As an athletic all-American, Blugold Fellow and an academic all-star, UW-Eau Claire senior Beth Lutz doesn’t have a lot of time for other activities.

“I have always been busy,” Lutz said. “In high school I was in three sports and took AP classes; I have definitely become used to it. It always seems to work out.”

Lutz earned all-American honors by placing 29th in the NCAA cross country meet. Only four women have earned the honor at UW-Eau Claire in the last 15 years.

As a secondary education major with concentrations in physics and history, Lutz has made the dean’s list every semester and carries a 3.98 GPA.

When Lutz applied for scholarships and admission to UW-Eau Claire in the fall of 2005, she was chosen for a Blugold Fellowship. Fellowships are given out to about 20 incoming freshmen each year. The program matches freshmen with faculty mentors and is designed to get students involved in student-faculty collaborative research projects in their first two years at UW-Eau Claire.

“It is cool to be able to get started right away,” Lutz said. “Sometimes it is intimidating as a freshman to go up to a faculty member and ask about research.”

It is not typical for secondary education majors to get research opportunities like those Lutz has had. She has given numerous oral and poster presentations for the Wisconsin Economics Association, the UW System Symposium for Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity and for UW-Eau Claire’s Student Research Day.

Lutz's first effort with her mentor Eric Jamelske, a professor in the department of economics, was an economic indicators project through the Chippewa Valley Center for Economic Research and Development. Lutz is now working on a project that evaluates the effectiveness of the U.S. Department of Agriculture fresh fruit and vegetable program in Wisconsin schools.

“It is a cool project because it pairs psychology with school teaching experience and research work,” Lutz said.

This fall Lutz will work in selected Eau Claire schools to localize the data from the project. The project indicates that after three months of the program, students receiving daily fruit and vegetable snacks have shown an increased willingness to try new fruits and vegetables served in schools compared to schools without the program.

Also, schools that have the program reported increased fruit and vegetable intake compared to schools without the program.

Jamelske said Lutz has been "wonderful to work with."

“For Beth I think it worked out very well," he said. “She learned she could work with faculty and treat them as colleagues. Her presenting skills are phenomenal.

“She has incredible work ethic and dedication. The quality of her work is spectacular.”

Matt Evans, associate professor of physics and astronomy and director of the Blugold Fellow Program, said every year the fellows are chosen based on their potential.

“She was a very good student,” Evans said of Lutz. “She succeeded in something when she was challenged beyond what normal fresh-