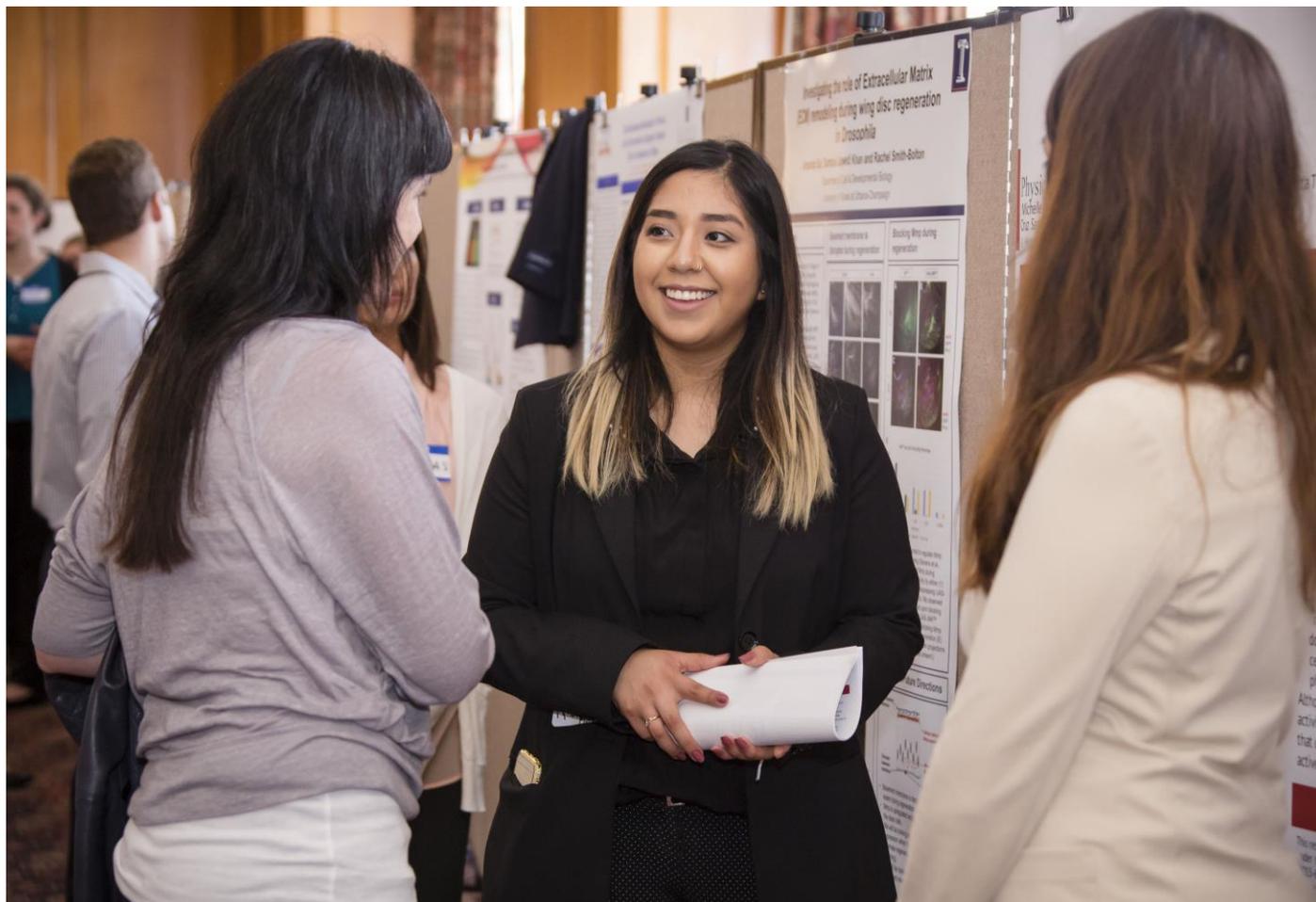


2015-16 ANNUAL REPORT
OFFICE OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS



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The Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) – Governance, Structure, and Personnel

The Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) at the University of Illinois was created on 16 August 2012 and reports to the Provost's Office. The Director is expected to carry out normal faculty research and service activities as well as reduced classroom instruction responsibilities. In 2015-16 the faculty Director served for three months at half time during the academic year, and at a third of full time during the summer. A full-time Associate Director assists the Director in fulfilling OUR's mission; in 2015-16, she acted as Interim Director for eight months. She also serves as Program Director for Ethnography of the University Initiative (EUI) program. OUR was also assisted by a 50% time graduate research assistant and a 10 hour per week undergraduate intern for the full academic year. EUI is assisted by a 50% time graduate assistant, through an arrangement with the Department of Anthropology. Weekly planning meetings are held between the director and the staff.

