

Volume 1 | Issue 5

October 2023



Social Science Division e-Newsletter

In this issue: **CUR 2023-2024 Nominations and Elections**

CUR Nominations and Elections

Social Science Division
October Meeting

**Spotlight on Dr. Elisa Sobo,
CUR Social Science Division
Representative**

**Upcoming Opportunities &
Deadlines**

Nominations for CUR elected positions open on October 16, 2023. Division Representatives link the organization to its members, by advancing undergraduate research through developing program resources, offering networking and mentor development opportunities, and advocating for CUR and undergraduate research at their home institutions.

Please encourage your qualified colleagues to apply to serve as Social Science Division Representatives! Individuals with undergraduate research experience, leaders in undergraduate research theory and pedagogy, and those who are passionate about undergraduate research are especially encouraged to consider applying. Nominations close on January 3, 2024. You can let your colleagues know that self-nominations are welcome. [Link](#)

Social Science Division Meeting

Our Division Chair, Dr. Doreen Sams, has scheduled a Social Science Division Meeting for October 18th from 1:30-2:30 pm over Zoom. The meeting ID and passcode is in the email from Doreen. For more information, please [email Doreen Sams](#).

Interview with Dr. Elisa Sobo, Social Science Division Councilor

This month spotlights Elisa Sobo, CUR Social Sciences Division



Representative. Elisa is professor of anthropology at San Diego State University, where she is also the inaugural Director for Undergraduate Research at the College of Arts and Letters.

What CUR committees or task forces are you currently serving on?

As a newcomer, I am not yet on any committees. I hope to 'watch and learn' this year. That said, I have been working with fellow division members on a paper regarding URSCA's value for career readiness within the social sciences that we hope to place with SPUR; and

"The Council on Undergraduate Research is committed to inclusivity and diversity in all of its activities; therefore, CUR will increase and nurture participation of individuals and groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in undergraduate research."

on a faculty mentor award for the social science division that will soon be announced.

How long have you been mentoring undergraduate research?

I seem to have been mentoring undergraduates forever! Before joining San Diego State University, I was employed in healthcare; and I recall having interns from University of San Diego starting in the late 1990s (I'm a medical anthropologist and had somehow created a link with the anthropology department there). Upon joining SDSU, I often invited interested undergraduates to work with me on my projects. For instance, I included undergrads in a medical tourism study done in the late 2000s, a vaccination selectivity project done in the early 2010s, and a pediatric cannabis project carried out prior to the pandemic (and to 'legalization'). This was somewhat frowned upon by colleagues who thought that graduate students were better prepared for research assistant jobs but, quite frankly, the energy, positivity, and unadulterated wisdom that engaged undergraduates can bring to the table is not to be underestimated. In any case, my institution has recently begun to prioritize undergraduate involvement in research and creative inquiry and two years ago, when an opening was created for a Director of Undergraduate Research in my college (Arts and Letters) I jumped at the chance. I joined CUR in Fall 2022 and have been working to 'get smart' about URSCA as a formal domain ever since.

What influenced you to join CUR?

"CUR Membership is designed to guide and assist faculty, mentors, administrators, researchers, staff, and students in their efforts to develop, enhance, sustain, and support undergraduate research on their campuses and beyond."

When I took up the Directorship, one thing the Dean prioritized for me was relaunching our undergraduate journal, now called Splice, the Journal for Undergraduate Scholarship in the College of Arts and Letters (JUSCAL). With the help of colleagues in the Student Success Center in CAL, I recruited a group of students and together we reignited the initiative. They did such a fantastic job that this year the Splice Collective (I like to work horizontally) was granted official status as a registered student organization (RSO, aka club). We all learned by doing, and this year I am happy to say that we have another strong group to carry the torch forward. Beyond Splice, I work to foster CAL students' participation in a college-wide scholarly conference that SDSU has held for over a decade now, and to assist faculty and students in linking up for project work and creating mentor-mentee relationships (and here I should note that it's not always the student who is serving as mentee!). Finally, for now, I should mention that another way I try to foster URSCA is by helping to spread the good word that we can all build more of it directly into our courses. Not everyone has the time or inclination to serve as a mentor, but we can always support URSCA through well-conceived classwork.

Upcoming Opportunities & Deadlines

Submission Window for NCUR is Open and the deadline is December 8, 2023. [Link](#)

The Social Sciences Faculty Excellence Award in Mentoring of Undergraduate Research is open for nominations and the deadline is March 1, 2024. [Link](#)

Social Science Undergraduate Conference Awards: The Social Sciences Division of CUR is offering a limited number of grants, up to \$200 each, for undergraduate students presenting research at regional or national in-person meetings during the 2023-2024 year. For information or questions, [email Brian Lagotte](#). [Link](#)

Contact Information

Anne Price, CUR Social Science Division Secretary

annprice@valdosta.edu

229-245-4326 <https://www.cur.org/who/governance/divisions/socsci/>