

# Research conference draws participation from over 60 students

□ For the second year in a row, the College hosted the Undergraduate Research Conference.

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Staff Reporter

The second annual Undergraduate Research Conference last month gave 62 students the opportunity to share research with the Meredith community.

"It is great to see students put scholarship into focus," said program director Rhonda Zingraff. "They are making a difference in their field and educating others."

Students displayed their findings through lecture sessions that ran throughout the day in locations including the Dogwood Rooms located beneath Belk Dining Hall and Kresge Auditorium.

Students collaborated on their presentations with faculty sponsors who facilitated the sessions.

"We want to support collaborative projects between students and faculty so that students accomplish more than they would with a typical assignment," Zingraff said.

Student presenter Merrily Strickland presented "Reflecting on Velazquez' The Rokeby Venus" after taking an art class with Dr. Beth Mulvaney.

"For me, having a faculty adviser was essential," she said. "Dr. Mulvaney's class comments and insights showed what an audience might be interested in. She spent a lot of

time helping me."

Lisa Dougherty, a Women In New Goal Settings (WINGS) student, said that she thought the conference was a "great experience for both the teachers and students" because it fostered "a mentoring type relationship for the student and provided an assistant to research to the teachers."

The conference also included 18 posters made by students. Students displayed information through artistic expression and explained their pieces in the Belk Dining Hall during the lunchtime hours of noon until 2p.m.

According to Zingraff, these presentations were more informal, and presenters did not have assigned times.

Although junior Leanna Derenge did not see the poster displays, she said that she had been impressed with the lecture sessions.

"I think this has been good for the Meredith community because it gives both the presenters and the audience a taste of professional academia," she said.

Zingraff said that she had enjoyed being the director of the program.

"It's wonderful," she said. "I've been in the position to read and learn ideas from all over the college. It's exciting to see where different things are being researched and the scope of what is going on."

Student Rebekah Meek applied ideas she had learned about feminist theory in a religion class for her presentation of "How the Media Failed Riot Girl:

Exploring Power and Norms in a Contemporary Feminist Movement."

"I was interested in the topic because I feel that it addressed an important part of the feminist movement that had been misunderstood," Meek said.

Student Meghan Wiest presented "Middle School Perspectives on School Violence: Critical Pedagogy and Performance" and said that she enjoyed getting feedback about her research from the faculty and students in attendance.

Senior Lori Beck presented "Relations between Different Student Activities and Student Grade Point Average" and said that she had been disappointed in the attendance.

"My adviser and two other people were the only people in the room when I presented," she said.

Zingraff said that overall the lectures had been well attended.

"In English 270, we all went over as a class to listen," said Honors student Courtney Harris.

"I learned a lot from the presentations and think that the experience will help me when I try to present my honors thesis."

English professor Dr. Garry Walton, who served as a facilitator for a session, said the conference was "a learning experience" for faculty and students "to know what is going on with other teachers and in other departments."

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