

- Exposing young professionals to research conferences is essential for the direction of a field and for the early professional development of students.

- For the psychology field specifically, a thorough concept of research methods is required for the development of both the researcher and the field. Research conferences can expose students to a range of theories and promote professional relationships (Carsrud, 1984; Kulik, Brown, Vestewig, & Wright, 1973).

- **The goal of the Conference for Undergraduate Research in Psychology (CURP)** is to enhance research activity, appreciation, and competency among psychology students in Indiana, increase professional development, and prepare future graduate students for successful transitions into careers in professional psychology.



The first annual Conference for Undergraduate Research in Psychology (CURP) took place on the IUPUC campus on November 15, 2017. Faculty, staff, students, and the public attended the conference. Kevin McCracken and Emily Edwards co-hosted the conference. CURP was sponsored by IUPUC's Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling program and the Office of Student Research. Partners with CURP included the IUPUC Division of Science and IUPUC Office of Career Services.



IUPUC

CONFERENCE FOR UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH IN PSYCHOLOGY

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This all-day conference allowed undergraduate psychology students to display their research projects consisting of oral and poster presentations. Students had the opportunity to network with successful professionals, exchange ideas with other students and faculty, and learn how to select and apply to graduate programs.

Dr. Cheryl Warner gave the keynote address and talked about cultural diversity in research and her career as a counseling psychologist. Dr. Darrin Carr and Carol Kostrzewsky led the interactive graduate school workshop and students engaged in conversations about preparing for graduate study in their fields of interest.



Coordinating the first annual CURP has required innovation in developing and implementing a plan for execution. These plans have consisted of marketing, budgeting, administration, and evaluation for future conferences. It has taught me to be visionary and stay organized.

I learned how to lead well and with competence in a way that leaves a legacy for future psychology students. I developed skills in management, communication, collaboration, critical thinking, finances, and project management. One of the values of CURP is to promote student involvement and I hope to see more students in the future develop these skills by contributing to the management of future conferences.



An undergraduate research conference can actively engage students in research and hands-on learning. Students who want to pursue a career in psychology can gain rich training in conducting and disseminating research and be well-equipped for graduate study. Undergraduates who are not interested in graduate study can develop an appreciation for research, participate in active learning, and build professional relationships with faculty mentors.

Our goal is to have an annual research conference at IUPUC to contribute to the future of psychology.

References

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Kulik, J. A., Brown, D. R., Vestewig, R. E., & Wright, J. (1973). Undergraduate education in psychology. Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association.
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