

the benefits of one example of humanities student-faculty collaboration at LaGuardia Community College, CUNY, in which a critical editing project was enhanced by student contributions, while the students gained skills that encouraged retention and nurtured future success.

In 2012, Naomi Stubbs (LaGuardia Community College, CUNY) and Amy Hughes (Brooklyn College, CUNY) began collaborating on two critical editions of the diary of actor, manager, and playwright Harry Watkins (1825–94; Hughes and Stubbs 2018a and 2018b). The goal was to produce a fully annotated print edition of selections of the diary and a digital edition of the full text, which would be freely available online. Early in the process, they sought ways to work with students to enhance the collaborative nature of the project as well as to create opportunities for students at their respective colleges. As someone with a considerable teaching load at a community college, Stubbs was also keen to identify ways to convert some of her workload into time on this project.

Students involved in the project were either paid as editorial assistants (through grant funding) or offered college credit for work as interns. They variously transcribed, encoded, and proofread pages of the manuscript; developed original projects related to the diary; tagged playbills; researched play titles; and presented on the project for external audiences. In these ways, they directly contributed to the project through completing tasks and helped Stubbs and Hughes clarify goals and policies. Interns were also required to develop an original project that would involve an external audience, which led to creative products (such as a song, poem, and fan fiction), pedagogical tools (a primer for Watkins's handwriting and how-to video for XML encoding), research projects (building Watkins's family tree and tracing the touring circuits described in the diary), and publicity for the project (blog posts, promotional postcards, the Twitter feed @WatkinsDiary, and a college newspaper article). These projects drew upon the particular skills and interests of the students, as well as enhanced the quality and reach of the project.

Beyond the benefits to the faculty members (Stubbs 2019), the students gained tremendously from their work on the project. Far from performing routine and mundane tasks, the students identified unique contributions they could make to the project and developed a variety of skills and abilities. Students reported developing specific skills (such as close reading, locating and assessing sources, XML encoding, and managing time) and familiarity with software (Excel, oXygen, and PowerPoint) that helped them in their studies at LaGuardia and beyond.

Community college students tend to enter postsecondary education needing more academic and pastoral support

than those at four-year institutions; many are first-generation students who may doubt their abilities. Two students reported that working on the project allowed them to feel like they were “part of something”; they came to LaGuardia via two previous colleges and completed their degrees at LaGuardia. After mastering challenging material, several students presented publicly on the project in roles such as conference presenter, workshop co-leader at New York University, and participant in a roundtable on humanities research. From specific skills and experiences to the less tangible benefits of building community and pride, this work was of great benefit to all concerned.

There were challenges, certainly; there were frustrating moments, limited funding, and an inability to view the physical manuscript. Still, this project illustrates the rich potential for faculty-led research projects at community colleges in the humanities that embrace student participation and lead to increased retention and success for students.

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Developing UREs at a Community College Branch Campus: A Collaborative Approach

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doi: 10.18833/spur/4/3/7

Northampton Community College (NCC) is an open-enrollment institution that has grown to become the largest postsecondary institution in Pennsylvania’s Lehigh Valley. Today, NCC offers college degrees, certificates, and specialized diploma programs to more than 30,000 students on three campuses. As such, NCC serves industry partners with employee career training, offers professional degrees and certifications in high-demand jobs, encourages community engagement through Smart Workshops for children, and offers adult education programming.

In the past, faculty at NCC offered a limited number of undergraduate research experiences (UREs) to students, mostly as sporadic independent research courses in STEM fields (biology and microbiology); capstone projects in various disciplines; and some experiential, course-embedded projects (chemistry, biology, ecology, psychology, and research methods in the social sciences).

Faculty in STEM and administrators at the NCC-Monroe Campus recognized the importance of UREs as high-impact teaching practices but were realistic about the limitations of a two-year institution. As community and institutional partnerships are important in the creation of long-standing programs, faculty sought a community grant from a local pharmaceutical company, which provided the first NCC Stem Pipeline Project for 2016–2018. The project was designed to benefit students from high school through postsecondary education, with dual-enrollment scholarships, STEM scholarships for NCC students, equipment purchases, and co-disciplinary UREs. The primary goal of adopting the co-disciplinary model was to improve overall scientific literacy amongst all students from multiple viewpoints, using science and non-science faculty partnerships. Examples of these projects involved biology-speech communication (oral presentations) in academic year 2016–2017 and chemistry-English (written presentations) in 2017–2018.

This initial grant supported the purchase of additional new technology for the labs; tuition funding for additional STEM students in need; and, most important, retention of STEM students.

These outcomes were recognized by both the institution and stakeholders, resulting in an award of an additional two years of support to expand the regional STEM education pipeline. Consequently, the 2018–2020 project was designed with three goals: (1) to maintain student support through dual-enrollment and STEM scholarships, (2) to increase faculty and institutional support for UREs, and (3) to establish permanent research sites. A faculty survey sent in 2019 revealed that students' lack of time and preparation as well as faculty teaching load, remuneration, and lack of research space were some of the main challenges at the institution. To address these issues, selected faculty developed a strategic plan to expand offerings of UREs, researching the best models and continuing conversations with administrators and staff to develop internal support and enable wide-scale adoption. The funding provided by this project allowed for the establishment of two permanent research sites on campus: an avian research center that has been active since fall 2018 and a greenhouse, currently under construction.

Based on these experiences, the following recommendations are offered to those initiating UREs at a community college:

- Identification of the challenges for the development of UREs at the specific institution is essential. Teaching loads, remuneration, and lack of space are important limitations that need to be addressed by the institution to increase faculty participation.
- Local support through community grants can help provide the funds needed for UREs. A multipurpose project that provides scholarships to students as well as infrastructure can be recognized as a successful long-term investment.
- Creation of UREs that best fit an institution's unique characteristics is paramount, but starting simple is important: embedded course experiences seem to be the best fit for those new to UREs (such as collaboration with local organizations and citizen science projects).
- For first- and second-year undergraduate students, learning about the research process is more valuable than finishing a successful project. They should be encouraged to learn from even disappointing results.

Acknowledgment

The authors thank Sanofi Pasteur U.S. for the funding of these grants to support the two NCC STEM Pipeline Projects.

Full-Spectrum Undergraduate Field Research at a Community College

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doi: 10.18833/spur/4/3/8

Conceptualizing and designing undergraduate research programs for general studies community college students can be challenging. However, there are frameworks available through which a cogent design can be developed. Two broad categories of thinking guided the development of an undergraduate research agenda in the Geography and Environmental Sustainability (GES) Program at Northwest Vista College (NVC) in San Antonio.

The first category was a paradigm shift in categorizing need. Employers assert that new college graduates need both field-specific and broad-ranging knowledge and skills—the latter, which are more highly valued, are often referred to as *marketable skills*. These interdisciplinary skills typically include communication, teamwork, decision-making, critical thinking, and knowledge application. A study of 400 employers indicated that organizations are more likely to hire recent graduates who have completed projects that required research, problem solving, and communication. Moreover, employers are more likely to hire graduates with collaborative research experience and those with study abroad experience (Hart 2015).