Presenting at the Undergraduate Research Conference

Last year after the Undergraduate Research Conference I wrote a blog post about how exciting it was to learn about the research that my fellow undergrads had been working on all year. If you haven’t heard of the Conference or if you’re not sure what it is, check out that post - I was similarly unsure before last year.

I got to explore the posters and panel presentations again this year, and I wasn’t disappointed. I learned about Germany’s model for sustainability and the obstacles a similar program faces in the United States, the development of solar cells that can be painted onto anything, and the way in which Samurai in Japan expressed their autonomy and individuality by enacting their own deaths despite a culture which required complete obedience. I learned about the public health effects of mass incarceration, adult literacy campaigns, regions of the US that do not distinguish between the vowel sounds in the words “pin” and “pen.”

It was a long and exciting day, but the most exciting thing that I did was to present my own research. My oral presentation was late in the day, and despite my worries that no one would come, I presented to a full room including my parents, my little sister, three of my wonderful friends, and my Spanish translation advisor, Professor Lloret, as well as the family, friends, and advisor of the two linguistics students who also presented on my panel. So thank you to everyone for coming!

I was nervous about my presentation, but it ended up being a really rewarding experience. I got to share my passion about something that I have been pouring all my energy into for the past year (the first ever translation of a 17th century Spanish play), and my audience seemed very interested and asked great questions.

I definitely recommend presenting if you are doing a thesis project next year. Independent projects especially can be a little isolating (I know from experience), and sometimes it’s easy to lose track of why you’re doing the research at all. My
presentation was a great opportunity to remind myself how excited I really am about my project, despite fatigue. Plus, it’s great public speaking practice for the future, which never hurts.

Did you present at the Conference? How did it go?

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