



COUNCIL ON UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

2024-2025 Elections Education Division: Division Representative Candidates

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:

- Capable mentor: Experienced guide and supporter of others looking to advance their personal growth and development in areas connected to but not limited to UR.
- Communication: Professional and effective communicators, experienced in difficult conversations and able to hear and disseminate community needs
- Collaborative Spirit: Team players making space for all voices to be heard, furthering the collective understanding of the group, and cultivating outcomes to best serve CUR and its membership

There is 1 individual 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.

- [Jessica Rodrigues](#)

Jessica Rodrigues, University of Missouri

Education Division Nominee

NOMINEE STATEMENTS

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

My commitment to mentoring undergraduate student researchers aligns with my position and expectations as an Associate Professor in the Department of Special Education at the University of Missouri (MU). My faculty expectations include to conduct high-quality research, communicate findings via research publications and conference presentations, and mentor MU students in research. Moreover, my dedication to the mentorship of undergraduate students in my research lab, the Mathematics Potential Lab, advances the mission of the Department of Special Education at the MU which focuses on the preparation of leaders in education to assist youth with disabilities to be academically successful lifelong learners. I currently mentor six undergraduate student researchers in my lab, four via NSF funding focused on broadening participation for undergraduate students with disabilities in STEM education research opportunities and two via a program at MU that connects students from low-income backgrounds to mentored research experiences. My NSF funding that provides opportunities for students with disabilities in particular aligns well with the MU Department of Special Education's mission, to believe in the potential of all learners and to value their unique perspectives and experiences.

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

My research lab, called the Mathematics Potential Lab, not only conducts special education research focused on amplifying the math and overall STEM achievement among youth with disabilities, but also provides mentored research experiences to undergraduate students with disabilities. Our research lab therefore has a huge focus on inclusive practices, as we strive to foster a welcoming research training environment for all. The student researchers in my lab and I, along with two other inclusive lab environments at other universities, collaborated on a recent article that will soon be published in Inside Higher Ed; the article is written from the perspective of the undergraduate student researchers to share about the importance of fostering inclusion in research labs and actionable strategies for mentoring student researchers with disabilities in particular. I am proud to be the faculty mentor on this important article, and we can't wait for it to be shared widely!

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

Just as I strive to create and maintain a community in my own research lab, I would be committed to fostering community and value within CUR as a CUR Division Representative. I enjoy networking myself as a professional, and I consider one of my goals as a research mentor to support students in gaining networking skills and experiences. Moreover, my own skills in creating a network of colleagues both at MU and across institutions would allow me to leverage these connections for bringing even more awareness to CUR. As a Division Representative, I would aim to increase awareness amongst my department, the MU College of Education and Human Development, and my broader network of colleagues and students about CUR, its mission, and how they can get involved.

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