

Office of Undergraduate Research Activity Jan 2013 – May 2014

The ACU Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) was established in March 2009 to support Faculty mentored scholarship conducted by undergraduate researchers. During its first 3.5 years, Dr. Greg Powell served as the Director of Undergraduate Research. In January 2013, Dr. Autumn Sutherlin replaced Dr. Powell as Director. During this time the office has had a consistent budget of \$30,000. When Dr. Powell was director, the director received a one course load reduction. When Dr. Sutherlin began as director, she received a two course load reduction. This reduction was paid for by Pursuit beginning January 2013, which gave OUR a slight increase in budget.

OUR is advised by two groups that help shape the activities supported by the office. The faculty advisory committee is the University Undergraduate Research Council (UURC). The role of the UURC is to advise the Director of Undergraduate Research on which activities will help support faculty, to decide undergraduate researcher of the year, and to award grants. The student advisory committee is the Student Panel on Undergraduate Research (SPUR). The role of SPUR is to advise the Director of Undergraduate Research on which activities will help support students, to decide undergraduate research mentor of the year, and aid in the planning of the Undergraduate Research Festival.

While it is difficult to track, approximately 300 undergraduate students participated in undergraduate research January 2013 – May 2014. These students were mentored by about 80 faculty members representing nearly every department on campus.

OUR works to support undergraduate research in three major ways 1) Funding Research and Travel, 2) Encouragement and Training, and 3) Promotion and Reputation. In the past year and a half several new activities and strategies have been implemented to further support Undergraduate Research at ACU. Below is a breakdown of the activities January 2013 – May 2014.

Funding Research and Travel

New Activity

Restricted Fund Established: Due to the fact that OUR was started in March or April of 2009 and had some budget money in FY09 OUR supported 7 student researchers that summer, which was in FY10. Because of this, the office was supporting research each summer out of the previous fiscal year's budget, which made transferring the money to the departments difficult. In conjunction with Clint Buck, a restricted fund was established for OUR in which the money for summer stipends for 2013 that had been budgeted for from FY13 was placed. The summer stipends for 2013 were then paid out of the FY14 budget, which got the paying of stipends on track with the budget year. The money that was placed in the restricted fund can serve as a future "rainy day" or special activity fund for special events to support Undergraduate Research.

Continuing Activity

Travel Grants: Faculty may apply for up to \$500 in funds for students to present at conferences. The FY13 budget did not include funding for travel grants. The FY14 budget contained \$4000 for funding travel grants. Savings in other areas allowed additional travel grants to be awarded each year.

Spring 2013, the UURC awarded travel grants to eleven students from 5 departments totaling \$4085 of the requested \$4940. Fall 2012 it had been decided that OUR would not give travel grants. Due to budget savings from the Research Festival, Research Dinner, and Pursuit paying for the Director course load reduction, it was decided that OUR could give a few travel grants. The application was opened late in the school year; therefore there were likely fewer applications than there might have been.

Fall 2013, UURC awarded eight student travel grants to four departments totaling \$1949. Thirteen applications for a total of \$4945 from five departments had been submitted. In Spring 2014, eleven travel grants were awarded to twelve students from seven departments totaling \$3100. Twelve applications for a total of \$4995 had been submitted.

Table 1: Summary of OUR Conference Travel Grants

	Spring 2013	Fall 2013	Spring 2014
Number of proposals	11	13	12
Proposals funded	11	8	11
Total amount requested	\$4940	\$4945	\$4995
Total amount funded	\$4085	\$1949	\$3100

To see a list of students who received travel grants for the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years visit the blog at <http://blogs.acu.edu/undergradresearch/grants/conference-travel-grants/>.

Summer Student Stipend: Faculty may apply for up to \$2000 for a stipend for student researchers. Originally it was decided that OUR would fund student stipends only to help fund faculty members who received Math-Science or Cullen grants who wanted to have undergraduate students work with them, but did not have a way to pay the students. OUR could consider funding additional things such as supplies and faculty stipends, but with such a small budget, it has been the decision of the UURC to continue to fund student stipends only.

Of the ACU internal grants, the OUR Summer Student Stipend gives the smallest awards. Therefore, Pursuit, Math-Science, and Cullen all award their grants first. This means that there are fewer grants that have not yet been fully funded and therefore a smaller total amount requested. In addition, because OUR only funds student stipends, there are additional amounts requested that are not eligible for OUR funds.

Summer 2013, UURC awarded six faculty grants totaling \$9750 to pay stipends to their undergraduate researchers. An additional 3 proposals totaling \$1700 did not receive funding. For Summer 2014, five proposals from five departments were funded for a total of \$7290. Two of these proposals were only partially funded. These two proposals requested an additional \$5500. Three proposals requesting a total of \$4500 were not funded. Note that the funding for the Summer 2014 stipends will be paid of the of the FY15 budget.

