

Abstract Submitted
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Assessment of the benefits of a summer undergraduate research program for physics and chemistry majors CHRIS HUGHES, GINA MACDONALD, James Madison University — Presently at James Madison University, there are slightly more than 100 physics majors and 150 chemistry majors. Each summer, a significant fraction of these students participate in either the chemistry or interdisciplinary materials science Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program on campus. This provides a large pool of students from which to draw data comparing the influence of undergraduate research on both classroom performance and attitudes toward science as a profession. By analyzing the grade point averages of chemistry and physics majors, we have shown slightly larger increases from spring semester to fall semester for students who participated in the REU than those who did not. We have also measured changes in attitudes using surveys of the students both at the beginning and at the end of the summer experience. An analysis of these surveys will be presented.

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