



COUNCIL ON UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

## 2023-2024 Elections Social Sciences 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 9 individuals running.*

*You may vote for all 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.

- [Christopher Josey](#)
- [Jeanetta Sims](#)
- [Matthew Fails](#)
- [James LaPlant](#)
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- [Tiffanie Turner-Henderson](#)
- [Brian Lagotte](#)
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# Christopher Josey, University of Missouri

## *Social Sciences Division Nominee*

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### **NOMINEE STATEMENTS**

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

I would be honored for consideration in the role of Representative for the Social Sciences Division at CUR. I have served as the Director of Undergraduate Research within my Department for the past four years, as Faculty Fellow for Undergraduate Research within my college for the past two years, and as a liaison to the Office of Undergraduate Research at the campus level at the University of Missouri. In these efforts, I have systematically studied the campus-wide culture of undergraduate research on campus. From this, I have successfully developed and administered three new programs in support of early and mid-career scholarship within Arts, Social Science, and Humanities programs on campus. I have also created a disciplinary Freshmen Interest Group within my department that focuses on early career exposure to Communication research. In addition, I have overseen many theses and currently run a lab of more than twelve undergraduates who have presented their research at state, regional, and national conferences. In addition, many have received prestigious awards such as the Fulbright fellowship or acceptance of their manuscripts in peer review journals. I have made furthering my professional development a priority by attending CUR Connect the past several years and plan on attending for many years in the future. I presented my first study on undergraduate research at CUR Connect 2023 in Pittsburgh this past year and am readying another manuscript for this year's conference.

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

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are at the heart of my research. My individual research agenda is at the nexus of minority representation and news programming. I systematically study how traditional news heavily promotes stereotypes of marginalized individuals. In recent years I founded an undergraduate research lab at my institution. It was the first such lab within the department of communication at the University of Missouri. Its sole focus is to unpack how news sites that promote stereotype disconfirming portrayals of marginalized groups serve these groups in important pro-social ways. My undergraduate lab is the most diverse within the college drawing heavily from first generation, minority, and early career students. Further, it is peer mentored, where upper-level students train and mentor new students. Seeing how well this worked in my own lab, as a Faculty Fellow within the College of Arts and Science, I successfully created three programs that fund early career students from under-represented backgrounds to pair with a faculty mentor during the regular year and summer. We also provide research and travel funds to selected students. We have found great success reaching out to non-honors under-represented students early in their career. In fact a majority of them go on to do further research with their mentor.

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

One of the things that I am most proud of from my time as a Faculty Fellow for Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity is the grass roots approach I took to networking across our diverse college. I got deeply embedded within each department to get to know what was happening in each division. I also listened first to determine the needs of each unit. I then did a systematic analysis of these needs. One of the greatest needs was for a sense of community and access to best pedagogical practices in UGRCA. I distilled the needs relayed to me by faculty and began to create programming to meet their needs. Such efforts included: Procuring a

printer for low-cost poster printing (cited as a barrier for students), maintaining a list of faculty liaisons in each department for networking/collaboration, providing accesses to campus/national resources to better educate faculty on the most up to date ways of working with undergraduates both inside and outside of the classroom. I will say that working with professors who ran the spectrum of experience with UGRCA across a diverse set of disciplines was challenging and very rewarding. I hope to bring the experiences that I have gained from these past many years to CURE as a division representative.

**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?**

No response provided.

# Jeanetta Sims, University of Central Oklahoma

## *Social Sciences Division Nominee*

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### **NOMINEE STATEMENTS**

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

For more than 10 years, I have continued my robust predominantly undergraduate research program, called Diverse Student Scholars where we have accomplished: more than 40 funded student grants; more than 105 conference presentations; more than 20 research independent studies; more than 25 conference proceedings, journal articles, or book chapter publications including one book; and 4 national conference top paper awards from the National Communication Association (2008), Marketing Management Association (2013 and 2018), and North American Management Society (2017). At my institution, I have served on the Undergraduate Research Creative Activities Team (URCAT), served on the 2018 National Conference on Undergraduate Research Steering Committee, chaired the 2018 National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) Pre-Conference Workshops Committee, and served as a reviewer for undergraduate research student proposals. For CUR, I have served on multiple taskforces and committees including the Executive Officer Search Committee, the CUR Governance Design Taskforce, and the ConnectUR advisory group.