An Advisory Board, consisting of representatives from colleges with significant undergraduate enrollments and from units that facilitate undergraduate research, counsels OUR on a number of initiatives. EUI's Executive Committee, made up of program stakeholders, assists the Program Director in accomplishing EUI's mission in an effective way.

OUR/EUI Personnel

Director: Dr. Anna Stenport (February 16-August 15, 2016)

Associate Director: Dr. Karen Rodriguez'G; Program Director, EUI

Graduate Research Assistant (OUR): Christopher Holmes

Graduate Research Assistant (EUI): Noelle Easterday

Undergraduate Intern: Mackenzie Kurth

2015-2016 OUR Advisory Board

Robert Baird, Associate Director, Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning

Dorothy Espelage, Professor, Educational Psychology

Merinda Hensley, Assistant Professor, University Library

Richard T. Johnson, Assistant Dean, Office of Undergraduate Affairs, College of Business

Lois Hoyer, Professor, Pathobiology; Associate Dean for Research and Advanced Studies, College of Veterinary Medicine

Lydia Khuri, Program Director, Housing & Residential Life

Natasha Mamaril, Coordinator of Undergraduate Research, Engineering Administration

John Randolph, Associate Professor, History

Elizabeth Rockman, Associate Director, Campus Honors Program

Robert Schooley, Assistant Professor, Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences

Wallace Southerland, Associate Dean of Students; Director, Office of Minority Student Affairs

Patrick Vargas, Associate Professor, Advertising

[FAA vacancy]

EUI Executive Committee

Merinda Hensley, Assistant Professor, University Library and Instructional Services Librarian

Ellen Moodie, Associate Professor, Anthropology

Isabel Scarborough, Associate Professor, Parkland College

Ex-Officio: Andrew Orta, Associate Professor and Head of Anthropology

OUR Philosophy Statement

OUR is guided by the philosophy that all Illinois undergraduate students should learn about current disciplinary research, take part in research discussions, and be exposed to research experiences in their regular coursework.

Furthermore, where practical, an advanced research experience should be among the capstone options in all major programs of study. Undergraduate research opportunities should be designed to support the educational goals and research mission of the University, advancing its commitment to innovative research and scholarship with global impact.

OUR Goals

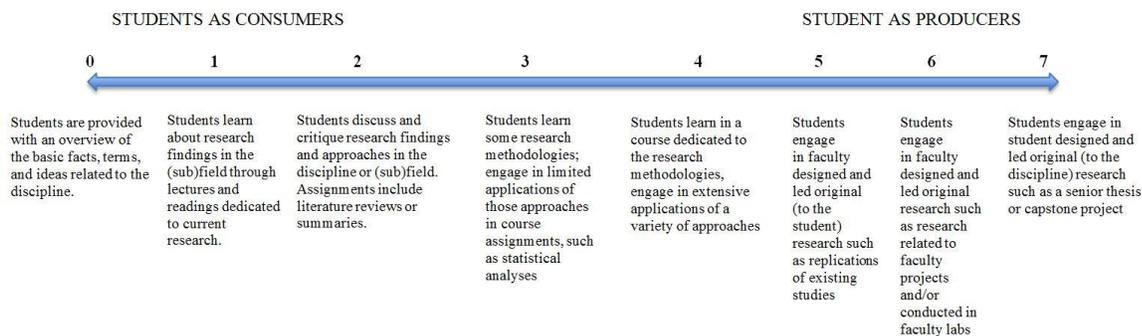
To achieve its mission, OUR seeks to:

- Coordinate and nurture undergraduate research efforts across campus;
- Inspire students and faculty to collaborate on research projects and foster a research mentoring environment that encourages and rewards collaboration;
- Assist faculty and staff in the development, assessment, and evaluation of undergraduate research opportunities, as part of curricular components, mentorship programs, internships, independent study, and co-curricular opportunities;
- Establish sound practices for students to develop research experience and skills regardless of discipline and time to degree;
- Work to create a culture of discovery across campus to support undergraduate research opportunities and encourage an atmosphere where students are colleagues and partners in research;
- Garner internal and external partnerships and financial support for undergraduate research;
- Encourage the creation and manage implementation of new opportunities for undergraduate research on campus;
- Disseminate best practices and models for undergraduate research to campus stakeholders;
- Serve as a primary conduit for archiving and enhancing the awareness of undergraduate research efforts among campus stakeholders and external audiences; and
- Allocate supplemental research support funding, as available and applicable.

