

Looking back, it's been just over three decades since I attended my first CUR meeting in 1992 – unbelievable! I've seen and have engaged in CUR's growth, expansion into new areas, maturation as a professional organization, reorganization, merger with NCUR, more reorganization, and continued strides to be the recognized voice and resource on the practice of undergraduate research and creative scholarship. This long history with CUR adds a valuable perspective as a candidate for treasurer or president-elect. I know that things will grow and not stay “the way we always used to do it”. Yet, I also understand the experience of those who have been long-time members of CUR who value “the way things used to be” and are trying to navigate the changes in the governance structure, maintain the important aspects of their CUR membership, and engage with CUR for their professional and personal benefit. Keeping CUR relevant for valued senior professionals, as well as embracing new generations of colleagues and leaders should be a continuing priority for our organization.

Current and previous leadership in CUR has prepared me for the eventual role of president. I served as the URP Division chair and Board member (2009-2011) and returned to the Board in 2021. Before and between my time on the CUR Board, I have been an active councilor and leader. Guiding councilors through the creation and development of *Characteristics of Excellence in Undergraduate Research* (COEUR), along with achieving consensus with the final product is a highlight of my contributions to CUR. Co-editing *Undergraduate Research Offices and Programs* and serving as a guest editor for the *CUR Quarterly* also demonstrate my ability to work with others towards a common goal. As a member of the Board and the Nominations Vetting Committee, I am familiar with the leadership structure, organizational needs and challenges, and operations of CUR. It was interesting and delightful to serve on the Board again to experience the organization's development, progress towards strategic priorities, and intentional positioning for the future. Having ended my term of service on the Board, I am now serving on the Editorial Advisory Board for SPUR.

Working at a large research institution has provided experience with a breadth of disciplines and pre-professional programs, competing priorities in the higher education landscape, and a variety of federal and non-profit agencies and organizations. This broad experience will help inform my work, if chosen to serve on the Executive Committee. My efforts to advance undergraduate research and creative activity at Missouri have been informed by my involvement in CUR. MU's program began like many others with resources directed towards upperclass STEM students. Now our menu of opportunities at MU has evolved include successful first and second year programs; interdisciplinary research teams in arts, humanities and social sciences; an annual, a juried Visual Art & Design Showcase; a robust summer umbrella program and logistical support for 8-10 funded programs serving ~120 students; and a comprehensive menu of 30 student workshops/semester. MU's student ambassador program has served as a model for other institutions. Current initiatives include a department liaison program, Research Intensive course designation, and a focus on first-generation and low income students. The new University Strategic Plan includes an aspirational goal that 100% of our graduating students will have engaged in three or more HIPs experiences. With colleagues from other HIP areas on campus, we held a successful HIP institute in June for ~80 faculty members. Appreciation for the advances and innovations of URSCA is an important quality for CUR Board Members.

Create, grow, and let go seems to be a theme of my professional life. Listening to others' challenges and ideas, identifying connections and possibilities, and creating collaborative programs and opportunities are engaging acts that give me great pleasure. In the realm of CUR, I can point my involvement in the creation of the URP Division, the URP Conference, the REUSS (REU Student Symposium) Conference at NSF, the Student Programs Task Force, and COEUR as examples outcomes of my leadership. Some of these initiatives have grown, some have changed as new priorities and opportunities emerged, and some (ie, Student Programs Task Force) were a good faith attempt to try something new and then be okay with letting it sunset. The REUSS conference has been reformatted with Posters on the Hill into the STR program. Back in 2011 there was skepticism that an annual conference was a wise idea. The every-other-year URP

conference was a great proof of concept that an annual conference was something that the membership desired and now we have our yearly ConnectUR. I also remember the skepticism and growing pains around the merger between CUR and NCUR. Patience and constantly highlighting the benefits of the merger was key to the eventual and successful result.

Letting go is also an important trait for leading an organization that values involved and engaged members. Relinquishing control of a ‘pet projects’ that I created is something I have learned to do and try to embrace as a senior professional. One needs to be comfortable in letting others move forward with projects, even though the project may morph from the original idea to adapt to current needs or new visions. Earlier this semester I formally stepped down from my role as Co-PI for our NIH-funded MARC program to align with the planned retirement of the faculty PI. This was a program I created in 1990 for ~10 underrepresented minority freshmen. I was at first hesitant about some of the programming changes that were suggested by a new program coordinator I hired; however, the changes worked and made the program even better. Now the program successfully serves ~80 URM students/year across all four years. The seed of an idea to create a “Broader Impacts” office at MU to help faculty with their NSF proposals is another example of creating, growing and letting go. A colleague and I advocated to the administration to create a Broader Impacts coordinator to organize resources and initiatives and offered that position to my former assistant director. She has taken the seed of the idea and grown it into the national Center for Advancing Research Impact in Society (ARIS) which has stimulated broader impacts work across the country. COEUR was revised this year and it was exciting to see how a new group of engaged leaders embraced and updated this important framework of aspirational excellence. Although a leader should articulate and advocate a vision, it is important that the vision, new innovations, and implementation activities be embraced by engaged members.

