Undergraduate research is an important step for both students continuing education at the graduate level, and those entering the workplace. In alignment with our University strategic plan, additional faculty participation as mentors for our students will directly address strategic area II:

(to) further develop UW-Whitewater’s reputation as a community of scholar-educators and professionals who possess and practice excellence in the creation of new knowledge and its effective integration in teaching, research, learning and problem-solving.

This is particularly important in the College of Business and Economics where traditionally, undergraduate research involvement lags other colleges on campus. Meeting the vision of the college, the UGR program provides opportunity for significant student-teacher interaction. Within CoBE, the Management area (and specifically the Entrepreneurship area), offer many opportunities for case studies and feasibility analysis that can provide UGR possibilities. As entrepreneurship is the art and science of conceptualizing, screening, planning, launching, and operating a new enterprise, it follows that this type of study, in many different stages of business development can be effectively implemented under the UGR structure. Entrepreneurship can be applied to new for-profit and not-for-profit enterprises, as well as enterprises with existing operations. Entrepreneurship as a course of study brings together faculty and courses from across business disciplines (including Marketing, Management, and Finance) to provide a foundation for developing the knowledge and skills it takes to launch and operate an enterprise in a manner consistent with a sustainable environment.

In this spirit, as faculty members we should look to students that excel in the classroom, as well as those that seek us out for independent studies and examine the possibilities for a UGR project. This is an opportunity for strong students to get more professor-student interaction and if used in conjunction with an independent study, gain credit towards their major/graduation. Depending on the project, the faculty member may also get an opportunity to present with the student outside of the UGR conference, and potentially take the work to publication. The framework for the UGR process is well defined and proven. More can be read here: http://www.uww.edu/urp/index.html, with an example schedule here: http://www.uww.edu/urp/Schedule.html

Regardless of the semester chosen for the project or independent study, there are requirements that are detailed on the URP site (above). This presentation practice furthers our student’s preparedness for professional and academic presentations that may be required in the future. In addition, there are a number of new resources available to students in Management and Entrepreneurship through the Whitewater Technology Park: http://www.whitewatertechpark.org/ Drs. Dougan and Vanevenhoven are available as resources to help guide any questions about potential assistance, Ms. Denise Ehlen is available as a resource for potential additional grant funding available (prototyping), and Dr. Jon Werner is a CoBE representative on the UGR committee. In line with University, College and department goals, we are well positioned to further quality UGR projects. This document should help faculty in finding the resources and information to increase the number of quality UGR projects in the CoBE.