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Psychology Divisional Newsletter**A Publication of a Division of the Council on Undergraduate Research****Fall 2021**

The Psychology Division of the Council on Undergraduate Research provides networking opportunities, activities, and resources to assist psychology administrators, faculty members, students, practitioners, and others in advancing undergraduate research.

Chair: Karen L. Gunther (Wabash College)

Newsletter Team: Amy M. Buddie (Kennesaw State University); Tsu-Ming Chiang (Georgia College & State University)

**Welcome from the Chair**

Argh – COVID tempted us this summer into thinking we were getting back to normal, then Delta hit. I hope you all are able to have more normal semesters this fall than last year, at least inching in the right direction!

The CUR Psych Division has been very active! I hope you all saw the descriptions of last year's student research awardees in the Spring newsletter (<https://www.cur.org/who/governance/divisions/psychology/news/>). We will be offering four research/travel awards again this year – see further down in the newsletter for more!

This past summer we offered two virtual conversations on conducting remote research with our students. More are being planned for the upcoming school year, so keep an eye out for those.

Upcoming activities include our bi-annual Mid-Career Mentoring Award. We are also planning CUR book discussions for the spring on broadening participation in URSCA, mentoring students, and more. Read on for details about both of these offerings.

We also have two great teaching tips from CUR Psych Councilors. If you have tips you would like to share, send them to the newsletter committee – we'd love to include them in our spring newsletter!

We hope you have a great school year, getting more back to normal, and we look forward to meeting more of our Psych Division members at this year's events.

*Karen L. Gunther
Associate Professor of Psychology
Wabash College*

Division Events and Deadlines

CUR Psychology Division

Mid-Career Mentoring Award Nominations

Deadline: October 15, 2021

The Psychology Division of the Council on Undergraduate Research invites nominations for a Mid-Career Mentoring Award. This award is for a CUR Psychology Division member who has influenced undergraduate research through their own research, through scholarly or creative projects with undergraduates, and/or through demonstrated leadership activities. The award consists of \$500.00. In addition, the profile and accomplishments of the award winner will be featured on the Psychology Division's website. More information on the award can be found [here](#).

Questions may be addressed to any member of the Mid-Career Mentoring Awards Committee:

Sarah K. Johnson | johnsons@moravian.edu

Nestor Matthews | matthewsn@denison.edu

Joanne D. Altman | jaltman0@highpoint.edu

CUR Psychology Book Clubs in 2022!

We invite you to learn from and teach your colleagues from around the country in the first (to our knowledge) CUR Psychology Division book club! The Council on Undergraduate Research's Psychology division is sponsoring a book club for division members this spring. Whether you are interested in learning something new, sharpening your skills, or sharing something you already know, you are welcome. The goal of the book club is to take what CUR knows about undergraduate research—which is a lot! – and adapt and translate it to our local contexts. We hope to do what book clubs do best: create a space to share opinions infused with our individual experiences so that everybody can learn something new.

We will be hosting two to four book clubs this spring, using these books:

- **Engaging students from diverse backgrounds in undergraduate research and scholarship.** *Book: Broadening Participation in Undergraduate Research: Fostering Excellence and Enhancing the Impact.*
- **Mentoring students in undergraduate research and scholarship.** *Book: How to Mentor Undergraduate Researchers*
- **Infusing Undergraduate Research into the Curriculum.** *Book: Developing & Sustaining a Research-Supportive Curriculum: A Compendium of Successful Practices*
- **The Impact of Undergraduate Research on Student Learning.** *Book: Science in Solution: The Impact of Undergraduate Research on Student Learning*

Book clubs will be limited to ten participants, each of whom will receive a free copy of the book. The virtual (zoom) book clubs will be hosted, one-hour sessions in February and March 2022.

Specifically, we are targeting:

- **Thursday, February 24**, at 6:00 PM ET
- **Thursday, March 3**, at 6:00 PM ET

If you are interested, please complete our [interest survey](#) by **November 1st!**

CUR Conversations in the Psychology Division

Over the summer, the Psychology Division hosted two CUR Conversations focused on the challenges and opportunities that pandemic-related virtual campus life posed for our teaching, learning, and research. One compelling topic that emerged in the Conversations was how to leverage open-source databases for remote

research. Participants expressed interest in learning about the potential benefits and obstacles associated with open-source data.

The Division would like to host another CUR Conversation focused on this topic, and we are seeking help from YOU, our Psychology CUR members, to help us identify:

- good open-source databases that might be of interest to faculty and students in Psychology
- volunteers who have experience with finding and using such sources and who are willing to guide a conversation about these topics sometime in early winter 2022.

Interested parties or suggestions for databases to include should be made to CUR Psychology Councilor Kathy Morgan, Wheaton College (MA): kmorgan@wheatoncollege.edu

Attn: Students!

We have two opportunities to celebrate your research:

Student Research/Travel Awards

The CUR Psych Division will again be offering four awards for student research or for travel to conferences for students to present their research. Each award will be limited to no more than \$400. See the [CUR website](#) for more details on how to apply.

The application deadline this year is November 1. We will let you know by December 1 if you are one of the award recipients. We look forward to learning about your research!

