

## How do our Institutions Encourage the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning?

John Hoddinott and Olive Yonge  
University of Alberta  
Canada

The University of Alberta has engaged in a series of initiatives around the integration of teaching and research as part of the undergraduate student learning environment. Recently, the Report of the Working Group on Teaching and Research (RWGTR) was completed and included reports from the various undergraduate Faculties about what they are currently doing to integrate research into their undergraduate programs. See Website: <http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/researchandstudents>

The relationship between research and teaching is complex and often controversial. Most previous investigations have asked questions such as 'are academic staff who engage in research, better teachers than those who do not?' or 'does teaching improve as a result of research experience?' There are a number of studies that have influenced us at the U of A in framing what constitutes undergraduate research and in generating adequate measures to assess the student perspective of research (Boyer, 1990; Hattie & Marsh, 1996; Boyer Commission, 1998; Brew, 2003; Jenkins, Breen, & Lindsay, 2003). A substantial portion of the scholarship on the integration of teaching and research has focused on how faculty perceive undergraduate research and on faculty and institutional best practices on integration (Colbeck, 1998; Ash Merkel, 2001; etc.). How students perceive the integration has been surprisingly understudied in comparison, though there are some notable exceptions (Neumann, 1994; Hakim, 1997; Mabrouk & Peters, 2000; Ash Merkel, 2001; Lindsay, Breen, & Jenkins, 2002). Most of these studies have focused on small qualitative assessments with limited sample sizes, often at primarily undergraduate institutions. Recently, student perceptions of research have been examined by focusing on the perceptions of alumni on the role of undergraduate research in their earlier learning environment (Bauer & Bennett, 2003). To date, there have been few, if any, attempts to assess the student perceptions of research at a large Canadian research-intensive institution. As well, there have been no attempts to benchmark internationally the student perception of research between research universities. Therefore we view this as an area of emerging scholarship. At the U of A we have just entered in the first phase, completing an environmental scan. We are now posed to begin researching the extent of the integration by surveying students and faculty on their beliefs and actions in this area and benchmarking against other institutions.

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John Hoddinott, Professor & Associate Dean (Teaching and Research)  
Augustana Faculty  
University of Alberta  
Camrose, AB T4V 2R3  
Tel: (780)679-1102  
Fax: (780)679-1129  
Cell: (780)679-9889  
Email: [jhoddino@augustana.ca](mailto:jhoddino@augustana.ca)

Olive Yonge RN PhD CPsych  
Professor  
Faculty of Nursing  
3rd Floor, Clinical Sciences Building  
University of Alberta  
Edmonton, AB T6G 2G3  
Tel: (780) 492-2402  
Fax: (780) 492-2551  
Email: [olive.yonge@ualberta.ca](mailto:olive.yonge@ualberta.ca)

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