

## **Rapporteur summary for the second panel by Prof. Besnik Bislimi, PhD**

Dear participants,

It is my pleasure to summarize some key findings or conclusions from these two excellent panels. First, I would want to thank each of the panelists for their valuable contribution and insights about the role and relevance of including research in our undergraduate programs.

We heard from Professor Hall and I believe we all agree that research is a permanent process and goes far beyond a semester limit that our students usually face. It derives from the process of creative destruction, where the birth of new and more advanced products creates new markets and destroys old ones. Research leads to not only new ideas and/or new products; it also helps us find new ways or technologies for producing existing products.

Students involved in research, especially those in engineering should be aware that only few of them might succeed. However, the main goal of research inclusion in undergraduate studies is the very process of doing research, not necessary its outcome.

Another focus of our panelists was on the main two elements that determine the success of research in undergraduate programs; its fertility through active involvement and synergy (the relevance of networking was mentioned several times), and the appropriability of its benefits through patents and publications. And it was noted that research integration is a win-win situation for both graduates and the institution (including its faculty).

Panelists emphasized the clear positive relationship between student involvement in research during the undergrad studies and three important elements: probability of pursuing graduate studies; timely graduation; and positive ex post feedback on the satisfaction with the undergraduate studies.

As RITK one lesson learned from this conference is the need to completely rethink the role and utilization of our work studies and the academic support center. Work-studies would be best utilized if involved in research and not necessary as support for existing staff responsibilities. And the Academic support center needs to look for ways in focusing more on the bottom quartile.

We were able to conclude for our panelists that there are several approaches as how to integrate research in the undergraduate studies. One recommendation was to adopt and adjust the RIT main campus approach.

We saw that research does not have to lead always to new products. Actually, the experience shows that most of the publications come from social sciences. However for social sciences a more aggressive enrollment in writing (and critical thinking) courses was recommended.

Panelists also discussed the limitations that result from relatively high class-sizes, which are negatively correlated to the success of research initiatives.

The relevance of sufficient funding for successful integration of research, especially in the initial implementation phase was mentioned as a potential limitation for small and tuition driven institutions such as RITK.

So thank you again to all participants for this two excellent sessions and of course many thanks also to Mimoza Polloshka, the head of the Faculty Development Center for organizing it.