OBJECTIVE
To connect undergraduate thesis students from different faculties in a cross-disciplinary research environment focusing on the generation and application of knowledge to health professions education.

Students are challenged to extend their home discipline training beyond the generation of new theoretical knowledge into a realm where they can also ask how these fundamental ideas may be applied to the benefit of the greater health care community.

This initiative offers unique exposure to the innovation and knowledge translation aspects of research, too often overlooked in undergraduate research education.

RESEARCH PARTNERS
At the forefront of McMaster University’s medical education research efforts is the Faculty of Health Sciences’ Program for Educational Research and Development (PERD).

This program represents a cross-faculty resource for educational scholarship, research advances, and curricular improvement as it pertains to teaching and learning in the health professions.

The departments of Family Medicine and Kinesiology have partnered with PERD to offer undergraduate students this unique cross-disciplinary research experience.

CURRENT RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS
Two senior undergraduate thesis students from Linguistics are participating in a new collaboration with Kinesiology and PERD.

The students will investigate the relationship between motor control and reading ability in order to generate knowledge that can influence our understanding of reading disorders (i.e., dyslexia) and literacy in at-risk communities.

MOVING FORWARD
The long-term goal of this proposal is to build a program of undergraduate research opportunities that spans a breadth of disciplines and offer valuable insight into our understanding of best practices in the health professions education.

Furthermore, it will enhance the undergraduate student experience through exposure to an environment wherein the translation and integration of knowledge and techniques of the scientific, business, humanities, and engineering disciplines is essential to the delivery of exceptional health care education and, in turn, health care.

The next step in developing this program is to expand the offering to more departments across campus. This process involves identifying areas of interest to the health professions education community and posing them to potential student and supervisor collaborators across campus.

The hope is that students and supervisors will look at health care problems with their own unique perspectives and, in coming together, generate conciliatory theses outcomes that result in more complete knowledge generation and translation.

If you, your students, or your department are interested in participating or learning more about this initiative, then please do not hesitate to contact Molly Pottruff at pottrumm@mcmaster.ca.

FORWARD WITH INTEGRITY