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

As a contribution to academia, I founded Diverse Student Scholars and was recognized in 2022 with a DaVinci Award for creativity in Oklahoma higher education. Since 2007, this program of mentored research has engaged more than 80 students. A key mission of Diverse Student Scholars is the involvement of research teams comprised of students from different identities. Thus far, students from key diversity dimensions (e.g., culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and religion) have all been participants and co-authors in the Diverse Student Scholars program along with several first generation and underrepresented students.

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

I have served two terms as an elected CUR Councilor and sustained undergraduate research engagement as both a faculty member and administrator; this dual experience will continue to be of great value to CUR since my work is aligned with CUR's mission, strategic plan, and five goals. In multiple courses, I have embedded undergraduate research into the course curriculum where 100% of students in all courses achieved a co-authored poster presentation at the statewide Oklahoma Research Day event. My students and I have presented on the cognitive, affective, and behavioral impact of undergraduate research as well as published articles demonstrating the impact of research engagement. In 2007, I founded Diverse Student Scholars as a significant contribution and means of giving back to academia. Along with focusing on research mentorship, Diverse Student Scholars advances students' transferable skills and abilities at working with others from different identities. Diverse Student Scholars students have collaborated on research for local metro-area nonprofit organizations and companies, and I have collaborated with faculty through teaching pre-conference workshops and making conference presentations about Diverse Student Scholars to stimulate greater undergraduate research engagement. Finally, I have presented about Diverse Student Scholars to domestic and international audiences including in CapeTown, South Africa and Dublin, Ireland. I anticipate continuing to draw on this set of background and experiences to continue serving CUR.

**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?**

In previous years, I have served CUR in a variety of capacities and am currently chairing the ConnectUR advisory group. I have continued to lead Diverse Student Scholars. During my term as president-elect and 2020 spring conference chair of the Marketing Management Association, I enhanced the spring conference by creating a marketing undergraduate research track for poster presentations with on-the-spot awards funded by the Social Sciences Division and with fellow CUR Councilor, Dr. Doreen Sams as the track chair. I see great potential in promoting additional disciplinary and interdisciplinary connections in the future.

## Matthew Fails, Oakland University

### *Social Sciences Division Nominee*

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#### **NOMINEE STATEMENTS**

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

I have been an active participant in a number of undergraduate research endeavors at my institution. I have served multiple terms as a member of our Honors College faculty board where I played an active role in fostering undergraduate research through a required thesis process. This includes working with the Honors Dean to smooth the process of connecting students with faculty mentors. Personally, I have served as a mentor for more than two dozen Honors thesis projects. I also actively conduct research co-authored with undergraduate students, which has led to multiple peer-reviewed publications. My proudest accomplishment in undergraduate research, however, has been the creation and maintenance of a department-wide undergraduate research poster symposium, which I have organized every April for the last 6 years (including several virtual versions during the heights of the pandemic). This poster symposium provides an opportunity for a wide array of undergraduates to create professional quality posters that convey their research findings from class projects. Over the last six years, this symposium has provided more than 100 students an opportunity to showcase their research in front of an audience of their peers, faculty, and university administrators. I initially created this symposium as an opportunity for my senior capstone students to present their work, but it has grown to become a signature event in our department and a cornerstone of our commitment to undergraduate research and student success. This symposium only exists (and continues to flourish) because of my individual commitment to the transformative power of undergraduate research.