For a list of faculty receiving Student Summer Stipend Grants visit the blog at <http://blogs.acu.edu/undergradresearch/grants/summer-stipend-grants/>.

Table 2: Summary of Summer Student Stipend Grants

	2013	2014*
Number of proposals	9	8
Proposals funded	6	5
Total amount requested	\$11450	\$20,290
Total amount funded	\$9750	\$7290

*2014 grants will be paid out of the FY15 budget.

Other Funding: As this was the first year for deadlines for travel grant applications, UURC was a bit more flexible with funding. OUR funded two other people outside of the regular funding schedule. Because money had been set aside for the director's course load reduction that was paid by Pursuit instead, there was a bit of money left over. Tom Lee had applied for a summer stipend grant, but it was not clear what the money would be used for with the student as they were traveling to Ecuador to do research. Funds of \$500 were given to help pay for the student trip. Rob Byrd had a student whose paper was accepted to an international conference after the application cycle. They received \$400.

Encouragement and Training

OUR supports undergraduate research at ACU in more ways than direct funding of research. Research is supported through the training of the director, faculty, and students to help them be better equipped for research. OUR also works to provide opportunities for students to present their research, whether off campus or on. OUR also provides encouragement by annually recognizing Outstanding Undergraduate Researchers and Mentors.

New Activity

Training Sessions for Faculty: Fall 2013, in conjunction with the Adams Center, OUR provided a training session for mentoring undergraduate research students. While this session was not well attended, strategies for making a better session next year have

been put in place. While not new activity Fall 2013 and Spring 2014, Pursuit, OUR and the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) hosted 2 sessions on how to apply for internal grants.

Training Sessions for Faculty and Students: Fall 2013, the Adams Center, ORSP, and OUR, coordinated a session on Research Ethics and the Internal Review Board. This session was open to faculty, undergraduate and graduate students. It was well attended and will be repeated next year.

Training Sessions for Students: Spring 2013 and Spring 2014, OUR hosted several training sessions on how to make posters for the Undergraduate Research Festival. Spring 2014, OUR also hosted a session for students on finding external research opportunities.

Summer Research Lunch: Summer 2013, OUR hosted a lunch for students and mentors who were on campus doing research. About fifty people attended.

Mentor of the Year: Spring 2013, the Mentor of the Year award was established by OUR and SPUR. Students were asked to nominate their mentors. Mentors of the Year (one each in STEM, Social Sciences, and Arts & Humanities) were recognized at the 2013 and 2014 Undergraduate Research Festivals.

Research for Credit: One of CUR's Characteristics of Excellence in Undergraduate Research is that Undergraduate Research is offered for credit. After learning more about this at the CUR Windows of Opportunities Conference, the director began developing a strategy for Research for Credit at ACU. While the beginning stages were planned and the director attended meetings with several people, due to the director going to Study Abroad in the fall, this plan did not progress further than the planning stage.

Continuing Activity

The ACU Undergraduate Research Festival: The Research Festival was held in early April of 2013 and 2014. In 2013, the number of participants was consistent with the previous year. However, in 2014 the number of presentations increased by more than 30% and the number of student presenters by more than 50% (Fig. 1). While students from McMurry began coming to the research festival in 2012, 2014 saw the first students from Lubbock Christian University attend. In 2013 and 2014, the Honors College sponsored the Research Festival by giving \$2000 for prizes. The Graduate School sponsored the Research Festival by giving lanyards for name tags and in 2013 paying for the programs.

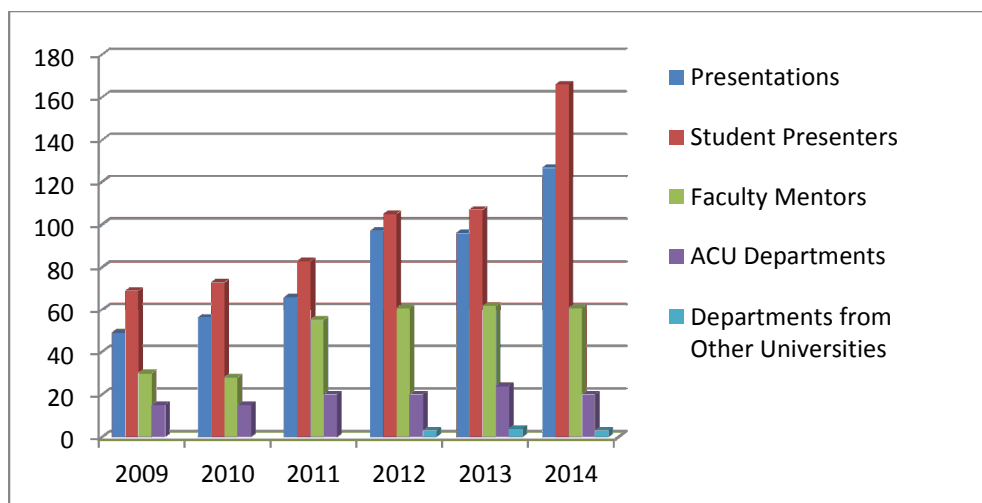


Fig 1: Participation in the ACU Undergraduate Research Festival over the years.