Definition of Undergraduate Research

The National Council on Undergraduate Research defines undergraduate research as “an inquiry or investigation conducted by an undergraduate student who makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline.” OUR considers this definition to be better understood as aspirational and that undergraduate research is best represented as a continuum as noted in the chart below, created by our office:

A Continuum of Undergraduate Research



This is the fourth annual report of OUR and covers activities in the period from 1 June 2015 through 1 June 2016.

EXTANT PROGRAMS

OUR continued and/or expanded a number of programs from the previous academic year:

Undergraduate Research Week and Symposium

Undergraduate Research Week (URW). This is the third year of the URW, an expansion of the signature undergraduate research showcase on campus, the Undergraduate Research Symposium. URW events included poster sessions, exhibits, performances, and oral presentations organized jointly by OUR and various units. As we did last year, special effort was directed toward expanding URW events to include units in the humanities and fine arts, and those in which venues were more appropriate to the presentations of student research (e.g., performance or exhibits spaces) and closer to potential audiences. Units sponsoring URW events included: the Department of Political Science; the School of Literatures, Cultures, and Linguistics; the College of Fine and Applied Arts; the Department of English; the Department of Anthropology; the Researchers Initiative of the Urbana South Living and Learning Community; the Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program (see new programs below for more information on this program); the Ethnography of the University Initiative; and the College of Engineering Illinois Scholars Undergraduate Research program.

Undergraduate Research Symposium (URS). The URS has been held annually on campus since 2008. As in past years, workshops for participants conducted by the University Library were retained, as were several advertising efforts in local media and university web outlets. Representatives from our corporate sponsors, served as judges, in addition to UI faculty and advanced graduate students, for the URS/URW sessions, generating a pool of award candidates. Final award decisions, however, were made by the OUR staff. As indicated in Tables 1 and 2 below, in terms of the number of posters, performances, videos, and oral presentations, there was a slight decrease. However, in terms of numbers of total students participating this year, there was an increase from last year—many research projects had multiple authors. Participation by department/unit and college can be seen in Table 3.