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

I am a firm believer in integrating undergraduate research into regular classroom activities. In my experience, undergraduate research can be plagued by the “hidden curriculum” problems that are present in so many domains of higher education. Undergraduate research – especially high-impact research, conducted with faculty mentors, and leading to peer-reviewed publication – should not be reserved for the small set of students who know that such opportunities exist and have the self-confidence to inquire about them. In my opinion, integrating research assignments to regular class curriculum democratizes the opportunities and benefits entailed in undergraduate research and leads to a more diverse and inclusive environment. I regularly teach research methods courses, upper division electives, and senior seminars that each center undergraduate research in the curriculum. My experience has been shaped by fifteen years at a large, public metropolitan university that enrolls a large share of first-generation students and underrepresented minority students. In this context, the first (and often largest) barrier to a more diverse and inclusive undergraduate research profile is simply making students aware that such opportunities exist. If given the privilege to serve as a Division Representative, I would be eager to learn from fellow members about how they have approached inclusion issues in undergraduate research and integrate these approaches at my home institution.

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

I believe I would be a valuable member of the CUR community. I have experiences that would be useful to share with a likeminded community, but I also have a real hunger to learn more about how colleagues at diverse institutions have fostered undergraduate research activities. On a professional level, I view undergraduate

research as the cornerstone of this next phase of my career and would welcome the opportunity to connect with fellow representatives. Personally, I am highly responsible and have a proven track record of successfully participating and managing large, institution-wide committees with diverse memberships. But most importantly, I believe that serving as a Division Representative in CUR would allow me to channel my passion and enthusiasm for undergraduate research in a way that benefits my home institution and the larger community. It would be my great honor to serve in this capacity and help advance the transformative power of undergraduate research experiences.

**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

# James LaPlant, Valdosta State University

## *Social Sciences Division Nominee*

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### **NOMINEE STATEMENTS**

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

I served as the chair of our Undergraduate Research Council at Valdosta State University (VSU) for 10 years prior to becoming Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. We expanded our Undergraduate Research Symposium to a campus-wide event and created an undergraduate research journal during my time as chair of the council. We also created a competitive internal grant process for faculty to apply for support for curriculum-based undergraduate research projects. As dean of the college, we have created an experiential learning certificate in which courses are coded for experiential learning credit (study abroad, internships and undergraduate research projects) for students to earn the certificate on their transcript.

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

My most rewarding experiences as a faculty member have involved the mentoring of undergraduate research projects, especially those projects with first-generation minority students. My institution has a minority student population of more than 40%, and our undergraduate research initiatives have endeavored to engage students across the entire campus. I am proud that Africana Studies, Native American and Indigenous Studies, and Women's and Gender Studies are interdisciplinary programs in my college with a wonderful track record of engaging students in community-based research and internships.

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

I have been strongly committed to the mission of CUR for the past two decades. I have served as a divisional councilor since the creation of the Social Sciences Division in 2001. I also had the honor of serving as the editor-in-chief of our flagship journal the CUR Quarterly which became SPUR (Scholarship and Practice of Undergraduate Research) for seven years. I also previously served as the chair of the Social Sciences Division. These various roles gave me the opportunity to promote CUR activities and educational content as well as engage members from all of our divisions. In my current role as the vice-chair of the division, I remain committed to promoting student and faculty programming by CUR as well as strategic planning on topics such as how we can best provide undergraduate research opportunities for the exploding population of online undergraduate students across the nation.

#### **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?**

Please see responses above. I also served on the abstract selection committee for ConnectUR in 2023.

