



COUNCIL ON UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

2023-2024 Elections

Arts and Humanities Division: Division Representative Slate

Position Purpose: The work of Divisions is done by Division Representatives who advance undergraduate research by providing networking opportunities, activities, and educational content. Their aim is to create and foster community and value within the organization. Representatives support the members of their division in activities and programs that align with the CUR strategic plan, mission, vision, and values.

Needed Qualifications:

- Familiar with CUR and it's mission
- Passionate about or had mentor experience in undergraduate research
- Showcases thought leadership in undergraduate research
- CUR Membership (once elected)
- Previous volunteer experience, not required but

There are 4 individuals running.

You may vote for both candidates presented to be elected as representatives for this division.

This division will also be accepting write-In candidates for this election cycle.

Candidate information is presented on the following pages. Click on each candidate name below to be taken to their Information In the document.

- [Jesse Guessford](#)
- [Julia Gossard](#)
- [Kevin Kaufmann](#)
- [Margaret Cassidy](#)

Jesse Guessford, George Mason University

Arts & Humanities Division Nominee

NOMINEE STATEMENTS

Please comment on your involvement in undergraduate research activities in the context of your institution and its mission.

I am a composer by training. I am still active in the field, and I have always seen the work that I do as research. Ten years ago, George Mason chose to focus on Undergraduate Research as part of its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) and I saw an opportunity to include the work that I and my students do under the research umbrella. Since 2010?, I have been involved with the Office of Scholarship, Creative Activities, and Research (OSCAR). At the start of the QEP, I created the music technology program that was one of the first programs at Mason to be designated as a research focused program. The capstone course of this project requires students to complete a research project and a creative project. I shared the curriculum ideas, course design, and learning outcomes from this program and course with the CUR community during the 2015 conference. In addition, I have mentored over 30 students in one-on-one student led research projects, funded student creative projects, and credit bearing private music instruction. I also ran a summer undergraduate research opportunity that connected 6 undergraduate with the library of congress to explore the music of Petter Ritter, an obscure composer from the late 1700s. Since 2018, I have taken a leadership role in Mason's Office of Undergraduate Education which houses the OSCAR programs. At this point the university mission has changed and there is a broader focus on innovative curriculum and high-impact practices placing undergraduate research as a pillar. In line with that mission, I have been actively engaged with recognizing student work in undergraduate research, creating a process for the name of the student's research project appearing on their transcripts.

In what ways have you helped promote diversity and inclusion in URSCA?

To start, the music technology program at George Mason is the most diverse program within Mason's School of Music. And, since research and creative activities are scaffolded into each of the courses, the groundwork for the promotion of diversity and inclusion has been already established. The last course that they take is the capstone class that engages the students in original scholarship and a large creative project. Even with this built in diversity, I further promote and push students to pursue their own scholarship further. I specifically seek out students who are passionate about their topic, no matter of the previous experience or knowledge. By including student who focus on both creative and scholarly inquiry, the pool of students also becomes more diverse in both the topics studied and the student themselves. At the most recent CUR conference, I was part of a team that examined historical data from one of OSCAR's grant programs, specifically around equity of student majors. However, this initial data dive had lead to interesting questions about access and equity of our process and the systematic expectations of a student to navigate the grant writing process. Currently, OSCAR is developing new processes and materials to help all students.

How do you anticipate your skills will help successfully uphold the Division Representative charge?

I have presented at CUR and other conferences about the importance of research in the arts and I would like to continue with that work and be connected to other like-minded scholars.

If you have served a previous term as Division Representative (previously Division Councilor), are there any particular contributions during your previous term(s) that you would like to highlight?

I have been active in the council and nationally. I have taken notes at meetings and will be running a small group to discuss research specifically in the arts.

Julia Gossard, Utah State University

Arts & Humanities Division Nominee

NOMINEE STATEMENTS

Please comment on your involvement in undergraduate research activities in the context of your institution and its mission.