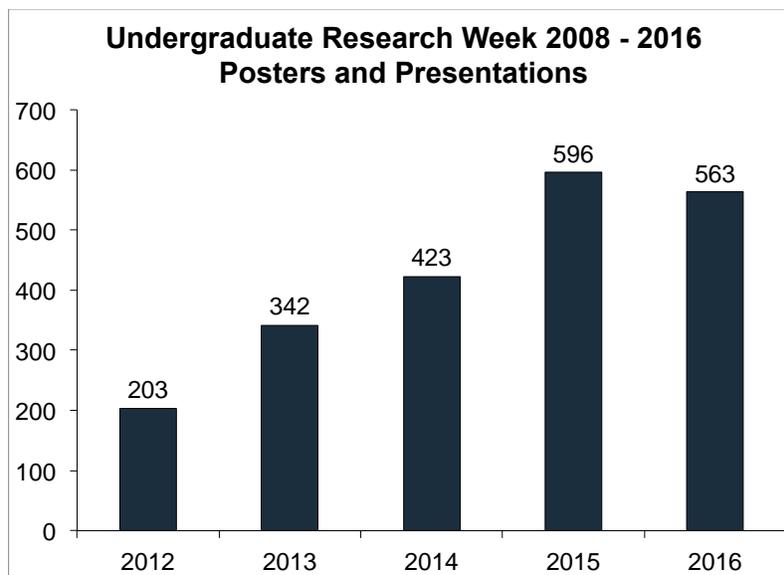


Table 1: Number of URS/URW Posters and Presentations, 2012-2016¹

¹ 2015 and 2016 numbers include events during URW as well as URS

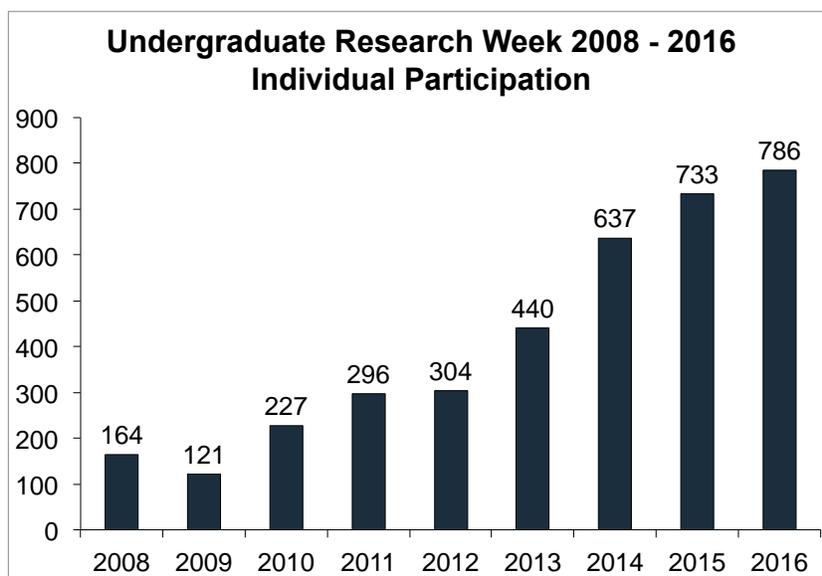


Table 2: Individual URS Participation, 2008-2016²

College Representation

<u>Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS)</u>	39.7%
<u>Fine and Applied Arts (FAA)</u>	17.8%
<u>Agriculture, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences (ACES)</u>	13.8%
<u>Applied Health Sciences (AHS)</u>	10.9%
<u>Engineering (ENG)</u>	8.3%
<u>Education (EDU)</u>	4.7%
<u>Media (COM)</u>	3.4%
<u>Division of General Studies (DGS)</u>	0.5%
<u>Business (BUS)</u>	0.5%
<u>School of Social Work (SSW)</u>	0.4%

Table 3: Percentages by College

Highlights of the URS included featured lunchtime presentations from students in Chemistry, Mechanical Engineering, and Global Studies and Geology, respectively, representing the range of undergraduate research on the UI campus. In addition, OUR displayed submitted entries in the [Image of Research](#) competition sponsored by the University Library. New this year was a viewing station for OUR's *In The Field* pilot program, a series of video vignettes that capture the research experiences of undergraduate scholars, highlights the diversity of undergraduate research across our campus (whether in coursework or

² 2015 and 2016 numbers include events during URW as well as URS

independent projects), and provides an ongoing documentation of the undergraduate research experience. Also new was the inclusion of corporate sponsor booths, allowing for an all day and directed engagement between students and our corporate partners. Finally, a thoroughly redesigned submissions database allowed for more efficient scheduling and planning. Further reconfiguring and streamlining of URW and URS submissions will be made in future years, including: longer timeline for submissions; coordination of URW events and URS within the database; and an end to late adds past our deadline. Efforts to encourage participation from historically underrepresented units, including FAA, remained fairly even with last year.

The full URW program can be found [here](#).

Ethnography of the University Initiative (EUI)

In January 2014, EUI joined OUR, but the former has a long and distinguished history. Under the leadership of Nancy Abelmann, EUI (<http://www.eui.illinois.edu>) was created more than a decade ago and has provided a pioneering approach to teaching and learning focused on promoting student research on universities and colleges. A unique national model, EUI is an integral and critical part of OUR's mission to support undergraduate research across our campus, both in terms of innovative pedagogy and critical student engagement. Across a range of disciplines, students in EUI-affiliated courses begin to see themselves as researchers and contributors to academic discourse. Using a variety of methodologies, including human subject research (enabled by an umbrella IRB amended each semester), students examine the university in its broader social, political, and historical contexts,

Since its founding, EUI has worked with over 165 affiliated courses across six colleges and seventeen departments at the UI (and at six additional colleges and universities). To date, more than 3,750 students have participated, with over 1,300 student projects and presentations subsequently archived in UI's digital repository, Illinois Digital Environment for Access to Learning and Scholarship (IDEALS). EUI has held twenty-four (biannual) student conferences and has produced a dissertation, a number of senior honors' theses and capstone projects, as well as over 15 articles and presentations highlighting EUI. A 2013 special issue devoted to EUI in *Learning and Teaching: The International Journal of Higher Education in the Social Sciences* is available online at <http://go.illinois.edu/EuiLatiss>.

During the 2015-16 academic year, there were 15 courses affiliated with EUI, serving approximately 375 students. At the end of each semester, students had the opportunity to present their research at the biannual conference; the spring semester event was part of URW. In assisting these courses, the Program Director recruited, trained, and supported faculty and students in the use of Moodle, Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocols, multimedia tools, and curriculum development.