## Ethan Ankrum, University of Washington

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### *Social Sciences Division Nominee*

#### **NOMINEE STATEMENTS**

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

The UW is a large state institution, spanning three campuses, with broad demographics– UW is research and it happens at all levels; The Office of Undergraduate Research (UR) aims to amplify the UW's mission to advance and disseminate new knowledge and understands that undergraduate research is integral to the undergraduate experience and life. In my role with the UW, I act as an advisor and coordinator for undergraduate students interested in research. UR is housed within the division of Undergraduate Academic Affairs (UAA), whose mission is to lead programs and services for all students to succeed, to learn from challenges, explore who they are, who they will become, and how they will contribute to their communities and world. Undergraduate Research and in my role as an advisor, supports many facets of the mission of UAA. Through advising students can discover their pathways, explore their curiosities, and set out on quests for inquiry all in the name of new knowledge to advance our communities, here and on a global scale. Along the way, this may lead to both personal and professional discoveries and growth. Further, we support our mission through programming that offers opportunities to students for funding, presentation, and connections to enhance their research experiences beyond simply doing research, but using it as a tool beyond the definition of “research.” Through our team's approach, I happily support many, if not all, facets of undergraduate research.

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

UR and myself are uniquely positioned within UAA in the Center for Experiential Learning and Diversity (EXPD). Meaning each day we get to consistently collaborate and interact with close offices that aim to support minority students, scholarships, community engagement, and global engagement. As such, our environment pushes us to continuously re-evaluate who we are and what we do. For example, we are currently hosting resources and workshops for the first time that support mentorship and are geared towards creating diverse, inclusive, research environments for undergraduates through the faculty mentor; we have pushed further to create accessibility at our largest yearly event– the Undergraduate Research Symposium; we have re-evaluated our scholars and fellowship applications each year to continuously consider the financial aid, need, and background of our applicants by asking better questions; and starting this year we are now able to access necessary data to assess all our programs on how well they serve our growing diverse, inclusive, communities in-comparison to the larger-scale university, across departments; and seek improvement objectives and goals. To me, it is clear that our office takes a diversity, equity, inclusive lens to each challenge we face and opportunity we offer. Settling for nothing less.

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

Through my current office and previous research office, my perspective relative to those who often work in undergraduate research differs greatly. Just being 25, my undergraduate and degree experiences come from a small, private, rural university where I studied business marketing, business, and communication studies. Only to find myself pursuing education research focused on literacy, knowledge-development, and English-language learners and those with reading disabilities. Where that research was at a first-of-its-kind literacy lab with a nationally-recognized grant (NICHD R15/2R15 grant). With this, my perspective allows me to integrate strong

marketing, graphic design (print, digital, web), practices and knowledge with undergraduate research and the broader research experience and environment. Further, I am highly organized and recognized for my ability and focus on creating efficient processes and procedures– where necessary– to reduce unnecessary work and bring focus to bigger problems, solutions, and the community. Further, as you consider why I've pursued social sciences, my heart and previous research experience lend itself, in-pair with future endeavors, beyond the realm of educational research alone. Pursuing my masters in learning sciences and human development, I am hopeful to use my degree-fields, research fields, and psychology and sociology to provide educational opportunities that prepare the most under-represented in the classroom (PK-12; higher education), whilst simultaneously letting all excel– not an easy goal, but one of-which I am passionate for.

**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

# Tiffanie Turner-Henderson, Wingate University

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## *Social Sciences Division Nominee*

### **NOMINEE STATEMENTS**

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

Over the course of my tenure at my institution, I participated actively in a variety of undergraduate research activities aligned with the institution's mission of faith, knowledge, and service. The experiences provided me with valuable opportunities for growth and collaboration with colleagues and students. Serving on the committee for honors college students is an important aspect of my research involvement. Through this role, I have collaborated with talented and highly motivated students who are passionate about their fields. Having the opportunity to support these students' academic endeavors has been rewarding. Aside from serving on the committee, I have also co-presented research papers with undergraduate business students. In addition to deepening my understanding of the subject matter, working with my students has fostered a supportive and collaborative learning environment. Furthermore, I have implemented service learning projects in a digital marketing course in which students completed market research in collaboration with local non-profit organizations. As a result of this experience, students gained practical marketing knowledge and were able to make a meaningful contribution to the community. In collaboration with non-profit organizations, they identified their marketing needs and developed tailored strategies to improve their online presence and achieve their objectives. In general, my involvement in undergraduate research has been invaluable to me. As a result, I have been able to explore areas of my interest and collaborate with talented individuals. A culture of research and community engagement has played a crucial role in shaping these experiences at my institution.