Fall Research Dinner and Undergraduate Researcher of the Year Awards: In the fall of each year the Undergraduate Fall Research Dinner is held. Faculty and students that have participated in undergraduate research in the previous year are invited. The two awards are given for Undergraduate Research of the Year. One is given in STEM and the other in Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. This year, the award was presented to two people in Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences and one in STEM. In 2013-2014, the award included the opportunity to present at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research.

Director Training: In 2013, the Director of Undergraduate Research attended two Council on Undergraduate Research conferences. The first was the annual CUR Dialogs at which those who work in undergraduate research can meet with representatives from various funding groups. The second conference was the Windows of Opportunities Conference for Directors of Undergraduate Research. This conference was for people who ran office of undergraduate research and provided a lot of support and ideas.

Student Presentations at External Conferences: April 2013, the director and two students represented ACU at Undergraduate Research day at the Capitol in Austin. The director and two students attended the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) in April 2014. McNair Scholars also took 6 students to NCUR.

Meetings with Departments: The Director of Undergraduate Research met with the faculty of Biblical Studies Spring 2013 and with both Theatre and Music Fall 2013.

Promotion and Reputation

The third major area in which OUR works to support Undergraduate Research at ACU is Promotion and Reputation. OUR works to promote and build the reputation ACU's undergraduate research program both internally and externally. When Dr. Sutherlin took

over as DUR, one of her goals was to increase visibility of and communication from OUR.

New Activity:

Blogs: While the Undergraduate Research Festival technically had a blog, it had not yet been made public. The blog now contains helpful information such as “Tips and Tricks” and the assessment rubrics. The blog also contains all of the programs and winners from previous Research Festivals. The link to the blog is blogs.acu.edu/researchfest.

The Office of Undergraduate Research now also has a blog. This blog contains information on what the office is, how it supports undergraduate research, events in undergraduate research and features about ACU researchers. While the blog is continuing to develop, it is currently the best online source of information about OUR. The link to this blog is blogs.acu.edu/undergradresearch.

Newsletter: Starting July 2013, OUR began sending out a monthly to bimonthly newsletter using MailChimp. The newsletter contains information about upcoming events, celebrates achievements of ACU undergraduate researchers, gives general information about research at ACU, and features short stories about ACU researchers.

Magnets: OUR developed magnets with pertinent research dates (deadlines, workshops, and events) and gave them to all ACU faculty. Pursuit and ORSP aided in funding this project. (Fig. 2)

Research

ORSP
acu.edu/orsp

pursuit
blogs.acu.edu/qep

Undergrad Research
blogs.acu.edu/undergradresearch

Workshops and Events

Mentoring Undergrad Researchers
October 9

Tips for Internal Grant Applications
October 24

Research Ethics and IRB
November 13

Tips for Internal Grant Applications
January 16

Undergraduate Research Festival
April 1

Grant Deadlines

**Fall Pursuit and
OUR Travel Grants**
October 16

Research Grants
January 27

**Spring Pursuit and
OUR Travel Grants**
February 10

Fig 2: ACU Research Magnet

Logo: ACU Creative Services was not able to work with OUR on a Logo, however something was needed for the newsletter, Facebook page, blog, etc. So the image of metamorphosis was purchased to make a Logo for the Office of Undergraduate Research to be used (Fig 3). SPUR member Rebekah Horton, along with the help of SPUR, designed a crest to be used on t-shirts, programs, etc. to represent Undergraduate Research (Fig 4)



Fig 3: Office of Undergraduate Research Logo

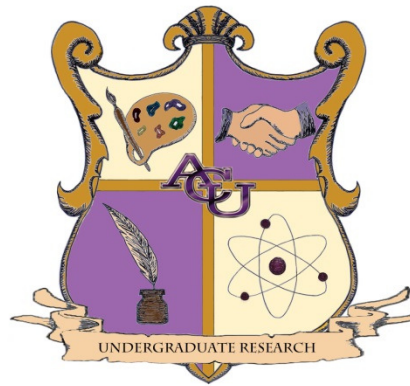


Fig 4: ACU Undergraduate Research Crest

Social Media: Previously the Research Festival had a Facebook page. OUR now has a Twitter account (@ACUresearch) that is used to post research opportunities, reminders about upcoming events and deadlines, and other research related topics. OUR also has a Facebook account and a Facebook group. Twitter has sporadically been used well.