EUI also continued its outreach efforts beyond the classes it sponsors, seeking to reach different constituencies, including the expansion of its engagement with regional high schools. Program Director Karen Rodriguez'G and Graduate Research Assistant Noelle Easterday met with administrators and faculty at Centennial High School; a new social justice course has been approved for affiliation with EUI for Fall 2016, including administrative and student research support. Centennial students are expected to do a special presentation during EUI's Spring 2017 student conference, along with our continuing high school students from Oak Park River Forest High School.

As invited representative of both the EUI and OUR constituencies, Karen Rodriguez'G also joined Prairie Futures, an Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities (IPRH) research cluster on Midwestern innovation and interdisciplinary design developments (*see* New Programs, Initiatives & Partnerships).

Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program (URAP)

2015-16 saw the piloting of URAP, a collaboration between OUR and Graduate College. URAP offers an opportunity for first and second-year undergraduate students (including transfer students) to gain undergraduate research experience while working under the direct supervision of advanced graduate students.

Applications were open to both domestic and international students; students were asked to provide a statement of interest speaking to why they were interested in participating in the program, and provide a brief essay outlining their top 3 choices of graduate mentor. Selected undergraduate apprentices had the opportunity to conduct and learn the research process through a one-on-one research experience with a graduate student mentor. Underserved students in the humanities, social sciences, and fine and applied arts were particularly encouraged to apply. We did, however, accept applications from students in all disciplines. Eighty-eight undergraduate students applied for 10 undergraduate student spots.

Graduate student mentors participated in a series of mentoring best practice workshops during the Fall semester and monthly meetings during the Spring. Undergraduate students worked up to, and were paid for, 70 hours during the semester (on average, 5 hours a week) and met with OUR staff on a biweekly basis, to provide cohesion as a cohort and to provide professional development workshops, including preparation for poster presentations during URW. A mentoring certificate has been developed for both current and future graduate student participants, to be issued by Grad College. There is currently no such offering through Center for Innovation in Teaching & Learning.

Growing pains notwithstanding, this pilot program was wildly successful. Students with little or no research experience developed as both researchers and scholars, building confidence to present and publish their work. One student won an honorable mention award for her presentation during URW and one was designated a Capitol Scholar (see description below). Given this success and the overwhelming interest by students, in the next academic year we will move from a model of paid undergraduate researchers to a credit-granting model (by Grad College). Such a model will allow for a larger number of students to participate; we hope to grow to 50 students per academic year. We are aware, however, that such growth may still be limited by administrative capacity to govern the program.

Undergraduate Research Journals

Working with Merinda Hensley at the University Library, OUR has assisted in the creation of such journals in several university units and programs. Although the exact organizational arrangements vary by unit, these journals are published electronically, once (or twice) a year, and student edited with faculty supervision. Software, training, and archiving are provided by the University Library. OUR pays for initial startup costs for the units involved as well as for training by the University Library staff.

Two journals are now in their third year of publication: the English Department's *Re:Search, The Undergraduate Literary Criticism Journal at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign* and the Ethnography of the University Initiative's (EUI) *Peer Review: The Undergraduate Research Journal of the Ethnography of the University Initiative*. *I-ACES: Journal of Undergraduate Research at ACES*, and the *TRiO McNair Scholars Undergraduate Research Journal* are now in their second year of publication. The *Illini Journal of International Security* published its first issue Spring 2016, and will publish biannually. These journals can be accessed [here](#).

The structure is now in place for the *Journal of Undergraduate Social Work Research* and its first issue is expected Spring 2017.

Undergraduate Research Certificates

OUR created its undergraduate research certificate program in Fall 2013. This certificate was established to create a framework by which the university recognizes student achievement in undergraduate research. This certificate provides students with an added credential that they can present to employers and graduate schools. Requirements include two research presentations, relevant coursework and/or research experiences, and attendance at professional workshops or research presentations.

OUR now awards undergraduate certificates on an academic year cycle. While the amount of certificates awarded this year has dropped from last year (to 19), the amount of submissions has increased as we have begun accepting applications from students as early as their sophomore year. Further, OUR's work with

colleges and departments in integrating research curricula with our certificate program has begun to pay off, as this year the College of Engineering and the Department of Advertising aligned both introductory and upper-division courses with certificate requirements. We anticipate that such integration will produce more applications and certificate completion. In advance of future growth, a new database for streamlining submissions, and efficient monitoring of student progress is being designed to launch Fall 2016.