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

As a minority group member, I actively promoted diversity and inclusion. My firsthand understanding of the challenges faced by underrepresented students in higher education has provided me with an invaluable perspective. This has fueled my commitment to creating a more inclusive and supportive academic environment. One way I have helped promote diversity and inclusion in URSCA is by co-presenting with underrepresented students at our institution's accreditation body's inaugural Women's Academic Leadership Summit. This collaborative effort aimed to provide a platform for students who have historically been marginalized in academic spaces to share their experiences and insights. By sharing the stage with these talented individuals, I aimed to inspire and empower them to excel in academia. In addition to co-presenting, I have also actively contributed to research on the interplay of gender, ethnicity, and the support of undergraduate women in campus leadership positions. This research seeks to shed light on the unique challenges and barriers that women from underrepresented groups face when seeking leadership roles on campus. By conducting interviews and examining existing data, I aim to identify strategies that institutions can implement to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for these students. Furthermore, I serve on our university's DEIB subcommittee which focuses on the student perspective. I have advocated for the creation of affinity groups, mentorship programs, and workshops aimed at promoting a sense of belonging and support for underrepresented students. By leveraging my role as a faculty member, I have collaborated with colleagues to develop inclusive pedagogical practices and coursework. These practices recognize and celebrate our student body's diverse perspectives and experiences.

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

It is my belief that there are several skills that will be vital in successfully fulfilling the charge of a CUR Division Representative. Through active engagement with colleagues, mentors, and students within CUR, I can facilitate valuable connections and collaborations. In addition, I possess excellent verbal and written communication skills, which enable me to convey ideas, provide feedback, and collaborate with others. A strong sense of organization is another asset I possess, which allows me to manage multiple tasks and deadlines effectively, coordinate events and activities, and prioritize my responsibilities effectively. In order to achieve common goals, I am adept at fostering effective relationships with diverse individuals, fostering teamwork, and leveraging collective expertise. With my advocacy skills, I can represent the interests of our division and advocate for resources, support, and opportunities that align with CUR's strategic plan. Leading and supporting team members, encouraging collaboration, and creating an environment that is positive and inclusive are some of my skills as a leader. By leveraging these skills, I can contribute to the success of the the Social Sciences division of CUR and foster a supportive community for undergraduate researchers.

**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 previously served as the Division Councilor for my previous institution. However, due to the challenging nature of the institution, I faced certain limitations that prevented me from fully contributing to the division's initiatives. Despite this obstacle, I am pleased to report that I have been able to successfully secure multiple business student capstone research papers for presentation at the CUR conference. Now, as I transition to a new university, I am excited to fully support the Social Science division initiatives. With my colleagues and fully engaged students by my side, I am confident in my ability to make a positive impact. Together, we can work together to achieve great things and contribute to the success of the division. I look forward to the opportunity to fully engage with the Social Science division initiatives and support our success.

## Brian Lagotte, University of Kansas

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*Social Sciences Division Nominee*

### **NOMINEE STATEMENTS**

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

In our Global and International Studies Program, I teach and mentor a one-year CURE-based capstone research experience for all seniors in the program. Through this experience, beyond conducting and writing an original research project, students are able to win research and travel grants, present at the NCUR and regional conferences, and occasionally publish their manuscripts. All these experiences help expand their post-graduation activities in a variety of fields.

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

In our program, I provide each and every student an equitable chance for the outcomes in the research experience. With this process, students themselves have the agency to decide what they take from the experience, if they choose the honors version of the seminar, and what extra accomplishments they strive for. In this way, I am attempting to fight against trends where some students are selected for the best opportunities—and these selections often coming from privileged groups.

