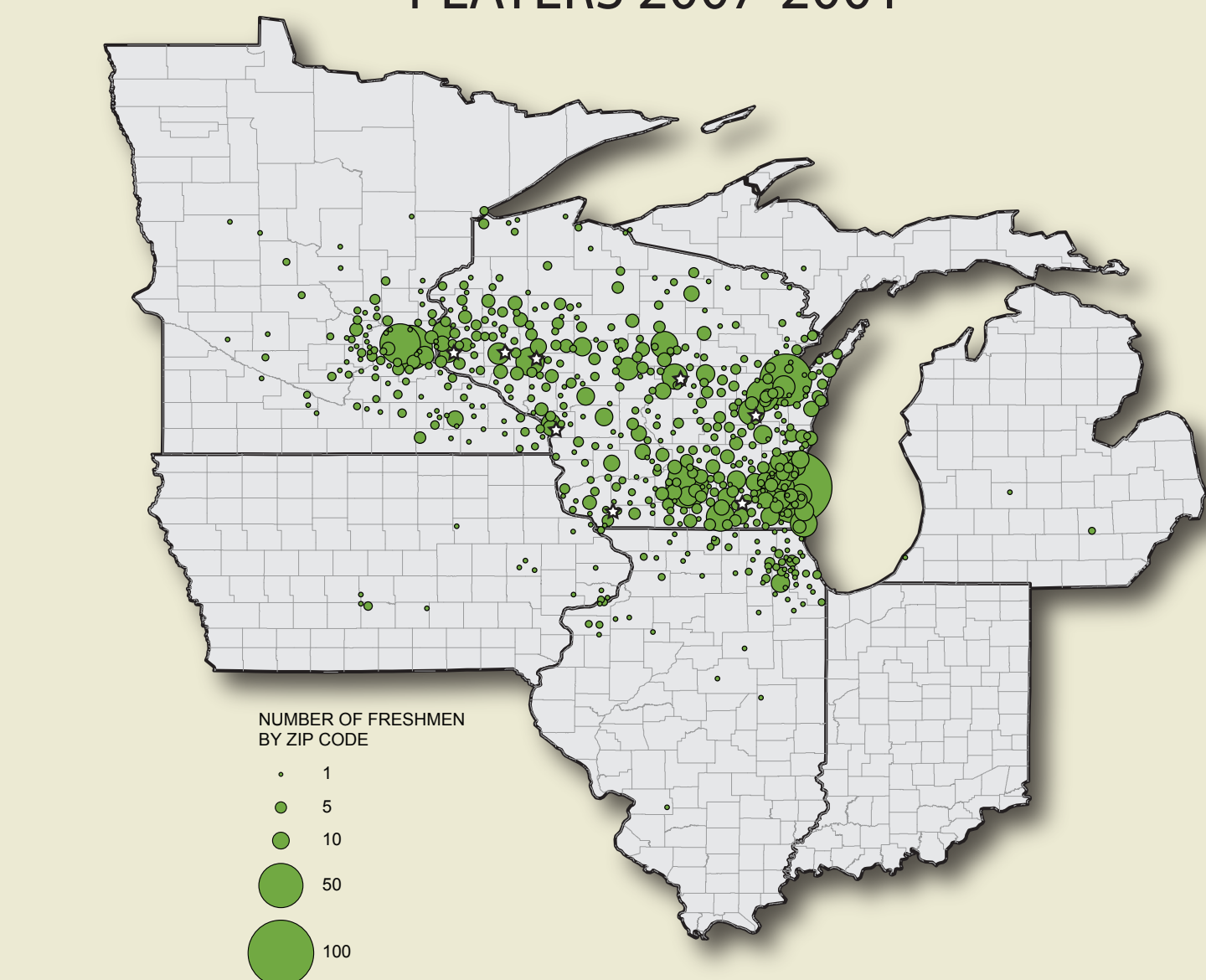


UW-WHITEWATER

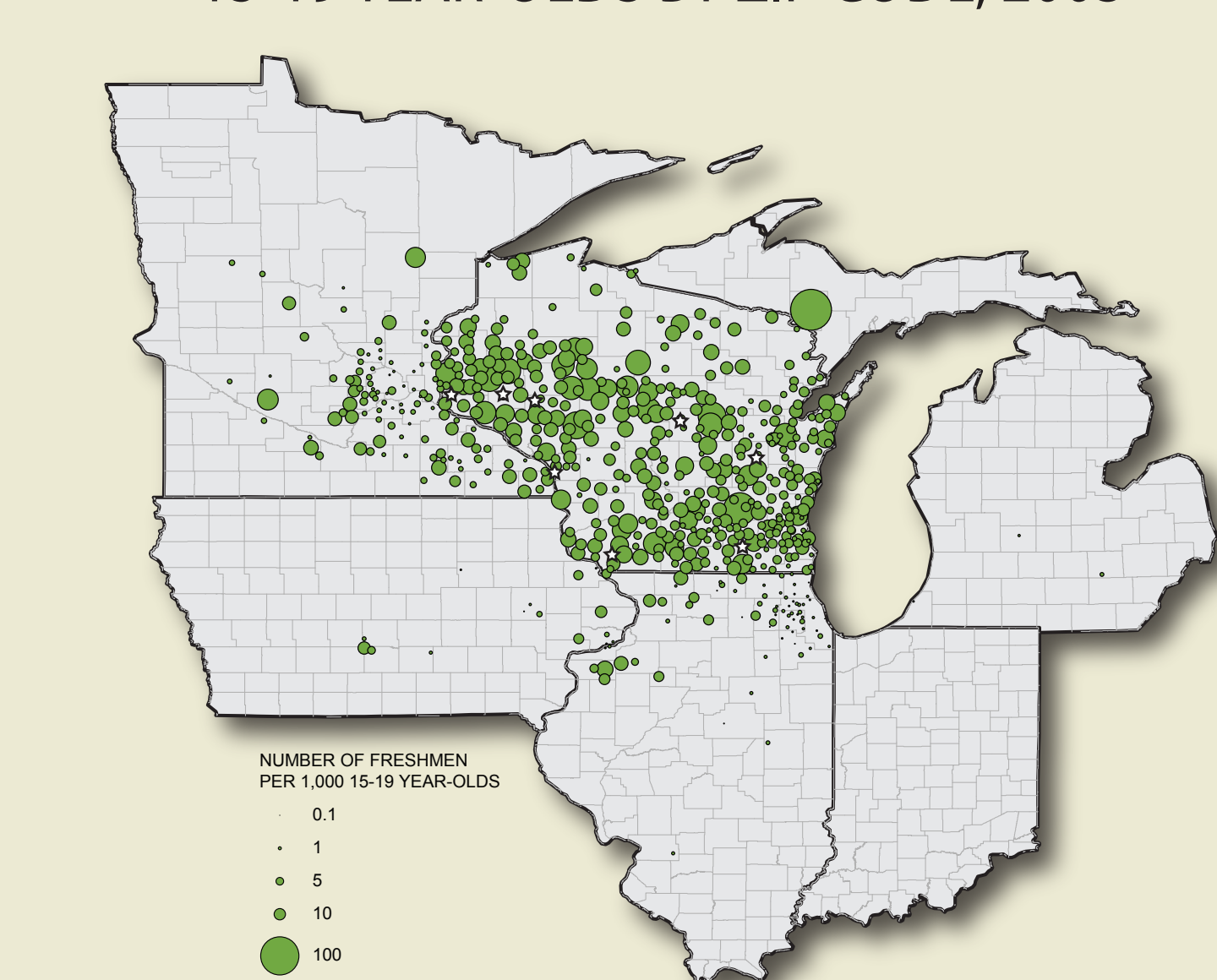
RESULTS

ALL WIAC FRESHMEN 2007-2001

ORIGIN OF ALL WIAC FRESHMEN FOOTBALL PLAYERS 2007-2001



ALL WIAC FRESHMEN FOOTBALL PLAYERS PER 1,000 15-19 YEAR-OLDS BY ZIP CODE, 2003



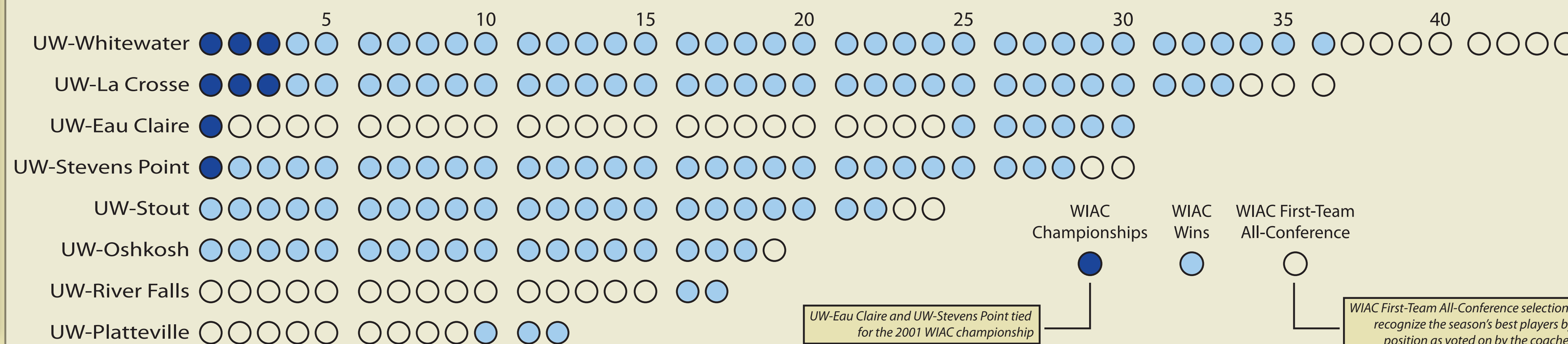
CONCLUSIONS

The result of the data illustrates a distinctive spatial pattern for each WIAC university. Typically, each WIAC football program recruited high schools near and around their respective geographical campuses. As one WIAC football coach stated, "You need to take care of your backyard." Urban centers, where the talent pool is larger, attract heavy recruiting interest from WIAC football programs. Recruiting practices in additional locations are result of relationships with high school coaches, and insight from alumni living in a particular region.

Absolutely, a large number of freshmen football players originate from the urban areas of Milwaukee, Madison, and Green Bay in Wisconsin, and also the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area in Minnesota (see maps). However, the smaller rural communities surrounding each WIAC university produce a larger amount of freshmen football players as a ratio of their respective hometown 15-19 year-old population (see maps). In terms of football player production, **this small-town phenomenon demonstrates the elevated importance rural communities have compared to urban centers to the WIAC football programs.**

