

LONG-TERM PERFORMANCE MEASURES OF RESEARCH SKILL DEVELOPMENT WITH FIRST YEAR HUMAN BIOLOGY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This presentation provides an analysis and insights from nine years of data on the performance of First Year Human Biology students when they experienced a curriculum that explicitly developed and assessed their research skills. Performance was determined by academics' direct measures of student research skills, student pre- and post- self assessment of their research skills, student written statements about research skills and interviews with students conducted at the end of Second Year.

A rich array of benefits of explicit research skill development was found from the variety of perspectives given by the data, whereas students declared very few downsides of this focus. Students were more circumspect when it came to identifying factors that helped them improve their research skills and factors that hindered this development; interviews and written comments highlighted numerous problems for the processes used, even though the overall trend was positive about the teaching methods. In addition, correlations trends were determined for student progression through their degrees when related to their final research skill measures from open-ended research conducted near the end of first year, as well as trends for correlations of marks over time.

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