

**Department of Psychology  
COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES**

**SUMMER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR UNDERGRADUATE WOMEN**

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: March 2, 2009**

*The Department of Psychology is pleased to offer the following research project for the summer of 2009. Interested students are urged to contact the faculty member(s) directing the project that most interests them. By contacting the faculty member, you can discover more about the project, learn what your responsibilities will be and, if possible, develop a timetable for the twelve-week research period.*

**PROJECT TITLE: Beyond Inquiry: The place of rote memorization in preschoolers' learning**

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**Project Description**

**Inquiry-based teaching is commonly seen as more effective in science education than rote memorization. Science concepts might be learned better if children attempt to answer their own questions, rather than merely repeat facts. On first sight, this educational approach brings a lot of advantages, the biggest one pertaining to children's perceived enjoyment. Children have fun with inquiry. However, on the basic level of knowledge development, there is little theoretical basis for inquiry-based learning. While rote memorization has its shortcomings, so does a narrow focus on the child's creativity and innovation. For example, a child left to explore a domain freely is likely to form misconceptions that are difficult to change later on. A better path to science education might be to combine memorization of facts with inquiry-based learning – an proposal that will be tested explicitly with preschool children.**