**Undergraduate Research: Introduction**

**Q:What is Undergraduate Research?**

**A:** Undergraduate research is a collaboration between a student and a faculty member in making a creative, original contribution to a given discipline, first by investigating that topic, then by sharing their findings with the academic community, usually through a conference presentation or journal publication.

This research is not limited to the traditional sciences, but includes the arts, education, engineering, health sciences, humanities, or any other topic which interests a student. Original creative work is also included (writing a short story or screenplay with a faculty mentor, for example).  Research projects can be anything from the investigation of the growth of cancer cells in cats to a study of common themes in 18th century Russian poetry, to interviewing survivors of a natural disaster, or working with a local business in designing a new marketing campaign.

 The research enhances the student’s involvement in and knowledge of a given field and brings new ideas to all who are interested in that field, therefore encouraging further research or creative work.

**Q: Why do undergraduate research?**

**A:** Undergraduate Research…

* Helps you obtain greater knowledge of a field beyond the classroom
* Demonstrates application of knowledge beyond the classroom
* Demonstrates initiative, leadership skills, and an ability to collaborate
* Demonstrates good communication skills (i.e., conference presentation/publication)
* Enhances your resume

**Q: Who does undergraduate research?**

**A:** *Anyone* may choose to conduct research as an undergraduate at WCU.

* Students with declared and undecided majors
* Students across all disciplines and majors
* Both Honors and non-Honors students
* Freshman and upperclassmen