Welcome.

Research is an essential part of the undergraduate experience at UNCG. Regardless of their majors or career paths, our students learn from our faculty the importance of scholarly inquiry and are encouraged to first ask important questions and then seek creative and innovative ways to find the answer. At the University Teaching and Learning Commons, we are honored to have the opportunity to encourage the work of our students through initiatives like our residential colleges, faculty mentorships, and the Undergraduate Research, Scholarship and Creativity Office. In this magazine, we proudly present to you a handful of the projects happening in the UTLC unit in profiles written by undergraduate students in the Ashby Residential College Digital Publishing Capstone. Together they are shining examples of the high quality of work being produced by our undergraduate students.

The name of the magazine, Minerva, pays homage to the Roman goddess of wisdom, who has served as an unofficial mascot since the school opened in 1893. The image of Minerva has graced every diploma, appears on the official college seal, and welcomes visitors with open arms from the east courtyard of the Elliott University Center. And in these pages, we offer you stories that reflect UNCG’s dedication to academic excellence and creative inquiry.

We believe that Minerva would be proud.
CONTENTS

4 ACROSS THE DIVIDE
by sunny townes stewart
A summer digging for fossils in the Great Divide Basin gives a pre-med major a new perspective.

9 SPEAKING OF RESEARCH
by mikayla brooks & emily lampkin
Two Speaking Center Consultants Share their research at the NACC Conference.

14 A GOOD FIT
by mikayla brooks
MaryAnn Kozikowski’s fashion talents find the right audience with untapped market.

20 CONCERN TO ACTION
by alysoun gough
Allie Puppo puts design skills to good work by joining the fight to end homelessness.

16 ONE RING AT A TIME
by daniel ricks
Fieldwork in the forest reveals more than science and history for Keith Watkins.

6 CREATING CHANGE
by sunny townes stewart
Emma Troxler finds time to teach and advocate for social justice issues while continuing her research.

12 LANGUAGE BARRIERS
by daniel ricks
Helping Montagnards find healthy food alternatives, Jalisa Horne learns new ways to communicate.

18 FOSTERING CARE
by emily lampkin
Ashley Wrenn researches ways to improve the lives of children in Foster and Kinship care.

22 DIGGING UP THE PAST
by alysoun gough
Alexa Uberseder searches for fossils of early humans at archaeology dig in Tanzania.
When Ashley Bryant was approached last spring by Dr. Robert Anemone about joining his paleontology research team on a fossil dig in the Great Divide Basin of Wyoming, the biology/pre-med major jumped at the chance. Even though she says she knew very little about the study of anthropology, Bryant was motivated by her desire for new experiences. “I believe that any time a student is exposed to new and uncharted territory, it allows for a unique and invaluable learning opportunity,” she says. “For me, undergraduate research has gone way beyond having something special to add to my medical school applications. It has given me the opportunity to be exposed to a different method of learning that extends far beyond the walls of the lecture halls on campus.”

While Bryant spent plenty of time mastering the traditional tools of the paleontology trade, sifting through layers of sand and stone to uncover tiny bone fragments and fossils, she was also able to contribute to the cutting-edge
research that Anemone and his team are producing. By incorporating modern technologies such as drones, satellite imagery, and highly accurate GPS data, the researchers believe that they can accurately predict the location of fossils, and thus improve the efficiency of field anthropologists’ work, increase their chances of success, and significantly reduce their costs.

To prepare for her work in the field, Bryant spent much of the Spring and Summer terms working in Dr. Anemone's paleontology lab, where she learned about the kinds of fossils his team would be looking for, as well as becoming familiar with the laser scanner and software used to create three-dimensional models of skeletal remains. In July, she accompanied his research team to the Great Divide Basin in Wyoming, where she was able to put her training to use.

Her classroom training had prepared her to an extent, but working out in the field came with a learning curve. First she had to figure out the living arrangements.