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

The CUR is integral to many of the things I do for the students. They offer an environment for students to present, fund, and publish their work, but also to network in conferences and related events. The symbiosis between the resources and mission of the CUR and the work I conduct at my home institute align well.

**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 am pleased to currently be the student travel award coordinator, helping students from around the country fund their conference presentations.

## Carol Strong, University of Arkansas - Monticello

### *Social Sciences Division Nominee*

#### **NOMINEE STATEMENTS**

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

I scaffold UR tactics into all of my classes starting with basic exercises in my general education classes and culminating in extensive research projects in my seminars. Students begin by writing short essays with a scholarly source provided to them. In my upper-division seminars, students read scholarly sources (often primary sources); access online databases, give conference length presentations in class, lead discussion and complete comprehensive research projects involving advanced UR. All students (regardless of their GPA) are encouraged to present their research at conference, as UR is beneficial to all students, not just the top achievers. Since 2009, I have taken approximately 150 students to 40+ different conferences at the state/regional/national/international levels, including successive CUR World Congresses in Doha, Qatar and Oldenburg, Germany; successive Southern Political Science Association conferences in New Orleans, LA and San Juan, Puerto Rico; and successive conferences at the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy in Berlin, Germany. Since 2012, I have supervised five student research projects that were awarded a Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship Grant from the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. The supervision process begins by targeting students that have projects that are of a quality to compete for the ADHE SURF Grant and supervising them as they complete the grant application. Each of the students under my supervision then organized to take an advanced research methods independent study with me to complete their project, then present their research at a discipline specific conference. I further organize and host educational events for students both on campus (including Student Success Seminars: Study Tips from Students and Graduate School Preparation Panel Discussions by UAM Faculty) and off campus (including attending public lectures at the Clinton School of Public Service in Little Rock, AR), as well as engaging students in community service projects each semester.

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

As a full Professor in Political Science at UAM (since 2008), I teach classes ranging from general education and first year German language classes to upper division (internationally focused) seminars. Each class utilizes a range of sources written by men and women coming from different countries around the world and representing multifaceted world views. I have moreover added bi-weekly case studies using YouTube/TedEx Videos and documentaries from the countries/regions under examination to my seminars. I am faculty advisor for Pi Sigma Alpha (the national, political science honor society) and co-sponsor of Alpha Chi (the national, interdisciplinary honor society), and am working to vitalize UAM as a 'veteran friendly' campus. As an advisor, I have created a Pi Sigma Alpha LinkedIn page that allows current students - many of whom are first-generation college students - to communicate with past graduates currently employed in jobs they want to pursue after graduation. I further encourage all students (regardless of their GPA) to present their research at conference(s). To me, diversity, equity, and inclusion can be developed, in part, by engaging all students (and not just the top achievers) in UR. By carefully selecting (state, regional, national/international levels) conferences to match each student's preparedness, even those coming into UAM struggling academically can come alive and finish their degrees with confidence. I believe that UR gives students ownership over their academic studies and helps them tie what they learn in class to what they do in (and how they see) the wider community.

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

At a time when the value of higher education is being questioned, my students are active in the community doing community service and/or visiting state/national political figures from Arkansas to talk about (and demonstrate) the value of UR in their academic career, the workforce and/or graduate/law school. For example, I visited the Congressional Senators/Representatives from Arkansas in Washington D.C. many times as a member of the CUR Advocacy Committee. Then, after being asked to students with me, five groups of UAM students (totaling 19 UAM undergraduate students) have visited their Arkansas Congressional Representatives in Washington D.C. As faculty advisor for Pi Sigma Alpha (the national, political science honor society) / co-sponsor of Alpha Chi (the national, interdisciplinary honor society), I have taken approximately 150 students to 40+ different conferences at the state/regional/national/international levels, including two CUR World Congresses in Doha, Qatar (2016) and Oldenburg, Germany (2019); three conferences at the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy in Berlin, Germany; and successive conferences at the Arkansas Political Science Association / Midwest Political Science Association / Southern Political Science Association in cities ranging from New Orleans, LA and Chicago, IL, to San Juan, Puerto Rico. I have further had board experience with the Arkansas Political Science Association and Region II of Alpha Chi; I have also been involved in selection committees organized by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education to honor UR projects by students across the state. To get my student engaged in civic projects, I have arranged for students to do internships; indeed, past students have worked for Monticello lawyers/judges, Arkansas Senators/Representatives, in the Attorney General's Office and the Governor's office. And whenever possible, I take students to public lectures at the Clinton School of Public Service and/or regional events, where they can network with people working in the government/non-profit organizations.

