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The Pyramid Mentoring Framework to Enhance Research Experiences in Introduction to Psychology

Having some research experiences in a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) area can lead to better academic motivation and performance, better preparation for an academic-related job after graduation, an increased likelihood of getting into graduate school in STEM fields, and improvement in critical thinking and creativity (Budesheim et al., 2021; Park et al., 2022). However, there is under-enrollment in participating in undergraduate research among first- and second-year students. This project aims to develop a new teaching model by implementing a pyramid mentoring mechanism in an Introduction to Psychology to help students gain hands-on research experience. Through a mentoring guide (the rubric), a senior researcher (can be the instructor) supervises three to four graduate students, who subsequently provide mentorship to three to four undergraduate mentees each. The learning outcome includes course performance (through regular course evaluation) and a two-stage survey (beginning and end of the semester) on attitudes toward research, interests in psychology, critical thinking, and creativity. Successful implementation of this teaching model can potentially increase enrollment in undergraduate research and essential skills such as critical thinking and creativity.