



Council on Undergraduate Research

Learning Through Research

ACAD Conference
Undergraduate Research, Scholarship
And Creativity in the Arts and Humanities
Nancy Hensel



Council on Undergraduate Research

- A **national organization** of individual (≈ 3000) and institutional members (> 510) representing all disciplines and over 900 institutions of all types
- **Eight disciplinary divisions**: Arts & Humanities, Biology, Chemistry, Geo-sciences, Mathematics & Computer Science, Physics & Astronomy, Psychology, Social Sciences
- **Two multidisciplinary divisions**: At-Large and Undergraduate Research Program Directors
- **National office** in Washington, D.C.

The mission of the Council on Undergraduate Research is to support and promote high-quality undergraduate student-faculty collaborative research and scholarship.

A Generally-Accepted Definition of Undergraduate Research



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Undergraduate research is an inquiry or investigation conducted by an undergraduate that makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline.

Statement developed at a CUR Dialogues workshop in 1997:
Wenzel, T. J., "What is Undergraduate Research?," *Council
on Undergraduate Research Quarterly*, 1997, 17, 163.

Student Benefits of Undergraduate Research Participation



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- **Disciplinary learning beyond traditional courses**
 - Learning research techniques in depth
 - Seeing the relevance of classes - Application of classroom knowledge and skills in a research setting
 - Significant use of the disciplinary literature
 - Seeing first-hand how contributions to the scholarly knowledge base permit other scholars to build upon one's efforts

Student Benefits of Undergraduate Research Participation



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- Professional and personal growth in ways not possible through traditional classroom and laboratory classes
 - Understanding how scholars work
 - Gaining self-confidence
 - Learning how to work independently and collaboratively
 - Learning to tolerate obstacles and be prepared for challenges
 - Learning how to handle uncertainty and to work on problems without clear solutions
 - Aid in deciding future pursuits

Faculty Benefits of UR Participation



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- Intellectual invigoration, increased enthusiasm, improved teaching
- Personal satisfaction working with undergraduates
- Advances in research program
- Effective means of staying current in one's field



Institutional Benefits of Supporting Undergraduate Research Endeavors



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- Enhances intellectual vitality of the institution
- Attracts talented individuals to join a faculty, improving the overall program
- Attracts engaged students
- External funding brings new equipment and facilities
- Leads to more innovative curricula, particularly collaborative and interdisciplinary courses and programs
- Increases opportunities for engagement in national discussions of trends in higher education and new research directions

Upcoming Events for CUR



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INSTITUTE

Initiating and Sustaining Undergraduate Research Programs

May 27-29, 2009,

Baldwin Wallace College

Proposal Writing Institute:

July 19-23, 2008

Willamette College

**Mentorship, Collaboration and Undergraduate Research in the
Social Sciences and Humanities**

Mesa Community College

Fall, 2009

Posters on the Hill





Quarterly

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Undergraduate Research in the Arts and Humanities

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Places where students can present their work:



Council on Undergraduate Research
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- NCUR – National Conferences on Undergraduate Research
- CUR – Posters on the Hill
- State Capitol Poster Sessions
- Statewide Research Days
- Regional Research Days
- Disciplinary Societies



www.cur.org

THE MERIT OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH: A Confluence of Student, Faculty, and Institutional Rewards, Kerry K. Karukstis, National Academies Partnerships for Emerging Research Institutions Workshop, September 2007.