“I had never been camping or even slept in a tent before,” she explains. “But by my second night, I was very comfortable and fit in with the rest of the crew.”

The fieldwork itself was a larger hurdle, but Bryant overcame it as easily as she had adjusted to sleeping outdoors.

“My greatest challenge during my time working on this project was being able to spot the tiny fossil remains in the field,” she says. “I had learned to recognize them under a microscope in the lab, but it rapidly became clear to me that actually distinguishing between the minerals, rocks, and tiny fossils in the field would be more challenging than I had initially anticipated.”

Bryant says that the more experienced members of the research team patiently took her under their wing and helped her develop her fieldwork skills. “As the session continued, I utilized what I learned to figure out what worked me,” she recalls. “By the end of the month, I was plucking tiny teeth with the best in the field!”

While she might not pursue a career in geospatial predictive modeling, her experiences in the desert of Wyoming have opened Bryant’s eyes to a whole new world, and she credits her mentor for allowing her to participate in the project.

“They have been the most inspiring and supportive research mentor I could have asked for,” she continues. “He has pushed me far beyond what I thought I could do. He took a biology pre-medical student and taught me how to think like an anthropologist.”
Senior Emma Troxler has always been a person who values action. When she arrived at Ashby College in 2012, she noticed a need for more opportunities for students to participate in social action. As a sophomore, the English and Women’s & Gender Studies double major started the Social Justice Committee for Ashby Residential College, one of the 20-plus, student-run committees that help govern the Ashby Residential College community. She explains, “I wanted to start something that would last after I was gone.”

Today, she is conducting independent, original research incorporating complex feminist theory, presenting at regional conferences, and co-teaching a class that she designed with Ashby Residential College Coordinator, Dr. Will Dodson.

Troxler says that participating in undergraduate research at UNCG has given her experience in a variety of different areas, including teaching, fundraising, and research, and this work has helped her develop intellectually. “The primary
change [in my research] has been in the types of projects I’ve been doing,” she says. “My interests have gotten more intellectual and academic, so right now I’m doing semi-original research instead of reporting on ideas.”

Her focus on feminist theory is not surprising. She has always been interested in the topic of feminism, and her exposure to complex feminist theory in a Women’s & Gender Studies class would be what first inspired her future projects.

“Indirectly my interest started in middle school,” Troxler says. “I just didn’t have the language in middle and high school to express the problems I was seeing. Academically, I wasn’t exposed to any feminist rhetoric until college.”

Once she was introduced to feminist theory, however, she says she was able to relate feminism and other types of critical theory to everyday life. “All of my projects have been related to feminism,” she says. “I’ve been able to use feminist theory in just about all of my English classes, so I really enjoy meshing my two majors together.”

Troxler and Dodson began working together when Troxler transferred into Ashby as a sophomore. Dodson says that during one conversation, she mentioned that she was interested in social justice and feminist issues. “Like with any student, any time an opportunity came up that connected with her interests,” he says, “I would just throw it her way. One of the things that is singular about her is that she is always willing to take advantage of opportunities.”

“I’ve been able to use feminist theory in just about all of my English classes, so I really enjoy meshing my two majors together.”

The semester after she started the Ashby Social Justice Committee, she was awarded an internship with the UNCG Housing and Residence Life Social Justice Committee, which in turn inspired a research project with the Chi Omega fraternity, focused on the history of contraception and contemporary reproductive issues facing women in both the United States and around the globe. She presented her research project at a university conference that semester, and that work sparked an extended series of projects, which have culminated into opportunities to be a teaching intern in a college-level course and refine her research skills.

Over the past two years, Troxler has presented “Channeling Rage: Stages
of Personal Feminisms” at the Ashby College annual “Un-Conference” and the Southeastern Women’s Studies Association Conference in 2013. And she has incorporated her teaching and research, by observing how students responded to the material being taught in a course called “Sense and Sensuality in Women’s Literature,” which she helped design.