The role of a board member or advisory committee leader in relation to staff is an important relationship to navigate. It can be a challenge for a confident and enthusiastic board member to learn how to respect the staff members’ expertise and allow them to do their job without micromanaging or second-guessing. This is especially true as organizations grow from a part-time staff member to a full-fledged organization. Of course we have seen CUR grow and watched the staff members successfully taken on roles that were once the role of volunteers. I have also witnessed this during my time as a board member of my national NPC sorority, Delta Phi Epsilon. When I joined the board, the volunteer alumnae were key in its operations, initiatives, and sustainability. To be sure, there was an excellent staff member holding it all together; however, in order to grow and survive, the board needed to accept that professional staff were needed to sustain the organization and new methods and practices would come into play. As a mother helping to coordinate my daughters’ competitive independent lacrosse club, I saw instances of parents second-guessing the paid coaches, resulting in negative consequences. I also experienced parents trying to dictate to other parents, rather than taking the effort of encouraging their peers to contribute when, where, and how they felt comfortable providing support based on their own skills and desired level of engagement. Leaders need to recognize what motivates others to serve, engage and advance the organization.

My alma mater Dartmouth College is recognized for its alumni involvement and annual fundraising. As a public university employee, I don’t have much to give financially; however, I can contribute in other ways. As co-chair of our “class project,” my peers are now annually providing \$15,000 for unpaid service learning internships and to assist low-income pre-med students with MCAT expenses. This fund-raising is on top of the annual fund and planned giving efforts. Serving on our class board, I have observed the dynamics of volunteer leadership and engagement, as well as interactions with college staff. Helping others understand appropriate engagement, how to direct their ideas and frustration, and tap into their motivations have added skills to my toolkit for CUR leadership.

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Education

1983	Visiting student (Agriculture)	The Ohio State University, Columbus OH
1985	A.B. (Biology)	Dartmouth College, Hanover NH
1989	Ed.M. (Educational Leadership)	Boston University, Boston MA
1994	Visiting graduate student (Education)	Stanford University, Stanford CA
2000	Ph.D. (Ed. Leadership & Policy Analysis)	University of Missouri, Columbia MO

Support Areas: Black Studies; Educational Counseling & Psychology

Work Experience

2012-present	Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis
2002-present	Director, Office of Undergraduate Research, University of Missouri
1997-2002	Director, Life Sciences Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program, University of Missouri
2008-2009	Fellow, Center for Advancing Science & Engineering Capacity, AAAS, Washington, DC Coordinator, Understanding Interventions that Broaden Participation in Research Careers Conference (understandinginterventions.org)
1995	Research Assistant, Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research, Stanford University
1989-1997	Senior Academic Advisor, Division of Biological Sciences, University of Missouri
1987-1989	Academic Administrator, Department of Biology, Boston University

Council on Undergraduate Research Activities - Member since 1992

Governance & Leadership

Elected At-Large Division Councilor, 2002-2005
Founding Councilor for Undergraduate Research Program Directors Division, elected 2005-present
Nominations Chair for Undergraduate Research Program Directors Division (2005-2009)
CUR Nominations Committee Member (2005-2009), chair for officer elections timeline revisions (2007)
Elected Chair of Undergraduate Research Program Directors Division, 2009-2011; served on the CUR National Executive Board, 2009-2011. (Awarded "Division of the Year" in 2011)
Co-Chair, Student Program Task Force (2012-2018); Member (2019)
Elected for Nominations Vetting Committee (2017-2020); Chair (2019-2020)
Elected Executive Council/Board of Directors (2021-2024)
Scholarship and Practice of Undergraduate Research (SPUR), Editorial Advisory Board (2024-present)

Conferences & Meetings

National Conference Attendee: 14 national conferences since 1992
Annual Business Meeting Attendee: 2002-2009; 2011-2023
Undergraduate Research Program Directors Conference Attendee: 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019
Institutes: Initiating and Sustaining Undergraduate Research Programs (James Madison University, 2006);
Creative Inquiry & Undergraduate Research in the Arts & Humanities (Milwaukee, 2014)

Significant Projects & Contributions

Working Group/co-author for "Characteristics of Excellence in Undergraduate Research" project, 2011-2012
Selected as "Volunteer of the Year" (2012) with Susan Larson & Roger Rowlett
Co-coordinator for REUSS (*Research Experiences for Undergraduates Student Symposium*), Arlington, VA (2011-2013)
Facilitator and site host for *Initiating and Sustaining Undergraduate Research Programs Institute* (2015)
Issue Editor for the CUR Quarterly, Spring 2012 issue (The Challenge of the Count)
Program Review Consultant for Austin College (2013), The Ohio State University (2016), Weber State University (2018), and University of Tennessee (2019)
NCUR Student Programs Task Force Resource Room: Memphis (2017), