Basic science courses such as Anatomy & Physiology are requirements of virtually all undergraduate programs in the health sciences including those in nursing. There is ample evidence that success in these courses correlates both with success later in the program (Henderson & Orr, 1989; Neuman, 1991) and with passing state licensure examinations (Bello et al., 1977; Dean & Fisher, 1992). However, little is known about the factors that correlate with success and failure of students in undergraduate Anatomy & Physiology.

In an effort to understand the factors associated with success in undergraduate Anatomy & Physiology coursework, we studied students enrolled in the first semester of a traditional two-semester Anatomy & Physiology course sequence. We collected general demographic facts, information about prior preparation for the study of Anatomy & Physiology, and data about other factors in our students' lives that might limit their study time. We then determined the factors that correlate with final course grade. Our results suggest steps that high school and undergraduate biology faculty might take to enhance the likelihood of student success in Anatomy & Physiology and other basic science courses of an undergraduate health science curriculum.

**Methods**

**Setting**

Lewiston-Auburn College (LAC), is a small (~1000 full time equivalent students), liberal arts, commuter college that is part of the University of Southern Maine (USM). It is located in Lewiston, Maine, a working-class community in central Maine with an important ethnic tradition (60% Franco-American). LAC offers several interdisciplinary degrees including a degree in Natural & Applied Sciences. It also offers a master's program in occupational therapy and the extension of the four-year bachelor's degree in nursing from the USM College of Nursing & Health Professions located in Portland, Maine, 45 miles to the south.

The Anatomy & Physiology course at LAC is a traditional two-semester sequence. It includes 2.5 hours of lecture and 3 hours of laboratory time per week, and awards 4 college credits. During the period of this study,