Dodson says that he has seen an increasing level of sophistication of Troxler’s research, which he attributes in large part to her willingness to learn and work hard. “She is a confident person and seeks out challenges so that she can push herself and continue to get stronger,” he says.

“With each project, she continues to professionalize, deepening her research skills, the sophistication of her analysis, and her writing—which was already good but has become professional-grade,” says Dodson. “She really has made the most out of these opportunities to expand her skills.”

Troxler says that the hardest part of her undergraduate research projects has been figuring out how to juggle them all. “Really the most challenging thing about research and everything that I’ve done since sophomore year has been time management. That’s pretty superficial but it’s true. I’ve enjoyed every project I’ve worked on, so the actual work wasn’t difficult, it’s just balancing everything that can sometimes be challenging.”

Today, Troxler is currently working as an undergraduate research assistant for Dodson’s new book, Teen Comedies and the Crisis of Masculinities, to be published by Anthem Press in 2017. She and Dodson will also be presenting at the Feminisms and Rhetorics Conference this year.

“Getting in is a pretty big deal,” Dodson says. “It is a national conference and it would be a professional, academic setting, which will be good for her.”

After graduation, Troxler hopes to find a job as an editorial assistant with a research journal, a job for which her research and academic pursuits have left her well prepared.
Two of the University Speaking Center Allan Fellows presented their scholarships at the National Association of Communication Centers Conference this April.

Hanna Kasmala’s research project is designed to discover how training and working at UNCG’s University Speaking Center enhances consultants’ intercultural competency. Intercultural competency, “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people of other cultures,” isn’t something we’re born with: it’s something we learn.

Kasmala chose this subject because of her work with non-native speakers in the Speaking Center. During these half-hour consultations, communication consultants have routine conversations with speakers. However, because the consultants had such frequent, direct contact with non-native speakers, Kasmala became intrigued by how the consultants’ speaking center experiences had influenced their views of concepts related to intercultural competency.

One difficulty for Kasmala was creating effective survey questions that would foster
the kind of insight she was looking for. However, after reviewing the literature and previous lectures on intercultural competency, she was able to create insightful questions. Although she found creating the survey challenging, getting it to the targeted population was very easy. She simply emailed the survey to the Speaking Center employees. For Kasmala neither of these issues came as a surprise: it has always been difficult for her to create the “perfect” survey, but easy to get the survey completed by the targeted population.

“\textit{It is beneficial to engage in these conversations because we all learn something from it.}”

Participating in this research has equipped Kasmala with a keen writing ability that is very technical and concise. As she progresses through her education, she recognizes that this is an important part of her experience as a consultant and a researcher. This project has further equipped her time management skills: her research project was very independent, so she had to foster her self-motivation to finish tasks by a certain time in order to not get stressed out.

Kasmala offers this insight about her project: “We constantly come into contact with individuals from other countries and sometimes, they do not speak fluent English, and this creates a communication barrier. By conducting research on the effectiveness of non-native conversation consultations, we can see that it is only benefical to engage in these conversations because we all learn something from it.”

Kasmala has her eye on a goal beyond UNCG’s Speaking Center: “I hope this research will benefit other communication centers in that they will be able to see how having conversation like this is helpful to employees and to non-native speakers. It is an interactive learning experience in which everyone gets something out of it.” And after her presentation at the Conference this month, the word is out!

Karen Boger, the second Allan Fellow, says that her work didn’t begin in the Speaking Center, but in a lab: “My interest in this project stemmed from my Statistics in Behavioral Science Research Lab, where I was introduced to analytics of Rotter’s original Locus of Control test.” But it was at the University Speaking center that her work began to take shape. “Since I already worked at the Speaking Center, Director Kim Cuny suggested I conduct research for the
National Association of Communication Centers Conference.” Boger’s research study intends to bring new data to contribute to the existing Speaking Center pedagogy in an attempt to better understand the way in which student consultants simultaneously approach their roles as both authority figures and peers. More specifically, Boger explains her project, titled “Examining the Peer Teaching Role of Speaking Center Communication Consultants Through Modified Teacher Locus of Control Scores,” as an examination of individual Communication Consultants and their behavior.

