

# Definition of Undergraduate Research Learning

## Background

During the 2019-20 school year, The Centre for Undergraduate Research Learning (CURL)'s Steering Committee developed a definition of “undergraduate research learning” for endorsement and adoption by Huron University College’s Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) and Academic Council.

The CURL Steering Committee reviewed many different approaches to undergraduate research learning. The intention of this definition is to provide a general set of principles to guide Huron faculty and students in the process of research learning and to articulate the learning objectives for research learning at Huron.

## Definition

Undergraduate Research Learning (URL) is a pedagogical approach that uses research as a practice to foster student learning. URL refers to a collaborative process in which students and faculty engage in some, or all, of the following:

- 1) formulating or addressing a question, problem or objective,
- 2) analyzing it within a disciplinary or interdisciplinary framework,
- 3) producing findings, conclusions, designs, creative works or performative practices,
- 4) communicating and defending such outputs to a critical audience in ways that align with practices in the discipline or interdisciplinary contexts,
- 5) reflecting on the research process and developing an awareness of the iterative nature and scope of the larger scholarly research enterprise.

URL is a form of Experiential Learning that situates the student as a contributing researcher with the primary goal of facilitating student achievement of a set of scaffolded learning outcomes. The faculty member is positioned as a teacher-researcher with responsibility for mentorship of junior scholars within a research partnership.

URL may include both depth and breadth of experiences. Some URL experiences may be entry points into scholarly conversations, while others may be immersive and accelerate the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills.