



December 1, 2023

Dear CUR Colleagues,

I have been a member of CUR since 2001 when the Social Science Division was created at the CUR Business Meeting at Elon University. The most rewarding and enjoyable professional development opportunity in my academic career has been my involvement with CUR. I benefited tremendously from CUR meetings, workshops, and publications as not only a junior faculty member but also as a university administrator. I have been very fortunate to work with so many talented faculty and university administrators across the divisions of CUR as well as the national staff and executive officers of CUR. I submit my application for the position of President-Elect of CUR so that I may pay forward all that CUR has done for me over the last two decades.

I have been very fortunate to serve in a variety of leadership positions with CUR. I served as the chair of the Social Science Division from 2012-2014, which provided me with the opportunity to serve on the Executive Board of CUR. I am most proud of my work with our flagship publication: the *CUR Quarterly* which became *SPUR: The Scholarship and Practice of Undergraduate Research*. I was the Social Science Division Editor for the *CUR Quarterly* from 2003-2007 and then an Issue Editor from 2007-2014. I was appointed Editor-in-Chief (EIC) of the *CUR Quarterly* from 2014-2017 and *SPUR* from 2017-2021. I worked with talented issue editors, divisional editors, and our CUR national office staff as we created *SPUR*. Our goals were to raise the profile of the journal, expand our reach, increase the databases in which the journal was indexed, and represent a variety of disciplines as well as international perspectives. We focused upon publishing high-quality research on the assessment, practice, and theory of undergraduate research. I was mentored by amazing issue editors and EICs of the *CUR Quarterly*, and I endeavored to pay that forward with the talented issue editors and divisional editors with whom I worked as the EIC.

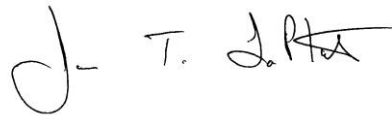
I will draw upon my experience with CUR and our flagship journal, which has provided me the opportunity to work with leaders in undergraduate research from not only across the country but also around the globe. Working closely with our national office staff and executive officers is a key part of this position, and I have enjoyed those opportunities over the last twenty years. One of the first wonderful individuals with whom I worked in the CUR National Office was Lindsay Currie who now serves as our CUR Executive Officer. If chosen as CUR President-Elect, I would also draw upon my administrative experience at Valdosta State University (VSU). I directed our Quality Enhancement Plan from 2010-2014 which focused upon undergraduate research. We expanded our undergraduate

research symposium to a campus-wide event, created a VSU undergraduate research journal, and funded a myriad of applied and community-based research projects of faculty mentoring teams of undergraduates. Furthermore, I have served as the Assistant Vice President for Research at VSU where I oversaw our Office of Sponsored Programs and Research Administration. Most recently, I have been the Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at VSU for the past five years. Experiential Learning (EL) is now a requirement for all graduates in our college, dozens of courses have been coded for EL credit, and our students can earn an EL certificate upon graduation.

I applaud the work that CUR has recently done in terms of the strategic plan and changes to the organizational structure. I hope to continue to build upon these dynamic changes. How CUR adapts to changes in the wake of the pandemic and continues to remain relevant must be a key focus. One-third of undergraduates across this country are now enrolled in fully online programs. How we engage these students in quality undergraduate research experiences is one of our key challenges. How we best engage early- and mid-career faculty in the changing landscape of higher education is another important challenge. From my time as EIC of our flagship journal, I am reminded that models of quality assessments of undergraduate research remain of great value to all of us. How to develop and grow undergraduate research programs with ever shrinking resources is another challenge for many of our institutions.

CUR has been like a family to me in terms of the colleagues, university administrators, national office staff, and executive officers who have mentored and supported me over the last 22 years. I am passionate about the power of undergraduate research for transforming the lives of our undergraduate students. Mentoring undergraduate research has been by far the most rewarding element of my academic career. Over 100 of my students have presented at our campus undergraduate research symposium, the Georgia Political Science Association Conference (GPSA), the Southern Political Science Association, and NCUR. My students have solo-authored publications in our VSU undergraduate research journal as well as the journal of the GPSA which are peer-reviewed journals. Several of my students have won the Pajari Award for the Best Undergraduate Research Paper from the GPSA. The life blood of CUR is the volunteer work that we all do on behalf of this organization, and I stand ready to provide my time, energy, and vision to the future of the organization.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. T. LaPlant". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a stylized "T".

James T. LaPlant
Professor of Political Science
Dean of the College of Humanities
and Social Sciences

CURRICULUM VITAE

James T. LaPlant

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EDUCATION:

Ph.D. Political Science, University of Oklahoma, 1998
Dissertation: "Political Learning in Adolescence: A Survey of Political Awareness and Attitudes of Middle School Students in the Heartland"
M.A. Political Science, University of Oklahoma, 1995
B.A. Political Science, University of Central Oklahoma, 1990

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

- Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Valdosta State University, 2018-present
- Interim Dean of the College of Science and Mathematics, Valdosta State University, July 2018 to May 2019 & February 2020 to May 2020
- Dean of the Graduate School and Assistant Vice President for Research, Valdosta State University, 2016-2018
- Interim Dean of the Graduate School and Interim Assistant Vice President for Research, Valdosta State University, 2013-2015
- Associate Dean, College of Arts and Science, Valdosta State University, 2007-2012
- Assistant Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, Valdosta State University, 2004-2007
- Acting Head, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, January-June 2006
- Professor, Department of Political Science, Valdosta State University, 2006-present
- Associate Professor, Valdosta State University, 2001-2006
- Assistant Professor, Valdosta State University, 1996-2001
- Policy Analyst, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, Summer 1996
- Instructor, University of Oklahoma, 1994-1996

