

DEFINITION OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AND INQUIRY

In a discussion paper prepared for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, Mary Beckman & Nancy Hensel started with the following definition and this is now the definition adopted by the Council for Undergraduate Research.

“An inquiry or investigation conducted by an undergraduate student that makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline.” (Beckman & Hensel, 2009)

There are some tensions and decisions to be made in relation to this definition so we might want to amend the definition to make it a bit looser.

“[An] inquiry or investigation or a **research-based activity** conducted by an undergraduate student that makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline **and/or to understanding.**” (following Beckman & Hensel, 2009)

Perhaps this is a way we might extend the definition. You might be able to think of different ways you could extend the definition to fit your particular context.

Reference

Beckman, M., & Hensel, N. (2009). Making explicit the implicit: Defining Undergraduate research. *CUR Quarterly*, Summer Vol 29,4, 40-44.

Brew, A. (2013). Understanding the scope of undergraduate research: A framework for curricular and pedagogical decision-making. *Higher Education*. 66 (5) 603–618.