After consultants complete the surveys, Boger compared the consultants’ work in the center with the questionnaire responses. The focus is placed upon how consultants function as educators in their consultations and how this impacts their teaching practices. She hopes that this research will help create a better screening process for Communication Consultants in the future.

What was the easiest part of her project? Working with Dr. Roy Schwartzman. Dr. Schwartzman helped her formulate the questionnaire. She says the hardest part was deciding which Locus of Control test variation would be most beneficial for her research. Participating in Undergraduate Research has had a positive impact: Boger now has first-hand experience with research, something she wishes to continue doing. “I plan on continuing this research project to get a more representative grasp on how Communication Consultants function in their roles as peer-to-peer tutors.” Boger plans “to do this research in a longitudinal sense,” shaping her direction, no matter where she may go.

“My research can help train more innovative and creative Communications Consultants.”

She hopes her project will help students who work in speaking centers be more effective by helping them become “more innovative and creative Communications Consultants who will better benefit the speakers who come to the Speaking Center for assistance,” she explains.

She also hopes her work will help her co-workers who are considering doing their own research. “Together we will be able to better formulate ideas and investigation strategies that will positively contribute to our future research.”
Jalisa Horne is studying how hypertension (or high blood pressure) is affecting the members of the Montagnard Community in the United States. Montagnards are a tribal people from the highlands of Southeast Vietnam, many of whom have moved to the United States to have a better life. However, a lot of them have been diagnosed with hypertension because of the vast differences in food from the United States and Vietnam.

Horne, a nutrition major at UNCG, is concerned that the lack of nutritious foods available to the Montagnard people is a major contributing factor to the high rates of hypertension in the Montagnard Community.

There is a lack of nutritious foods available to the Montagnard people for a variety of reasons. One of the struggles many Montagnards have when moving to the United States is language.
The Montagnard people speak Vietnamese, so coming to a country where the primary language spoken is English poses a real problem for them in tackling issues of daily living, such as navigating nutrition education. Also because of this language barrier, finding well paying jobs is difficult; the average income for these families is considerably lower, which complicates the nutrition issue.

In order to help address these problems, Horne and her fellow researchers had to find a way to survey the Montagnard community in the Greensboro area. With the help of several organizations in the area, like the Center for New North Carolinians here at UNCG, Horne and her colleagues have undergone the proper training for determining the blood pressure and general health of the local Montagnard community.

Through this project, Horne has encountered a few experiences that have made her a better person. One of the things Horne cites as beneficial is how she has had to develop her own communication skills. Since she needed to be able to talk with the Montagnards in the area, Horne has had to employ different and creative ways of communicating!

Horne says that “even though conventional communication can be difficult, it is comforting to the members of the Montagnard Community to know that there is someone who cares for their well being, and someone who is willing to help them improve their health.”

Horne hopes that through this research, she can help the entire Montagnard community in the United States with finding foods that do not cause hypertension, and eventually helping the Montagnard people make a better life for themselves, not only in the Greensboro area, but in the entire country as well.
What if you were someone who has struggled all your life with being a size 14 or if it was someone you knew and cared about? Your best friend, your daughter or your sister? Put yourself in their shoes and think of how excited they would be to hear about MaryAnn Kozikowski’s project Consumer Preferences in Plus Size Design.

Starting early in life, many plus-sized people have trouble finding clothes that are well liked and fit. Manufacturers have this idea that just because people are over a certain size means that they don’t like to look good or care about having great clothes that fit their bodies. Kozikowski’s project addresses some of these every day issues that consumers and their friends and families face when looking for plus-sized clothes.