OFFICIAL POSTS HELD IN CUR AND GPSA:

- Member of the ConnectUR Annual Conference Planning Committee, 2023
- *SPUR: Scholarship and Practice of Undergraduate Research*: Editor-in-Chief, 2017-2021
- *CUR Quarterly*: Editor-in-Chief, 2014-2017; Issue Editor, 2007-2014; Social Science Division Editor, 2003-2007
- Social Science Division Chair, Council on Undergraduate Research, 2012-2014
- Social Science Division Councilor, Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR), Summer 2001-present
- Executive Board of the Georgia Political Science Association (GPSA), November 2003-2010 (secretary 2005-2007) (vice president and program chair 2008) (president 2009)

MENTORING OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH:

- 100+ students have delivered poster and paper presentations at the Valdosta State University (VSU) Undergraduate Research Symposium held each April
- Several dozen students have delivered paper presentations at the Annual Meeting of the GPSA
- A dozen students have delivered paper presentations at the Southern Political Science Association
- Half a dozen students have published their research in Omnino (the peer-reviewed VSU undergraduate research journal)
- Several students have published in Questions in Politics (the peer-reviewed journal of the GPSA)
- Half a dozen students have won the Pajari Award for the Best Undergraduate Research Paper at the Annual Meeting of the GPSA
- Half a dozen students have delivered paper presentations at NCUR

COURSES TAUGHT:

Graduate Level

- Managing Small Cities and Counties, Online Course for the MPA Program, Valdosta State University
- Public Administration and Community Based Organizations, Online Course for the MPA Program, Valdosta State University
- Quantitative Methods for Public Administration, Moody Air Force Base, Valdosta State University
- Policy Analysis, Moody Air Force Base, Valdosta State University
- Public Administration and Public Policy Formation, Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base, Valdosta State University

- State and Local Government and Politics, Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base, Valdosta State University
- Public Administration and Community Based Organizations, Moody Air Force Base, Valdosta State University

Undergraduate Level

- Conspiracy Theory in American Politics, Valdosta State University
- Scope and Methods of Political Science, Valdosta State University
- Culture and Politics in the South, Valdosta State University
- Development of American Democracy, Valdosta State University
- Introduction to Domestic Policy Issues, Valdosta State University
- American Political Process: Campaigns, Elections and Voters, Valdosta State University
- American Political Theory, Valdosta State University
- Political Socialization and Public Opinion, Valdosta State University
- Political Parties and Elections, Valdosta State University
- Southern Politics, Valdosta State University
- American Political Behavior, Valdosta State University
- Introduction to American Government, Valdosta State University
- Introduction to Political Analysis, University of Oklahoma
- American Political Processes and Political Behavior, University of Oklahoma
- Introduction to American Government, University of Oklahoma
- Introduction to American Government—Honors, University of Oklahoma

Study Abroad

- Organized and Directed a Study Abroad Program to Palacky University, Olomouc, Czech Republic, May 2009 (12 students), May 2004 (30 Students), May 2001 (13 students)
- Taught two courses, American Political Thought and Comparative Federalism, for Czech students at Palacky University, Olomouc, Czech Republic, Spring 2001

RECENT PUBLICATIONS:

Refereed Journals

“Stopping the Steal and Selling the Big Lie: An Analysis of Tweets and Certification Votes Among House Republicans in the Wake of the 2020 Presidential Election” *American Politics Research* Forthcoming 2024 (co-authored with Kristina LaPlant and Keith Lee)

“Christmas Trees, Presidents, and Mass Shootings: Explaining Gun Purchases in the South and Non-South.” *Social Science Quarterly* November 2020: 387-

406 (co-authored with Kristina LaPlant and Keith Lee)
DOI: 10.1111/ssqu.12897

“Cocked, Locked, and Loaded: An Analysis of the Five Policy Regimes of Concealed Carry on College Campuses.” *Politics & Policy* 2020: 1-26 (co-authored with Kristina LaPlant, Deryl Mack Seckinger, and Keith Lee)
DOI: 10.1111/polp.12389

“Game Day Meets Election Day: Sports Records, Election Results, and the American South.” *Social Science Quarterly* February 2017: 1-13
(co-authored with Keith Lee and Sydney Bryan) DOI: 10.1111/ssqu.12356

RECENT CONFERENCE PAPER PRESENTATIONS:

“Run Herschel Run: Projecting the 2022 Senate Race in Georgia.” Presented at the Citadel Symposium on Southern Politics, Charleston, SC, March 3-4, 2022 (co-authored with Karen Owen and Keith Lee)

“Stopping the Steal and Selling the Big Lie: An Analysis of Tweets and Certification Votes Among House Republicans in the Wake of the 2020 Presidential Election.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Georgia Political Science Association, Savannah, Georgia, November 11-13, 2021 (co-authored with Kristina LaPlant and Keith Lee)

“Christmas Trees, Presidents, and Mass Shootings: Explaining Gun Purchases in the South and Non-South.” Presented at The Citadel Symposium on Southern Politics, Charleston, SC, March 5-6, 2020 (co-authored with Kristina LaPlant)

“Religion, Republicanism, and Realignment in Alabama: An Analysis of the 2017 U.S. Senate Special Election.” Presented at The Citadel Symposium on Southern Politics, Charleston, SC, March 1-2, 2018 (co-authored with Keith Lee)

RECENT GRANTS:

- African American Male Initiative, University System of Georgia, Initiative to Promote Student Retention and Graduation Rates, 2023-2024 (\$11,000)
- African American Male Initiative, University System of Georgia, Initiative to Promote Student Retention and Graduation Rates, 2022-2023 (\$15,000)