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Meeting of Minds features student research

By **Jeff Samoray**, OU Web Writer

Undergraduate researchers from Oakland University shared their scholarship with other students and faculty at the 11th annual **Meeting of Minds** symposium. This year, 155 oral and poster presentations were made May 9 at the University of Michigan-Dearborn.

Meeting of Minds emulates a professional academic conference with student presenters from Oakland, the University of Michigan-Dearborn and the University of Michigan-Flint. The experience is particularly rewarding for students who plan on pursuing graduate work.

"The value of any presentation is going in front of people to speak and share your ideas and work," said OU senior French major Jocelyn Floyd, who presented her paper "Evolving Realism Chez Balzac." Floyd is considering an MBA degree after she completes a stint working in France as a teaching assistant. "Meeting of Minds is formal enough so it's good presentation practice. At the same time, the stakes aren't as high as a professional conference. It's also interesting to see what other students are studying and presenting."

The research represented diverse scholarship and collaborations with faculty from a wide range of academic disciplines. Each presentation stemmed from regular coursework or independent studies.

Some of the research presented by OU students included a paper by Tim Patrick, titled "On Emily Dickinson's Wings," sponsored by Distinguished Professor of English Jane Eberwein; "The developmental significance of middle childhood" by Susan Casaceli and Keri Woodruff and sponsored by Associate Professor of Psychology Mary Eberly; and "Development of a High Throughput, Cell-free Transcription Activation Assay" by Aaron McBride with Professor of Chemistry and Director of the Center for Biomedical Research Denis Callewaert.

"The students involved become experienced in a hands-on research project from beginning to conclusion," said Associate Professor of Sociology Cynthia Schellenbach, who worked with OU student Julie Harkins and Associate Professor of Sociology Terri Orbuch on a poster presentation titled "Risk and Protective Factors Among Adolescent Parent-Child Dyads." "The important part for students is presenting research and getting feedback in the form of questions and comments. This allows them to go back to their research and ask new questions. I've had many OU students go on to graduate school, and oftentimes their peers do not have these same kinds of research experiences. I've found that students who complete a study and participate in Meeting of Minds see themselves as better prepared for grad school.

"This forum also gives professors a vehicle for a very concentrated, ongoing mentoring relationship with a student. It's an exciting, dynamic process that becomes a real-world experience for the student and a nice bridge to graduate work."

Participating students also publish their papers in the "Journal of Undergraduate Research."

For more information on the event, including a complete list of presenters, visit the **Meeting of Minds** Web site. For more information on student research opportunities at Oakland University, visit the **Research** Web site.

SUMMARY

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