Student Development

Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships (SURF). OUR sponsored a competitive Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) program for undergraduate students at UI. This initiative provides students with funds necessary to conduct research under faculty guidance during the summer term at UI. This program is designed to broaden and deepen the types of research being conducted by undergraduate students on campus, and the recipients are able to use this opportunity as a way of engaging with their fields of study.

Applications were received from 62 students, a number fairly even with the last two years; most of the applicants had exceptional academic records and impressive proposals. Due to the ongoing campus budget crisis, awards were made to 6 students (down from 14 students for Summer 2015). Awards were \$2,500 for each student, with allocations totaling \$15,000. Applications from Humanities, Arts, and Social Science majors were down significantly this year.

Research Travel Grants. OUR offers a research travel grant competition that provides students with funds necessary to conduct on-site research at an archive, lab, research center, museum, or a location that has materials not readily available at UI. Proposals were accepted any time during the academic year. OUR received six applications and funded four proposals for a total allocation of \$4,495.

Conference Travel Grants. This program is designed to facilitate the presentation of undergraduate research at professional conferences beyond the UI campus. These are competitive awards in which students submit their proposals and acceptances for national and international conferences, and OUR reimburses the winners for travel expenses up to a designated amount. In the 2015-16 academic year, OUR again offered three cycles of competition. Fifty-four applications were received and OUR funded 50 of these for a total allocation of \$10,326. Students submitting proposals and receiving awards came from a wide range of departments and colleges.

Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship-Abroad (SURF-A). Due to the ongoing campus budget crisis, SURF-A was suspended for Summer 2016.

Capitol Scholars. In cooperation with sister UI campuses at Chicago and Springfield, OUR participated in the third University of Illinois Undergraduate Research Day (aka “Posters Under the Dome”) event at the Illinois State Capitol on May 5, 2016. Ten poster presentations, with 14 students in total from the Urbana campus, were chosen as Capitol Scholars based on the quality of their research and relevance to state policy concerns. Students presented their posters in the main hallways of the Capitol to members of the state legislature, their staffs, and visitors. Students also received a tour of the Capitol. A significant increase in outreach to legislators and news media by all three campuses resulted in a record number of visits from legislators. Several students (including Urbana students) were interviewed about their projects and undergraduate research generally by local news channels.

Faculty Development

Faculty Development Grants: Due to budget concerns, faculty development grants were suspended for the 2015/16 academic year. We do hope, however, to build on the success of last year’s successful grants, in the upcoming academic year cycles.

Restructuring Student Development

Given both the ongoing budget crisis and larger questions of accessibility to and diversity of research support, OUR is considering the restructuring of the SURF, SURF-A, and research travel grants into one “Research Support Grant.” We anticipate two grant cycles—Fall and Spring, with up to \$2,000 per student and grants to be used within the academic year (or summer following) in which the grant is given. Application will still require a proposal of research and support by a faculty mentor or institutional affiliation, with reporting at the end of the research term. Additionally, we will require a budget outlining expected expenses, including materials and other costs not currently supported by our current grants. Number of grants given will depend upon availability of funds and viability of proposals submitted.

Although we realize that our SURF (\$2500/summer) has already achieved ‘icon’ status, with over 60 students applying every year since its inception, we have also noted that without specific campaigns targeting the humanities, social science and fine arts, student submissions from those disciplines drop significantly. As a result, SURF submissions and awards are heavily oriented to science and engineering, with little exception. In turn, research travel grants tend to come from humanities, social science and fine arts students, and a lower application number, as they are granted for off-campus research support only. We hope that combining these two grants into one Research Support Grant will provide access to a wider array of disciplines and student research parameters.

The Conference Travel Grant will remain as a stand-alone grant, not combined with the Research Support Grant.

2015-16 NEW PROGRAMS, INITIATIVES, AND PARTNERSHIPS

Drop-In Hours

In order to facilitate growing interest from students about both specific programs and undergraduate research in general, OUR inaugurated drop-in hours for academic year 2015/16. Given its success, we anticipate expanding this to two afternoons a week.