### **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 a SSD Councilor since 2011/12, during which time I served as divisional secretary (2012-2017) and SSD Chair (2017-2020). As Chair, I worked with the division to create the SSD Excellence in Mentoring Undergraduate Research (EMUR) Award, which is now awarded annually. After serving as Chair, I have served on successive EMUR selection committees and served as the Co-Chair of the Posters on the Hill Selection Committee, Jan-Mar 2022. For many years, I was a member of the CUR Advocacy Committee, where I first started to visit the Congressional Senators and Representatives from Arkansas. Then, after being asked in 2017 to bring actual students (and not just stories) to demonstrate the value of UR, I have taken five groups of UAM students to Washington D.C. – totaling 19 UAM undergraduate students – to the offices of their (Arkansas) Congressional Representatives, 2018-2023. And whenever elected representatives have come to the UAM campus, I have arranged for students to meet with them. Under my supervision, six UAM undergraduate students presented their research at the 2016/2019 CUR World Congresses (first in Doha, Qatar, then in Oldenburg Germany). At these events, I further participated in a five-person panel about doing graduate work in Australia while in Qatar and presented a poster outlining how I scaffold UR into all levels of classes in my teaching portfolio while in Germany. Additional conference presentations focusing on UR include: in 2016, I participated in a CUR panel discussing landing faculty positions at PUIs at the National Postdoctoral Association conference; between 2013 and 2019, I participated in Roundtable Discussions (promoting undergraduate research/CUR) at successive Southern Political Science Association (SPSA) conferences; between 2021 and 2023, I participated in four Professional Development Sessions focusing on teaching strategies using UR at successive Midwest Political Science Association conferences; and, in 2018, I participated in a panel discussion entitled: 'Raising the Profile of CUR through Advocacy and Outreach at the 2019 CUR Business Meeting and the Biennial Conference that followed. Finally, in 2020, I contributed a chapter (Undergraduate Research in Political Science) to the 2020 Cambridge Handbook of Undergraduate Research.

## Doreen (Dee) Sams, Georgia College & State University, Ret.

### *Social Sciences Division Nominee*

#### **NOMINEE STATEMENTS**

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

I currently serve as I currently serve as the Chair of the CUR Social Science Division and served my institution by being involved in multiple aspects of undergraduate research. I have been a part of the CUR Social Science Division since 2011 and a Councilor since 2016. I have served on CUR committees, including the Advocacy, finance, and NUR committees. I co-founded the Posters at the Georgia State Capitol and co-created an undergraduate research poster presentation for the Marketing Management Association. I have mentored research internationally that has been published in academic journals, presented at academic conferences, and presented to the Georgia College & State University (GCSU) Donors' Gala. I am a coauthor of the 1st and 2nd editions of "Mentored Undergraduate Research Handbook". It has been my privilege to be part of the grassroots group that created the Mentored Undergraduate Research & Creative Endeavors office and serve as the inaugural chair from 2012 until May 2022. From its beginnings, I led the organization to become an AURA winner in 2020. I helped secure funds to send students to NCUR, regional, national, and international conferences to present their research. During my tenure, GCSU became an institutional member of CUR increasing its membership and number of CUR councilors. I was instrumental in conducting research that led to the creation of a national undergraduate research journal. My service to undergraduate research was recognized in the Journal of Transformative Learning. I have also served on several review boards. I have mentored undergraduate researchers since 2005. My mentees have presented research to community partners and clients; at conferences, including campus, local, regional, national, and global conferences, and many have been published in academic journals. Most of their mentored research has focused on "real world" issues for which practical applications were needed.