I am the Associate Dean for Research in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Utah State University. In this capacity, I help support our undergraduate majors find opportunities to engage in humanities and social science-based research. We are a land-grant university and one of our main missions is to provide equitable access to education to all Utahns. Our faculty are some of the most eager in the country to connect with and mentor undergraduate students (in no small part thanks to the Office of Research's Undergraduate Research program headed by Associate Vice President Alexa Sand). We meet our mission well through undergraduate opportunities. At the college level I do much to help connect faculty to our students as well as provide ample student funding. Along with the Dean, last year I founded and now operate the Experiential Learning Fund which provides scholarship support to students pursuing a wide variety of research projects and conference presentations for undergraduate students. These experiences are essential for students to further their intellectual growth and curiosity. This fall, I am organizing our college's first college-specific undergraduate research symposium that will highlight many of the Experiential Learning Fund projects as well as a number of our students who were funded through our UR programming. The hope is to help students gain the confidence to then be able to present at larger regional and national events including Research on Capitol Hill, Utah Conference on Undergraduate Research, and NCUR. We will provide the students selected to present at this fall symposium with funding to pursue additional opportunities. As a faculty member, I have been particularly devoted to undergraduate research. In history, I teach our two required research courses: Historical Research Methods and Undergraduate Research Capstone. I've recently moved to teaching both online to help ensure that we are reaching all Utahns across the state with the ability to research. These classes provide students the opportunity to learn how to pursue research in the humanities in an ethical way through cognitive apprenticeship. I served as the Phi Alpha Theta faculty advisor for three years and helped students in the preparation of their research to the Utah Regional conferences as well as to the National Conference in New Orleans. With my help, seven students presented in New Orleans. While I am no longer faculty advisor, I still regularly mentor history students through this process. I've also mentored 9 USU Honors students through independent research projects and co-authored with three of them to help them see the process of professional writing. Additionally, I mentored a student through the prestigious Peak Fellowship program here which provided a summer's worth of funding. I regularly encourage our students to present at our wonderful Student Research Symposium. In all, I consider myself an advocate for undergraduate research who is constantly trying to find ways to connect students to faculty and wider resources.

In what ways have you helped promote diversity and inclusion in URSCA?

Along with our Dean, I created Experiential Learning Fund to specifically address inequities apparent in our high-impact and experiential learning programs, of which undergraduate research is a part. Many of our students work full time and have families. They cannot afford to take on research projects over full time jobs. This fund provides students funding (through non-qualified scholarships paid not to tuition but to their accounts that can be cashed out) to be able to take the time away from work to pursue this. Students have used this funding to pursue archaeological field school and pay for their childcare. Others have used the funding to

give up a part time job and instead use that time to research alongside a faculty member in the USU Special Collections on the history of botany. This has made a huge difference to ensuring that *all* of our students, not just those with economic means can pursue research and creative activities. As Associate Dean for Research I've been dismayed at how many students (and fellow faculty) can sometimes not see the humanities as "real research." It has been my goal to help those in other disciplines as well as the students taking our courses to see that humanities research and creative activities could (but not always) look different compared to lab or field work in life sciences, it is still research under our large umbrella of scholarly activity. Making sure that we have inclusion and diversity of fields is also essential. Finally, it is important that we are constantly seeking participation from our minoritized students. As a PWI, it is essential that we make sure our students of color have access to undergraduate research opportunities. Although the status of our current DEI Division is in question in Utah (see HB261), the important work to make higher education - as well as research - a more inclusive and diverse space will continue. I have been in conversations with our DEI Division to provide additional access to professional development opportunities for our Indigenous students, the Black Student Union, and the LatinX Cultural Center.

How do you anticipate your skills will help successfully uphold the Division Representative charge?