Getting Started in Research Workshop Series

We inaugurated our “Getting Started in Research” (GSIR) workshop series Spring 2016. Previously workshops like this were provided by the registered student organization, Research as Students at Illinois (RSI). OUR had worked closely with RSI to facilitate these workshops over the last two years. However, this year a change in RSI leadership has meant little contact with our office, and no advertised activities. In light of this, OUR moved forward in developing its own student-oriented workshop series. GSIR provides students with the tools to find research opportunities, including delineating research interests, understanding campus structure, and locating and contacting faculty. At the first workshop, which kicked off URW, Graduate Research Assistants Chris Holmes and Noelle Easterday walked students through a series of tasks (via a developed worksheet). At the end students left with the means of, and how to, contact at least two faculty in their research interests.

Given the overwhelming interest in this workshop (within an hour of announcement across our portals, all 30 slots were filled and many requests to be waitlisted), we anticipate holding this workshop twice a semester. We also look to develop other student-oriented workshops, including “Getting Ready for Graduate School,” etc., in partnership with Grad College, the Career Center, the Leadership Center, and other campus stakeholders.

Prairie Futures and Design Commons

“Recovering Prairie Futures: Midwestern Innovation and Inter-disciplinary Digital Developments” (Prairie Futures) is an IPRH research cluster. Prairie Futures looks to drive research through pedagogy across a number of units, ultimately providing a “toolkit” of digital means supporting inquiries around Illinois developments and innovations. Faculty would be able to adopt a comprehensive module or a single activity in their courses; these courses would then contribute to an ongoing archive. The Prairie Futures group includes faculty and academic professionals from across campus, including GSLIS, Media & Cinema Studies, the Center for Innovation in Teaching & Learning, the University Library, OUR/EUI, and FAA. Meeting monthly, this first year was devoted to thinking through how UI’s interdisciplinary innovation histories move through pedagogy and class assignments, with a series of invited speakers from across campus (and from within the group) providing an overview of tools and resources (including specific scholarly or popular resources and projects) that have worked well to translate or motivate innovation histories for students, faculty, and the broader public.

Because of its research and pedagogical interests and larger questions of inclusion, Prairie Futures became involved in the planning for the proposed Design Center at UI. Stewarding an [Enhanced Vision Proposal](#) for a Design Commons that represented the demographic and academic diversity of our university, and the need for the planning and design of the proposed Center’s social and collaborator infrastructure, Prairie Futures members are now actively engaged with the Design Center Core Committee. From this has come the Design Dialogues Speakers Series; the inaugural event garnered a standing room only, multi-disciplinary audience of faculty, staff, students, and researchers from across the UI campus. Currently, the Dialogues committee is working to include an undergraduate student advisory committee.

Development Efforts and Outreach

Corporate Partnerships and Private Sector Engagement. Collaborations with the UI Office of Corporate Relations (OCR) were resumed in February 2016, with the OCR point of contact being Roger Vanhoy from February 2016 onward. This collaboration resulted in outreach and information about URW to more than 60 companies total, including all companies with offices at the Research Park through Director Laura Frerichs, as well as in the state of Illinois and locally in Champaign-Urbana. Support was received for student prizes at URW from Monsanto (\$1,000) and FMC Technologies (\$3,000). Eli Lilly contributed in-kind, by sending corporate representatives to judge student posters in the sciences and health fields at the URS. All companies reported positive impressions and an interest in continued involvement. Best practice discussions were also undertaken between OCR and OUR in terms of how best to engage corporations. OCR agrees to be first point of contact, and Roger Vanhoy prefers to be copied on email. There is potential for additional philanthropic support from the private sector, with a clear strategy in place. This would need to be developed in collaboration with OCR, in order to identify mutual benefits for OUR and any private sector entities.

UI Research Institutes. The process of extending interactions between OUR and UI campus research institutes was initiated this year, and identified as a strong development potential for the Office. On campus research institutes reporting to the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research employ, educate, or otherwise engage thousands of undergraduates each year. With the support of Vice Chancellor for Research Peter Schiffer, contacts have been made with the following units, all of whom are enthusiastic to expand and deepen collaboration: Beckman, IGB, IPRH, PRI, and NCSA; additional units are of relevance as well. Areas of collaboration may include: 1) establishing best practices for undergraduate research in the units and in collaboration with OUR; 2) institutes and OUR collaborating on a yearly “research fair” in Fall semesters to match institutes with students interested in research opportunities; 3) identifying and promoting diversity measures to increase undergraduate research at the institutes among underrepresented groups; and 4) partnering with research institutes on external grants (government, foundation, private) in support of integrating undergraduate research in research proposals. Examples include NSF’s Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) and International Research Experiences for Students (IRES).

