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Does Requiring Participation in Research Have a Positive Effect on Students’ Perception of Undergraduate Research?

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Introduction

Undergraduate research is not only beneficial to the university and community for all the new ideas it brings to light, but plays an important role in student development. Studies have shown that students who are involved in research as undergraduates are proficient in:

- Critical thinking
- Communication
- Confidence
- Problem solving

There have been many studies conducted on the best ways to get students involved in research in order to gain these benefits, most of which are based around increasing awareness.

My research is based on the impact of bringing research into the classroom and requiring students to participate. Will this increase student interest in participating in future undergraduate research?

Table 1- Survey Response Rate and Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th># of responses</th>
<th># interested in research</th>
<th>% interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beginning of Semester</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Semester</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>~71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Methods

A Biology 1610 class was required to participate in a research project on Bird-Window collisions. They completed tasks similar to those done in traditional research: proposal writing, data collection, abstract writing, and conference presentation.

Results

At the beginning and end of the semester, results were collected via Qualtrics survey (results shown in Table 1). We recognize the potential for bias, as those who responded to the survey are more likely to have had a good experience.

Conclusions

The data we collected was very positive and showed an increase in student interest in research. Of note from this project:

- We have seen a lot of reasons why students don’t participate in research and would like to explore this in the future.
- We did not have a satisfactory response rate on the survey. In the future we would like to conduct the study again to get more results and better control for bias.

Study conducted in Brigham City, Utah with help from Dr. Kim Sullivan. We would like to thank Dr. Sullivan for allowing us to bring her Bird-Window Collision project down to the Brigham City campus.