This organization does much to help faculty and the larger community see the value of undergraduate research. My research is currently focused on the pedagogy of higher education, especially high impact practices which includes undergraduate research and its methods. I see one area of value that I could add would be in the community and collaboration piece of the strategic plan. Given my research on these practices, I could help to draft position statements and white papers that address the impact and importance of undergraduate research. Additionally, I've organized over 25 professional development activities (most of which are over Zoom) since 2022 focused on faculty and student research for our college. I'm capable of helping to run, manage, and market these opportunities. Finally, as a clear communicator, I will be able to continually advocate for undergraduate research at the USU level as well as throughout our region.

If you have served a previous term as Division Representative (previously Division Councilor), are there any particular contributions during your previous term(s) that you would like to highlight?

I did not serve in a previous term.

Kevin Kaufmann, Loyola University Chicago

Arts & Humanities Division Nominee

NOMINEE STATEMENTS

Please comment on your involvement in undergraduate research activities in the context of your institution and its mission.

I am the undergraduate research program manager at Loyola University. The office is housed in the Center for Engaged Learning, Teaching, and Scholarship (CELTS). I am involved in research on campus in multiple ways. I help students find opportunities, promote on and off-campus opportunities, and coordinate the funding process each year for multiple on-campus fellowships. Furthermore, I teach a research methods and practice seminar each semester and coordinate our year-end symposium every spring.

In what ways have you helped promote diversity and inclusion in URSCA?

Since I've been in this position, I have promoted diversity and inclusion, especially in our fellowship programs. We strive to have a broad reach at the university across all disciplines. In addition, we promote our fellowships and office services specifically with campus partners that focus on traditionally underrepresented groups. What's more, we try and recruit and appeal to faculty from similar groups to become mentors in their disciplines.

How do you anticipate your skills will help successfully uphold the Division Representative charge?

I feel like I have been successful in the previous three years in upholding this charge with my continued involvement with committees outside of the division. I have particularly enjoyed working on the upcoming ConnectUR conference and look forward to working with these colleagues. I would like to continue to work within CUR and continue to work across the divisions on a variety of initiatives all in keeping with CUR's overall mission of advancing undergraduate research.

If you have served a previous term as Division Representative (previously Division Councilor), are there any particular contributions during your previous term(s) that you would like to highlight?

Gave two presentations at 2023 ConnectUR, including a workshop Currently serving on the ConnectUR Annual Conference - Advisory Group for 2024 On the Advocacy subcommittee representing Arts and Humanities

Margaret Cassidy, Adelphi University

Arts & Humanities Division Nominee

NOMINEE STATEMENTS

Please comment on your involvement in undergraduate research activities in the context of your institution and its mission.

As a department chair, I routinely encourage students to submit to conferences and film festivals (I am the chair of a communications department), and have mentored students through the process of preparing to present at these events. I have attended NCUR with student presenters, and I actively solicit undergraduate submissions to the annual conference of an academic association for whom I serve on the Executive Board. I often teach my department's senior thesis seminar, in which students develop an original research project. In my lower level classes, I take care to incorporate the type of activities that will prepare them for their thesis class.

In what ways have you helped promote diversity and inclusion in URSCA?

I'd like to focus on a specific example of work I do in this area. My institution holds a film festival every winter that focuses on issues of diversity and social justice. I curate a session every year that features Adelphi student filmmakers. The focus of these films (and the background of the filmmakers) has ranged from sexual and gender identity to race/ethnicity, religious beliefs, and the experience of autism. These sessions have given a wide variety of underrepresented students the opportunity to show and discuss their work. From there, they often go on to submit their work to other festivals and conference, both on and off campus.

How do you anticipate your skills will help successfully uphold the Division Representative charge?

I have extensive experience leading academic associations, having served the full leadership cycle (VP-Elect, VP, President, Past President) of both the New York State Communication Association and the Media Ecology Association. In both associations, I served as convention coordinator in my year as vice president. Over the years, I have contributed to a variety of projects and events to encourage and mentor student scholars. I would welcome the opportunity to do this type of work with other CUR members.

If you have served a previous term as Division Representative (previously Division Councilor), are there any particular contributions during your previous term(s) that you would like to highlight?

N/A