

# Undergraduates Conference Attendance, a Win-Win Situation for Students and Their Home Institution

**Isiorho, S. A. PhD, CPG-07788,  
LPG, MBA**

One of the requirements for upper level geology courses in our program is for undergraduates to do independent research projects and to present their results in the class. We also encourage students to work in professors' labs and their names are included in any paper that results from the lab project. Sometimes, students are encouraged to present their results to their peers in a campus wide conference in addition to their classroom presentation. Also, we strive to encourage undergraduates to go to conferences, asking them to do volunteer work where possible for 'free' admissions.

There are several benefits that result from students' participation in conferences. Students are acculturated into the world of research. Students see the use of and results from the use of research equipment such as SEM, XRD, rock saw, and microscope. Some students have continued their undergraduate research projects into graduate studies, and all benefit from having presentations and conference attendance in their professional resume. Students appreciate data better from their labs when they read research articles. The college or university also benefits through exposure of the college/university to out side colleges/universities and potential employers of the students. The opportunity to network and meet with other students are added benefits.

Several students who have presented their independent research projects have said that they value the experience of not just the research project, but for presenting their results.

Students who have presented their results at local, regional, and national conferences have expressed great satisfaction attending those conferences

and they have also express satisfaction meeting some of the authors of articles or books they have read. Undergraduates should avail themselves of every opportunity made available to them to present or attend conferences, as it is a win-win situation for them and their home institution.

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