Opportunities and Challenges for Implementing URSCA at Clarion University

URSCA Strategic Plan at Clarion University:

**MISSION STATEMENT:**
URSCA at Clarion University is to foster professional growth, develop faculty-student relationships, and support career development that enables students to construct intellectual and practical skills necessary for success.

**DESIRED OUTCOMES:**
- Develop funding programs to support student and faculty undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative activity.
- Reduce grant "infrastructure" to support URSCA and faculty grant writing activities (California University of PA model).
- Explore targeting a percentage of work study positions towards research.
- Explore possibility of student government association fees for research activities (student travel, student stipends, general faculty - student research support)

Incorporate URSCA into the curriculum providing students with the opportunities for professional engagement in their fields.
- Include URSCA as a means of success within the University’s strategic plan.
- Perform an inventory of student centered HIP including URSCA
- Develop a rich curriculum at the freshman and sophomore levels.
- Define the duties of the Office of Undergraduate Research.
- Develop a scaffolding map that defines URSCA expectations for each of the four years in college.

Incorporate a grant writing culture.
- Bring in CUR facilitator for grant writing workshop.
- Streamline and update the grant writing process internally.
- Develop a faculty peer mentoring network for grant writing.

Educate faculty on the pedagogy of mentoring related to student engagement in research.
- Develop a more extensive grant writing workshop and program.
- Expand the faculty mentoring program to include URSCA.
- Include literature on URSCA on website.

**Successes:**

**DEVELOPMENT OF URSCA 4 YEAR SCAFFOLDING MAP PROJECT**
Facilitated Year: Early Engagement
- Discover the excitement of research & critical inquiry
- Develop intellectual curiosity through the faculty-student relationship
- Develop information literacy, speaking and writing skills
- Understand sources of knowledge

Facilitated Year: Research Development
- Understand research methodology across disciplines
- Understand the role of the scholar supported by the teaching/mentoring relationship
- Advance information literacy, speaking and writing skills
- Use reflection to discuss scholarly work.

Facilitated Year: Application
- Differentiate disciplinary research strategies and methods
- Participate in enhanced faculty/student research or mentoring experiences
- Demonstrate information literacy, speaking and writing skills in the discipline
- Explore various methods of disseminating scholarly work

**Research Year: Implementation and Evaluation**
- Synthesize knowledge and skills in research and creative inquiry
- Implement a collaborative scholarly experience supported by faculty mentoring
- Display Information, speaking and writing fluency
- Perform, exhibit, and defend studies, disseminating results through oral and written means

**INCREASED FUNDING AND PARTICIPATION IN UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GRANTS**
- 32 Projects Funded
- 95,271 in awards, $6000 maximum/student
- 19 Biology, 4 Physics, 4 Psychology, 1 Speech Pathology, 1 English, 1 Special Education, 1 Education, 1 Art

**2017**
- 31 Projects Funded
- 16,579 in awards, $6000 maximum/student
- 16 Biology, 3 Physics, 3 Psychology, 1 Speech Pathology, 4 in Art, 1 Political Science, 2 Anthropology, 1 Economics, 1 Music, 1 Accounting
- Increased number of collaborative cross-disciplinary research projects
- In addition to UGR Project Awards, new Student Travel Awards Program begins Spring 2014 Semester.

**Challenges:**

UNIVERSITY:
- Massive reorganization and restructuring at the University
- Negative climate
- Budgets – R&D: focus on immediate profit versus investment in deeper learning
- Retirement & uncertainty

FACULTY:
- Morale – why should I bother?
- Workload - how can I do any more?
- Limited resources

ADMINISTRATION:
- No stability in administrators overseeing URSCA and grants; new appointments - staff all over again
- Slow process defining the functions of the Office of Undergraduate Research

CURRICULUM:
- Few required undergraduate research courses
- Communication barriers between Gen Ed Council and advocates of URSCA

**Opportunities:**

UNIVERSITY:
- Massive reorganization and restructuring at the University
- Strategic Plan identifies HIP

FACULTY:
- CUR Membership
- Small group from diverse fields highly motivated to participate in URSCA

ADMINISTRATION:
- Positive early support as URSCA both financially and programmatically (sponsored 2 curriculums at University)
- Movement in defining the Office of Undergraduate Research

CURRICULUM:
- Scaffolding Map project
- Currently changing general education requirements