Student Recruitment. OUR continues to work with the Office of Admissions in recruiting students to UI. OUR staff attended and staffed a booth for Admitted Students Days in Spring 2016, speaking to prospective students and their parents as well as distributing OUR brochures on its current programs and initiatives. The Associate Director also met individually with several visiting students and their parents.

Serving Underrepresented Groups. OUR continues to work with the Office of Minority Student Affairs and its TRiO McNair programs to enhance their efforts. Specifically, the Office provides data on minority student participation in the URS and encourages McNair scholars to submit proposals; provides data on and encouragement to minority students receiving conference and research travel grants, as well as undergraduate research certificates.

Communication Efforts. Due to its significant rebranding, as well as increase in social media presence, OUR's visibility across campus has increased. Total Twitter impressions (as of April 30, 2016) numbered 23,971, a 238.3% increase from the previous year. Our website now features a blog, spotlights on individual students, including our new *In The Field* video vignettes, and additional resources and links for students. Total impressions on OUR's website numbered 18,805 (between September 1, 2015, and April 30, 2016). EUI will undergo a significant rebranding including a new website focused equally on faculty and student development, as well as an increased social media presence.

This year OUR developed a more comprehensive and efficient database of advisors, faculty, department representatives for undergraduate research, honors program deans, and the OUR Advisory Board respectively, though campus 'blanketing' remains a challenge.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Through a self-study process, OUR has identified a list of peer institutions (based on <https://www.pb.uillinois.edu/dr/links.cfm>) with robust programs or offices for, or support of, undergraduate research. These include (not ranked): Ohio State University, Northwestern University, UC Berkeley, UNC Chapel Hill, University of Pennsylvania, UT Austin, University of Washington, Washington University St. Louis, and UCLA. We place OUR highly in this group, though the UI budget for staff and personnel is significantly smaller than at most comparable institutions, including members of the Big Ten Academic Alliance (formerly Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC)), where OUR is a member of the newly formed Undergraduate Research Group. Particularly distinctive is OUR's interdisciplinary, comprehensive, and proactive approach to undergraduate research, which seeks to engage all disciplines, regardless of methodology or past practice of implementing formal research opportunities for students, and at all levels of and across curricula, thus prioritizing reaching a broad range of students, faculty, and staff.

The self-assessment and strategic planning exercises we undertook as an office during Spring 2016 builds on the Office's past successes, and seeks to identify ways to increase efficiency in design and implementation of the unit's varied support for undergraduate research, while increasing the reach and impact of these efforts, both on campus and externally. To this end, OUR seeks to implement the following during 2016-17:

- Establish procedures and connections to generate additional resources for undergraduate research through corporate and foundation relations as well as by partnering on research proposals (e.g., REUs and IRES) with faculty PIs, research institutes, and OVCR.
- Facilitate for students seeking to access research opportunities in a range of fields, including through an annual research fair or by investigating feasibility and impact of a database of opportunities.
- Implement a philosophy and ethos of seeking to shape the agenda on campus and externally about research methodologies and approaches to inquiry across fields to generate original output and scholarship on undergraduate research. This may, for example, take the form of faculty development and mentorship or by facilitating scholarly publications or popular dissemination on aspects such as best

practices of undergraduate research. Though dissemination of student research results is important through mechanisms such as URW and digital commons, the purpose of a central campus office in support of undergraduate research should also be to drive meta-, methodological, and epistemological perspectives.

- Implement procedures for and inform about early and firm deadlines, including for project submissions to URW or course offerings through EUI; last minute changes and additions are taking up significant staff time and is not sustainable in the long run.
- Streamline OUR's own funding programs to ensure fairness, accuracy, and accountability. Instead of a multiplicity of separate grants for students and faculty with varying application deadlines, OUR will institute three distinct funding support mechanisms that can be applied for through a streamlined web form:
 - Undergraduate Research Support Grant (may be used for travel or to pursue research on campus; can be used at any point during the year);
 - Undergraduate Conference Travel Grant; and
 - Faculty Development Grant to design and implement new/revise existing undergraduate research components. Advisory Board members will be asked to assist in evaluating applications as one way to increase participation and contribution by board members.
- Identifying core areas of staff portfolios. Because OUR has grown so quickly in the past few years, and is now filling a number of roles on campus and beyond (see page one of the annual report), we spent significant effort as a group in identifying what each portfolio contributes to the unit's mission. It is recommended that portfolios and duties be assessed again in May 2017 to see where potential to develop or scale back could serve the unit's mission.