In her study of Consumer Preferences in Plus Size Design Kozikowski surveyed “consumers who identify as female and wear a size 14 or larger.” Participants were asked about their design preferences in the clothing available to them. Participants were also were asked about common problems in design they experience.
as well as where they purchase their clothing items. “The results of this survey are of value to all apparel designers and apparel businesses that focus on the plus size female consumer.” Based on the survey results, Kozikowski created three designs in order to show how knowing your consumer “will positively affect your design process and your company’s bottom line.”

So how was it that Kozikowski became interested in researching something like this? “Being an apparel design student, I am always interested in what the consumer wants and needs are, regarding clothing,” she says. “Even consumers who do not self-identify as interested in fashion or trends have specific design elements they prefer when shopping, (whether they know it or not!).”

To inform her design, she designed a survey to determine what her target consumers wanted to see in a clothing line. Her greatest challenge was managing the success of her survey. “I had over 200 responses, which was wonderful,” she says. “There is so much information you can pull from the results, so narrowing and highlighting the most important information was a task.”

Kozikowski believes that knowing your target consumer makes you a better, more effective designer. And she knows the market well. “Personally I am most interested in plus size design for female consumers because I am one and I know there are lots of short comings in what is available to us. It’s a market segment that several design companies are diving into or at the very least considering.”

Kozikowski feels that the plus size clothing market has been ignored for years, but is starting to get noticed. “Not only can this increase the bottom line of the apparel companies invested in the market,” she says, “but it can also increase the availability of clothing to the target market, which I am sure has positive self esteem benefits for the consumer.”

“I think that knowing your target consumer makes you a better, more effective designer.”
How many people realize that there are trees on campus that are older than the school itself? This is the goal of Geology major Keith Watkins: to educate people about the history of the trees at UNCG, so they can appreciate the trees’ history and respect them for the historical landmarks they are. Along with professor Dr. Paul Knapp, Watkins has spent a considerable amount of time going around the UNCG campus and the surrounding area studying trees to determine their age. Boring as that may sound, Watkins would beg to differ. Working in the Tree Ring Science Laboratory with Dr. Knapp has allowed Watkins to invest his time in work that he hopes will touch many areas of the UNCG community, not just the Geology Department.

Every day thousands of people traverse our beautiful campus hardly noticing anything, especially the trees. This is why Watkins became interested in studying the trees on campus. He wants people to see and understand the history these trees hold.
Watkins found his interest in dendrochronology (the method of determining the age of a tree by counting its rings) in Dr. Knapp’s Biogeography class last year. He became fascinated by learning about the various ecosystems that make up our world. Dr. Knapp noticed Watkins’ fascination and invited him to join an investigation of the trees on campus. Watkins says that he hopes he and Dr. Knapp can find a “crown jewel in our little pockets of forest.” The search for the oldest and most perfect tree is still going on; however, recently Watkins says that they were able to find a tree that dated all the way back to 1844.

In order to take the core samples from such old trees, a special tool is used; it is quite simply called an increment borer. The name describes its purpose: this tool goes into the side of the tree, through the bark, and all the way to the center (or pith) of the tree so a straw sized sample can be removed and studied. This process in no way harms the tree, so there is no concern that any specimens will be damaged. The information received from this sample does not only give the age of the tree, it also tells about the climate of the area; little space between growth rings indicates a colder or dryer growing season, and wider space between rings indicates a warmer or wetter growing season. But beyond the really cool research moment, it is the hope of Watkins and Dr. Knapp that the information found in the trees can be used to help preserve their history and beauty around UNCG and beyond.

Saving trees hasn’t been the hardest part of the project, however. “The most difficult thing about this research so far has been running into poison ivy!” During the summer months, poison ivy runs rampant in the forests where Watkins must do his fieldwork, so keeping on schedule can be tough. However, it all pays off when you find a tree born in 1844!

