



## Book Review

Healey, Mick, & Jenkins, Alan. (2009). *Developing Undergraduate Research and Inquiry*. York, UK: The Higher Education Academy. ([download](#) the book)

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Mick Healey and Alan Jenkins' *Developing Undergraduate Research and Inquiry* (2009) draws on international perspectives to argue that "all undergraduate students in all higher education institutions should experience learning through, and about, research and inquiry" (p. 3). [Healey and Jenkins also make this case, briefly and with new perspectives, in the current issue of *PURM*.]

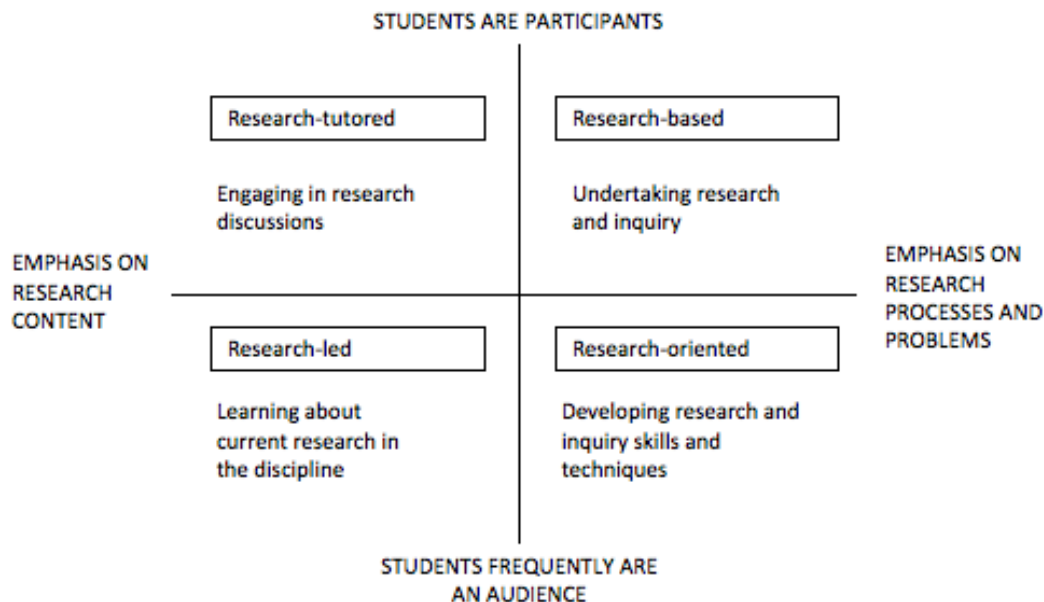
This volume is an important contribution to literature on undergraduate research for two reasons. First, Healey and Jenkins offer a heuristic that can guide course-, program-, institution-, and national-level planning for undergraduate research. Second, they provide a rich set of international resources and examples of this work at each of those levels.

Healey and Jenkins, leading voices on teaching and learning in British higher education, based their report on a 2006 conference about how the United States' conceptions of undergraduate research might inform the development and culture of higher education in the United Kingdom. A primary goal for Healey and Jenkins is to prompt "a fundamental conceptual shift from the notion of students as a passive audience for the research output of individual academics, to the idea of students as active stakeholders in a research community in which their experience of research within the core curriculum mirrors that of" faculty (p. 2). Healey and Jenkins believe that research and

inquiry are central to authentic and deep learning. They aspire to reshape the curriculum into an integrated set of inquiry experiences for students.

This goal is echoed in the fall 2011 issue of *CUR Quarterly* (32:1) titled "Undergraduate Research for All?" In that issue's opinion piece, John Mateja (2011) claims that "nothing less than the reputation and credibility of U.S. higher education are at stake in how we answer this question" (p. 9). Expanding meaningful undergraduate research experiences to all students, however, will require many institutions to radically alter the one-on-one, out-of-class model for this work, a model that simply cannot be scaled to accommodate all of our students. Mateja calls for "visionary thinkers and innovators" (p. 10) who can develop new and effective models for integrating research into the curriculum. *CUR Quarterly* then profiles several faculty and programs that approach this problem from different perspectives, including a helpful article by Philippa Levy (2011) from the University of Sheffield, U.K.

Although not part of that issue of *CUR Quarterly*, Healey and Jenkins have much to contribute to this discussion. To weave research and inquiry throughout the curriculum, Healey and Jenkins propose a four-part framework for engaging undergraduates:



Healey and Jenkins contend that all four quadrants have a place in the curriculum. Too much of current British teaching and learning, they claim, is in the bottom half of the figure, meaning that students are passive consumers of research rather than active members of an inquiry community. A more balanced curriculum would lead students to move throughout the framework, sometimes cycling from one quadrant to another within a single course and sometimes following a progressive sequence from “learning about” to “doing” inquiry across an academic major (Levy elaborates on this in her fall 2011 *CUR Quarterly* article).

This framework is a useful heuristic for analyzing the place of research and inquiry in any curriculum, discipline, or university. Like Mateja’s *CUR Quarterly* essay, Healey and Jenkins note that a central challenge to undergraduate research in the U.S. is the relative lack of connection between many undergraduate research programs and the curriculum (p. 123). At many U.S. colleges and universities, undergraduate research experiences allow a few students to deeply explore the upper quadrants of the Healey and Jenkins framework, undertaking authentic inquiry and contributing as stakeholders to

serious research discussions like journal clubs in the sciences. However, the vast majority of undergraduates only occasionally venture beyond the bottom of the framework, primarily learning about research and developing isolated inquiry skills.

As Healey and Jenkins illustrate with diverse examples from the U.K., Australia, and the U.S., this heuristic can reveal both strengths and gaps in the undergraduate research experience. They put particular emphasis on the importance of developing both student capacity for and a student culture of inquiry through curricular and co-curricular programs. They also provide an extensive set of institutional strategies to mainstream undergraduate research and inquiry (outlined on pages 80-81).

Healey and Jenkins’ international examples and rich collection of references (pages 127-149) might be particularly helpful to readers in the U.S. Since the book includes separate chapters on disciplinary, departmental, institutional, and national practices and strategies to enhance undergraduate research, Healey and Jenkins offer a vision of possibilities that extends far beyond most analyses of this topic. For example, because nations structure higher

education differently, distinct models of undergraduate research have developed. While U.S. academics likely will not adapt a British or Australian approach, they might gain new insights into their own contexts by thinking carefully about the U.K. dissertation (p. 19-22) or the ways University of Queensland faculty introduce first-year undergraduates to the skills and practices of bioscientists (p. 40).

Expanding the scope of undergraduate research will require creative yet systematic approaches to integrating inquiry through the curriculum. Healey and Jenkins do not, and cannot, show us precisely how to reach the goal of all students engaging in undergraduate research. However, their small book is a valuable resource for anyone seeking to think deeply about whether and how research and inquiry can become the heart of undergraduate education.

### **Works Cited**

Mateja, J. (2011, Autumn). It's time to take the next step. *CUR Quarterly*, 32(1), 9-12.

Levy, P. (2011, Autumn). Embedding inquiry and research into mainstream higher education: A U.K. perspective. *CUR Quarterly*, 32(1), 36-42.