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

As to diversity and inclusion in URSCA, as a first-generation college student, my mission is to serve a diverse community through my research and mentoring. I recognize that diversity and inclusion are not limited to race, gender, or ethnicity but include many other aspects of humankind, including economic and educational diversity. I do NOT believe undergraduate research should be offered only to honor students. Some of the best research comes from some of the lowest GPAs. Why? Because someone believes in them. I ensure that research projects and publications serve diverse populations' needs. For example, my mentees and I researched and published "Addressing Global Poverty and Hunger" in 2021. Our research continues. In 2021-2022, several teams of undergraduate researchers were mentored by two other mentors, and I conducted extensive research for a nonprofit in Atlanta, Georgia, researching gentrification. Another example is research conducted by my undergraduate researchers on "Social Justice" that was presented to the Rural Institute of Georgia. Diversity within cross-curricular research. As a URSCA initiative, I expose my mentees to other perspectives through cross-curricular research. My mentees have conducted research with the GCSU theatre department, the environmental sciences, nursing, health sciences, and others. A classroom example from the 2010 initiative I conducted brought students worldwide into my classroom through the Internet. My students researched foreign institutions that were to be part of the experience before the actual events. In 2011, I published and presented at an academic conference about the experience in hopes of encouraging others to expand global

diversity into their classrooms titled “Phoenix Rising a USA Perspective: The Multilevel / Multimodal Reflections of a Recipe for Triangulation of a Globalized Learning Opportunity”. At the institutional level, as chair of the Mentored Undergraduate Research & Creative Endeavors (MURACE) office, I proposed a “diverse scholars” initiative for GCSU.

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

My extensive experience leading the Office of Mentored Undergraduate Research & Creative Endeavors (MURACE) (2005-2022), experiences as a CUR Councilor, as cocreator of the Posters at the Georgia State Capitol, rebranding of the Georgia Undergraduate Research Council, and as the Chair of the Social Science Division, and service on multiple CUR committees and task forces have demonstrated the skills needed for a CUR representative.

**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?**

My contributions include the current Chair of the Social Science Division, reviewer for NCUR and Posters on the Hill, promoting CUR initiatives through Advocacy, and serving on task forces and committees. My skills as a statistician, mentor students and faculty, service as course lead for the Georgia WebMBA for both the International Business and Marketing disciplines (supervising faculty and leading assessment of learning initiatives), AAC&U VALUE Rubric Quantitative Literacy certification, multiple years of mentoring and researching, and practitioner business knowledge continue to be an asset to CUR. I have been and continue to be an active CUR member; I have networked with diverse populations, shared the CUR vision, and fully understand the CUR strategic plan. As Chair of the Social Science Division, I led members in creating a new funding source that is more inclusive (aligning with diversity, equity, and inclusion strategic initiatives). The funding provides travel funding for CUR conferences to doctoral students, lectures, and/or newly minted professors, thus, reaching mentors or potential mentors early in their careers. I have led the division in creating a mission statement to align with the mission statement of CUR. My statistical skills have led to discussions in meetings as to the sustainability of efforts of the division in that new funding rubrics have been designed. My work with Dr. Sims to create the undergraduate research student poster presentations and award demonstrates my advocacy and partnership between the Social Science Division and Marketing Management Association. My years of experience leading MURACE demonstrate my leadership skills. I have, however, learned that all the skills and degrees in the world are not enough to succeed unless you have a passion for your work. To be successful, you must be a lifelong learner. These beliefs drive my choice to serve CUR.