Students: Showcase Your Research!

Despite the challenges due to the pandemic, many undergraduate students continue to engage in high-quality psychological research. We're interested in learning about your research project and sharing it with the CUR community. Here's your chance to be a research star by creating a short video showcasing your research.

What do you need? A smartphone, that is all! Of course, you can use a more elaborate setup, but what is important is having you share your research with others. In this video, which should be no more than 2 minutes long, we would like you to:

- Introduce yourself (along with any collaborators and research mentors) by providing this information:
 - Your name, your institution, your class standing (e.g., sophomore, junior), and your major.
- The title (or working title) of your study
- Your answers to these three questions. Please leave a 10-second pause between each question to allow us to insert the question prompts during the editing process.
 1. What was your research question, and what inspired it?
 2. How did you conduct your study to answer your research question? As you describe your study, please remember that your goal is to "give away" psychological science, so your target audience is other undergraduates who may not be as knowledgeable about research in your area as you are.
 3. What did you find, and what significance might these findings have for advancing psychological science? Again, please remember that your target audience is other undergraduates, so your discussion should not be overly technical in nature.

Please be sure to include a written transcript of your video to make your video accessible (or include closed captioning). How you structure your video should adhere to all applicable institutional policies regarding

showing animal or human subjects, so please discuss with your advisor what these policies at your university are for what you can/can't include before submitting your video.

When you are finished, please submit an electronic application with a cloud storage link (e.g., Google Drive) to your MP4 video file and the written transcript to aeps@whitworth.edu. We can't wait to see the great work you're doing!

These videos may later be placed on the CUR website for promotional purposes.



Teaching Tip #1 - Grading Philosophies

Adding a brief "Grading Philosophy" section to each syllabus can set the tone and avoid problems in advance. Here's an example.

Grading Philosophy: Your grade on each assignment starts at zero and increases in proportion to the quality of your work. Please do NOT ask "why did you take points off for this or that?", since that question implies that the points were yours to begin with and had been taken from you. Unlike a degree mill,

(FILL IN THE NAME OF YOUR INSTITUTION) requires students to earn their degrees. Accordingly, the task is on you to demonstrate why you earned the points in question. This approach has you assume a proactive role in your education—an excellent habit to acquire in your lifelong journey of learning

Nestor Matthews
Professor of Psychology
Denison University

Teaching Tip #2 - Learning Interrupted: Shaking Ourselves Free from Complacency

When asked to share a teaching tip, I immediately consider online learning these days. Although I taught in-person most of my career, I have been teaching online for over a decade. Plus, given our continued pandemic realities, most people reading this newsletter likely need support with online techniques. The connection of online education to undergraduate research is still new territory. While thinking about and considering online teaching and undergraduate research, I want to encourage us to similarly consider on-ground (in-person) teaching anew.



Questions about the efficacy of online teaching and learning can be seen as gifts; they will help us make it better. I encourage us to apply the same questions to on-ground or in-person experiences. Some critics question whether the online student is really the one doing the work—remember that not everyone writes their own papers in our in-person classes. When you question if there is inappropriate collaboration—remember the file-drawers of old quizzes, tests, and assignments that are the stories of sororities and fraternities. Remember to respect that if a student wants to compromise their own learning by taking short cuts or even cheating, that is their choice regardless of the learning environment. Our duty is not to police students but to convincingly invite them to the material, provide means for them to learn, and then give them accurate feedback about work product they provide (whether or not it is traceably their work).

Familiarity with teaching and mentoring, I argue, has bred some degree of complacency in all of us. We believe in what we are doing, in part, because we have been doing it well and with evidence of positive outcomes. We would benefit from remembering all the on-ground issues that still exist on our campuses.

Familiarity has given us a rose-colored lens through which to view our on-ground practices, while online learning is viewed with an astute critical eye. While I will not attempt to explain our complacency – that is a job for another psychologist, I wish to ask you to continue to be critical. Online education has disrupted teaching on many of our campuses, even without a pandemic. And while it disrupted us, it seems to have allowed us an unobstructed view of the obstructions to the meaningful learning that we desire for students. Use that energy to invigorate all that you do across all teaching platforms.

For those of you who like clear tips, I offer these. (1) Challenge yourself... In an online format, when things are not working, ask if the issue is with the technology or with your approach? Be willing to modify your style and methods. (2) Believe there is always a way... When you find yourself asking, "I wonder if I can _____ online?" assume that the answer is YES! Decide what it is you want to do, and then ask colleagues (or Google) what available resources will allow you to do it. (3) Try to see the positive. No longer do students have to sit passively in a class to watch a video. Now you can share a video and intersperse knowledge-checks live in the moment. That just might be better than what we have done on-the-ground before. And, finally, (4) consider whether you are resisting change and how you can drive what the change looks like on your campus. Even if things were better in the old-days, that isn't where we are today, and it is definitely not where we are going. [And don't tell the other disciplines, but psychology is a trend-setting discipline that has led innovations in pedagogy before. We can set the example for how to create robust undergraduate research opportunities using online tools.]

Jennifer Coleman
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Check out our Psychology Division Page on CUR's Website



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