Video: Spring 2013, the Learning Studio offered to do a video about undergraduate research. Students and the director were interviewed and footage of the research festival was filmed. However, this was all lost when the Learning Studio back-up system crashed.

Other Office Items of Note Not in the Major Three Categories

Half-time load: As previously mentioned, January 2013, the Director position was moved from quarter time to half time. Pursuit now pays for the replacement adjuncts for the director course load reduction.

Easels: For the poster session at the Research Festival, posters are displayed on easels which cost \$5 an easel to rent from the Hunter Welcome Center. Because there was money that was earmarked for the director course reduction (which was paid by Pursuit) that was not spent for that purpose, OUR had a budget surplise. OUR purchased 50 easels for \$11.88/ easel. This money will be recouped in just over two years. It is also possible the OUR could rent the easels out to others.

Student worker: OUR employs a student worker. Caroline Gafford continued to work for OUR through April. Evan Bridges has been hired to be the new student worker.

2013-2014 Calendar of Events

Summer Research Lunch

July 12 – 12:00 PM

Core Classroom

For Student Researchers and Faculty Mentors

Tips for Mentoring Undergraduate Researchers

October 9 – 11:30 AM

Adams Center Classroom

For Faculty Mentors

Tips and Tricks for a Successful Internal Grant Application

October 24 – 11:30 AM

Adams Center Classroom

For Faculty Mentors

Fall Undergraduate Research Dinner

November 5 - 5:30 PM

Hunter Welcome Center

For Student Researchers and Faculty Mentors

Research Ethics and IRB Approval

November 13 - 11:30 AM

Adams Center – The Woods

For Student Researchers and Faculty Mentors

Tips and Tricks for a Successful Internal Grant Application

January 16 – 11:30 AM

Adams Center Classroom

For Faculty Mentors

How to Find Research Opportunities Outside of ACU

January 23 – 6 PM

Living Room

For Student Researchers

How to Make an Effective Poster

February 27 – 7:30 PM

March 3 – Noon

March 18 – 4:00 PM

Library 301 – Computer Lab

For Student Researchers

2014 ACU Undergraduate Research Festival

April 1 – All Day

Hunter Welcome Center

For Student Researchers

New Areas of Focus for 2014-2015

In 2014-2015, OUR wants to continue on with many of the programs and plans that are already in place. However, there are areas in which OUR would like to grow in 2014-2015.

Arts: The Arts at ACU already do an excellent job of featuring their students' scholarship. However, OUR would like to aid these departments if an effective way to support their work can be found. Fall 2014, a faculty member from the departments of Theatre and Music and possibly Language & Literature and Art & Design, and the

director will attend the CUR Institute on Scholarship and Creative Expression in the Arts and Humanities. At the Institute a plan for OUR support of the Arts will be formed.

Research for Credit: In 2014-2015, further work will be done on a Research for Credit course in departments. There will be a few faculty members who do pilots in a variety of departments. Biology, Engineering & Physics, and Chemistry & Biochemistry already have this type of course.

Marketing Plan: Marketing student, Brittany Coons came to OUR and offered to work on a marketing plan for undergraduate research. She will work on a video and a social media strategy.

Faculty Research Spotlights: OUR plans on co-sponsoring with the Adams Center a series of Adam Center Sessions during which 4-5 faculty will give 10-15 min overviews of their research. Those with undergraduate researcher students will invite them to the session.

Additional Student Recruiting Sessions: SPUR has recommended that OUR host some informational meetings about undergraduate research for students.

Tentative Calendar for 2014-2015

Summer Research Lunch

Date and Time TBD

For Faculty Mentors and Student Researchers

Preparing Students for the Research Festival

November 19 – 11:30 AM

For Faculty Mentors

Fall Undergraduate Research Dinner

October 30 – 6:00 PM

Hunter Welcome Center

For Student Researchers and Faculty Mentors

Faculty Research Spotlights

Multiple Dates

For Faculty Mentors

Faculty Research Spotlights

Multiple Dates

For Faculty Mentors

How to Find Research Opportunities Outside of ACU

TBD

For Student Researchers

Tips and Tricks for a Successful Internal Grant Application

TBD

For Faculty Mentors

How to Make an Effective Poster

Multiple Dates

For Student Researchers

Research Ethics and IRB Approval

November 5 – 11:30 AM

For Student Researchers and Faculty Mentors

2015 ACU Undergraduate Research Festival

March 31 – All Day

Hunter Welcome Center

For Student Researchers