The research Watkins has been doing is incredibly helpful not only to the university, but also to himself as a person. Before beginning his research, Watkins had no intention of going to graduate school. However, now he is eager to stay at UNCG for a few more years to conduct more research through our graduate program. The Undergraduate Research, Scholarship & Creativity Office (URSCO) has allowed him to do so much more than he ever imagined at UNCG: he has found a field of study that he believes could be something he does for the rest of his life.
We’ve all been taught to make an impact and Ashley Wrenn and her colleagues are doing just that. Wrenn’s undergraduate research began as an independent study with her advisor and mentor Dr. Tyreasa Washington. Once her passion was ignited, it couldn’t be stopped.

The double major in social work and sociology is working with a research team of graduate students, faculty, and local social work professionals to conduct a systematic review of other studies to identify better predictors of positive behavioral health outcomes for children in foster and kinship care. “Specifically, we examined the studies’ characteristics, such as research design, sample demographics, instrumentation, and the relationship between various psychosocial factors and behavioral health outcomes,” she explains. “Eventually the results can be used to prevent and develop effective treatments and interventions for children in foster and kinship care.”

Ashley’s research is important because children in foster and kinship care disproportionately experience mental health, behavioral, and social competency issues. She notes that this often leads to extraordinarily high risk outcomes such
as incarceration and homelessness in their early adult years.

Ashley hopes that her work can assist this population and contribute to a long-term solution to the challenges they face. “Research needs to be conducted to identify promotive factors of better mental and behavioral health outcomes,” she says. “Then that can be used to prevent and develop effective treatments and interventions for this population.”

In addition to its real-world application, Ashley says that working on this project has helped her fine tune her research skills in ways that will help her throughout her career.

“For this particular project, I have learned how to develop research questions, how to conduct a literature search, and how to collect and analyze data,” she says. “Having the chance to ... strengthen these skills as an undergraduate has given me the chance to have support in the learning process.”

But beyond the practical skills that she has learned, she says that one of the most important lessons has been that while research “really is the backbone” of social work, it is necessary to narrow down the scope of your work in order to be effective.

“Since people are so diverse and have a multitude of experiences, my first instinct was to try and include as much information as possible,” she says. “However, I think a big learning point through this process has been that in order for the findings and research to be beneficial and to really help those impacted, it has to have a central focus.”

“Being able to see the enormous potential of research has fueled my passion for it.”

For Ashley, what initially began as an independent study has become much more than just a class. “Being able to see the enormous potential of research has fueled my passion for it, as it sincerely is a tool of advancement and change,” she says.

She is already planning for the next phase of the project, which will use the findings of the systematic review to formulate an empirical study. “That study will involve community partners from this project and will focus on looking for promotive factors for behavioral health of a population,” she explains.

As Wrenn and her colleagues continue on in their research with an at-risk population in mind, they are fulfilling the University’s motto: Doing Something Bigger All Together.
According to the 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress, there were over 610,000 people experiencing homelessness during one night in January. Allison Puppo has always had a concern for people experiencing homelessness and decided to take this concern into action. She found particular focus on helping the homeless when she began working at the Center for Community Engaged Design over the summer, but in particular, two individuals stand out for the work they are doing or have done in the past. Shanna Reece, Director of The Servant Center in the Glenwood Neighborhood is on the front lines of helping homeless veterans, and Liz Seymour, former Director of The Interactive Resource Center, has also been influential. Both women inspired Puppo.

The work of these Greensboro women has helped Puppo recognize that having housing is fundamental to living in our society; Puppo argues that not having this basic part of life seems inhumane.
In fact, it was seeing homeless persons on the streets and thinking about how they are surviving a particularly harsh winter evening that made Puppo unable to look the other way. The greatest challenge for her, after reviewing data, was simply just understanding how homelessness was still a reality. She was eager to get started on making a change.