The large number of **Minnesota** high school football players attending WIAC universities is a result of Wisconsin-Minnesota tuition reciprocity where students can cross the border to attend college and pay in-state fees. However, the northern portion of **Illinois** produces a significant number of WIAC football playing freshmen despite the absence of such an agreement between Wisconsin and Illinois. Several of the Division III universities in Illinois are private institutions with increased tuition rates. Much of the northern Illinois region consists of relatively affluent communities. The Illinois college football migration pattern to WIAC universities may be explained by the combination of these two factors coupled with a desire to play college football which can trump out-of-state tuition costs. Certain **Iowa** students attending WIAC universities for in-state tuition rates benefit from declining enrollments at UW-Platteville, for example, where Iowa students granted acceptance regulated to specific majors.

WIAC FOOTBALL MEASURES OF SUCCESS 2007-2001



UW-Eau Claire and UW-Stevens Point tied for the 2001 WIAC championship

WIAC First-Team All-Conference selections recognize the season's best players by position as voted on by the coaches

WIAC FOOTBALL RESULTS 2007-2001

2007 WIAC Results		2006 WIAC Results		2005 WIAC Results		2004 WIAC Results		2003 WIAC Results		2002 WIAC Results		2001 WIAC Results	
WIAC University	WIAC Win-Lose	WIAC University	WIAC Win-Lose	WIAC University	WIAC Win-Lose	WIAC University	WIAC Win-Lose	WIAC University	WIAC Win-Lose	WIAC University	WIAC Win-Lose	WIAC University	WIAC Win-Lose
UW-Whitewater	7-0	UW-Whitewater	7-0	UW-Whitewater	7-0	UW-La Crosse	5-2	UW-La Crosse	6-1	UW-La Crosse	6-1	UW-Eau Claire	5-2
UW-Eau Claire	5-2	UW-La Crosse	6-1	UW-Eau Claire	5-2	UW-Eau Claire	4-3	UW-Eau Claire	5-2	UW-Eau Claire	5-2	UW-Stevens Point	5-2
UW-Oshkosh	4-3	UW-Stevens Point	4-3	UW-Oshkosh	4-3	UW-Whitewater	4-3	UW-Stevens Point	4-3	UW-Stout	4-3	UW-Stout	4-3
UW-Stevens Point	3-4	UW-La Crosse	4-3	UW-La Crosse	4-3	UW-Stevens Point	4-3	UW-Stout	4-3	UW-Stevens Point	4-3	UW-River Falls	4-3
UW-La Crosse	3-4	UW-Platteville	3-4	UW-Stout	3-4	UW-Platteville	3-4	UW-Eau Claire	4-3	UW-Whitewater	4-3	UW-La Crosse	3-4
UW-Stout	3-4	UW-Eau Claire	2-5	UW-Stevens Point	3-4	UW-Stout	3-4	UW-River Falls	2-5	UW-Oshkosh	2-5	UW-Platteville	3-4
UW-River Falls	2-5	UW-River Falls	2-5	UW-River Falls	2-5	UW-River Falls	3-4	UW-River Falls	1-6	UW-River Falls	2-5	UW-Whitewater	2-5
UW-Platteville	1-6	UW-Stout	1-6	UW-Platteville	0-7	UW-Oshkosh	2-5	UW-Platteville	1-6	UW-Platteville	1-6	UW-Oshkosh	2-5