

Survey Brief

Undergraduate Research Participation

Part 1: Results from UCUES 2010

Undergraduate student participation in research opportunities and creative activitiesⁱ are valuable experiences for students interested in gaining a deeper understanding of subject matter. These activities leverage one of the key strengths of research universities, the faculty's commitment to research. Moreover, students who participate in undergraduate research and creative activities have higher GPAs and higher aspirations for post-graduate study.

In this survey brief, using data from the University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) 2010, we describe the types of students who participate in research at UC Riverside. In an accompanying brief, we describe the types of students who participated in a "higher-level" research activity: presenting at the Undergraduate Research Symposium. We also provide suggestions to faculty about how to involve students in research.

In UCUES 2010, students were asked to report which types of research or creative activities they have participated in while a student at UC Riverside. The results of those questions are displayed below.

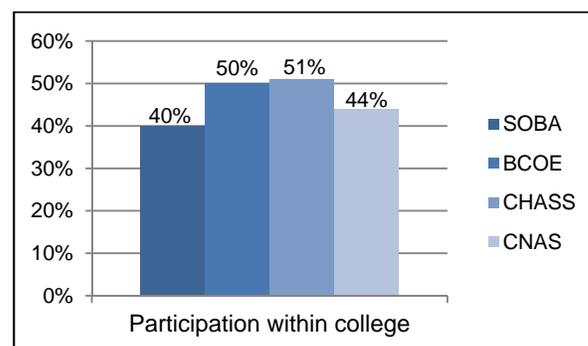
Research and Creative Activities	
Assist faculty in research with course credit	21%
Creative projects with faculty for course credit	20%
At least one independent study course	20%
Assist faculty in research as a volunteer	15%
Assist faculty in research for pay	11%
Creative projects with faculty as a volunteer	11%
Creative projects with faculty for pay	7%

UCUES 2010 administered to 4,987 UCR students.

Nearly half (49%) of UCR students responding to UCUES reported participating in at least one of the listed research or creative activities. Students who volunteered or were paid by faculty to perform research or work on creative projects have, on average, higher cumulative GPAs (2.93) when compared to the average undergraduate cumulative GPA at UCR (2.77).ⁱⁱ Students participating in research or creative

activities were also more likely to report Masters or Doctoral degree aspirations compared to their peers who did not participate in research.

Students who participated in research or a creative activity were very diverse and came from 95 majors in 41 departments at UCR. In the UCUES sample, students majoring in Psychology (13%) and Business (13%) reported the most participation in research or creative activities. Biology (6%) and Biological Science (5%) majors also showed high participation. Overall, students in the Bourns College of Engineering and College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences participated slightly more often than students in School of Business Administration and College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences. Most of the research participation in CHASS was concentrated in a few majors in the social sciences and humanities.



Within the sample, women (51%) were more likely than men (46%) to participate in research or creative activities. The data also show that African American (54%), Hispanic (51%), and students of other ethnicities (55%) were more likely than White (49%) and Asian American (46%) students to participate in research activities. Students participating in research activities did not vary by self-reported social class.

ⁱ A creative activity typically refers to work in the arts. The use of the word research within this brief includes creative activities.

ⁱⁱ This comparison is between students reporting research participation in UCUES 2010 and the average cumulative GPA of all undergraduate students attending UCR in fall 2010.