Puppo used her love of design to begin her project. She believes design to be an equalizer that can foster the best in people through meeting their environmental needs. Shelter gives form to their lives and creates a sense of security. She firmly believes that this problem can be fixed with enough conversation, planning, and action.

She plans to use her Interior Architecture degree to change homelessness in our community by creating the Housing First model. She hopes this will culminate in a housing village with services tailored to the residents to help them live more fully. For the homeless to feel safe, unafraid, and cared for is her goal.

Participating in this research has inspired Puppo to pursue design education in her graduate studies. She hopes that her own promotion of community engagement may inspire other design students wanting to use their skills for the good of their community. As Puppo reminds us, “We are all stakeholders in our community and enriching lives through design is very rewarding.”

What is stopping this from becoming reality? The greatest challenge after reviewing data and other programs utilizing the Housing First Model is taking the time to take action. Puppo asks us: “when can we get started?”

“The need is tremendous. Housing is fundamental to living in our society and to not be able to have the basics of life seems inhumane.”
In 1968 in the Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania, archaeologists found “Twiggy,” the skeleton of a human ancestor estimated to be 1.8 million years old. This summer, a UNCG undergraduate Anthropology student Alexa Uberseder had the opportunity to join her mentor, Dr. Charles Egeland, on a research trip to the Olduvai Gorge. The Olduvai Gorge continues to be an active excavation site, and Uberseder and her research team spent the summer analyzing 169 fossil specimens at the DK East site, where Twiggy was found 37 years ago. Their goal was to seek evidence of hominin activity, determine if there were any more hominin (human ancestors) remains to be found, and attempt to reconstruct the environment of the site.

In addition to searching for fossils, once they were revealed, Uberseder’s team mapped the finds and measured their orientations (the way in which a bone is oriented in regards to a designated north cardinal direction) and inclinations (the angle at which a bone is buried in the sediment). They analyzed the
bones to determine factors such as animal type, species, size class, bone element, weathering stages, and surface modifications. To help determine the type of bone and size of animal of the specimen, they also compared the bones to complete skeletons of various animals.

Uberseder explains that the ultimate goal of the research is to reconstruct the paleoenvironment in order to determine what types of animals were common in the area, what type of environment and climate those animals lived in, if standing bodies of water were present, and more importantly, if there is evidence of hominin remains or activity.

“The longer I work on it, the more definitive this research has become. It is rewarding to see things fall into place.”

Uberseder says that to gain such valuable experience in an environment as exciting as the DK East site was a wonderful opportunity that she will be able to build upon in the future. “I’ve always been interested in anthropology and osteology, so this was a wonderful opportunity to be able gain experience with both in such an exciting environment,” she says.

But in addition to the opportunity to gain hands-on training in field work, Uberseder says that she also gained important life-long skills from her project. “Having the privilege to carry out this project has allowed me to experience the hard work that goes into academic research and will push me to strive in future projects and opportunities,” she says. “It will also allow me to gain practice speaking in front of audiences, which will benefit me individually and professionally.”
About the UTLC and Undergraduate Research

The Undergraduate Teaching and Learning Commons through its office of Undergraduate Research and Creativity supports co- and extra-curricular engagement of undergraduates in faculty-mentored research and creative projects. For example, we offer undergraduate research and creativity assistantships, travel support for students presenting their research off campus, and an annual campus-wide celebration of undergraduate scholarly inquiry. The URSCO is involved in state and national initiatives that promote undergraduate research.

Professor D. Cyrus (School of Music, Theatre and Dance) described the scholarly process as one that requires us to, “envision, learn, create, perfect, present.” Scholarship requires the use of discipline-specific tools and procedures to address important questions. The approaches to scholarly inquiry can be as diverse as the disciplines they represent, and can take place in a variety of settings such as an art studio, the library, a field site, and/or laboratory. Ultimately, students that engage in undergraduate research and creative inquiry are able to demonstrate a greater understanding of content knowledge and its development.