

First Australasian Conference of Undergraduate Research (ACUR) A Success

The one-day conference, a new initiative of Macquarie University, is being hailed as one of the highlights of the Australasian academic calendar. Over 200 undergraduate students in all disciplines and their supervisors and supporters met September 20, 2012, to present and hear about research carried out by undergraduates. Commenting on the presentations, delegates were astonished at the high quality of the research and the professional way students from universities across Australia and New Zealand presented it. This is the first time that an undergraduate research conference has been held in Australia.

Oral presentations and posters at the conference covered a broad spectrum of academic subjects, including some on film and drama. Topics ranged from medical research to ancient history. A range of papers addressed issues of climate change, and there were a number of fascinating presentations on planets and space. Literature was also well represented. For example, Blake's "Songs of Innocence and of Experience" were examined from an ecological perspective, and a number of social, identity and gender issues were addressed. Biology was also well represented, as was psychology, law, and much more.

A peer-review process at the conference resulted in prizes for the best poster and most interesting poster. The prizes were presented by Macquarie University's new vice-chancellor, Professor Bruce Dowton. In a short address to the delegates, he spoke of the work and achievements of Professor Adrian Lee, who donated the prize for the best paper, and he stressed the importance of integrating research and teaching.

This was a significant event in the life of Australasian higher education and has "touched a nerve". Students' appreciation for the conference is summed up in an email sent by of one of them: "As a first-year student, I was so honored to be given an opportunity to present my research to students and other visitors at a conference. I was also inspired by other presenters' enlightening presentations and have learnt some new information on different topics and methods of research I can apply to future research. This has been a significant highlight of my first year at university, and I would like to thank you for organizing and making possible this great conference."

It is hoped this will become an annual event. Plans are already under way for a conference next year.

CUR RELEASES TWO PUBLICATIONS

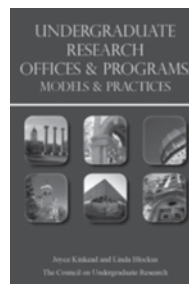
How to Start an Undergraduate Research Journal

D. Alexis Hart



How to Start an Undergraduate Research Journal provides justifications and strategies for beginning and/or sustaining undergraduate research journals—whether institutionally, nationally, or internationally. This booklet also provides administrators, editorial boards, and teaching and research faculty members with advice about copyright and dual-publication

considerations, and offers suggestions about how to embed an undergraduate research journal into the broader curriculum. Furthermore, an entire chapter is devoted to advancing institutional assessment via undergraduate research journals. The fourteen "Best Practices" vignettes included in the appendix present a range of practical advice and reflections on the experience of faculty around the world who have developed journals of undergraduate research—in print and online. A second appendix provides a detailed list of undergraduate journals, including their content/mission statements.



Undergraduate Research Offices & Programs: Models & Practices

Joyce Kinkead and Linda Blockus

This is the next-generation reference book and manual for those who are seeking to start or enhance existing undergraduate research programs, drawing on the wisdom and experience of more than 25 contributors.

Showcasing offices and programs of undergraduate research at a variety of institutional types at various points

of maturity, each of the model chapters is devoted to an institutional type and follows a template, thus making it easy for the reader to browse chapters and trace a particular theme: mission, resources, events, publications, and even challenges. The volume also offers pragmatic advice on assessment, special programs, and summer experiences. Sharing ideas and resources is a hallmark of the Council on Undergraduate Research, and it is in this spirit that *Undergraduate Research Offices and Programs: Models and Practices* was developed.

To order this and other CUR publication visit:
<http://www.cur.org/publications.html>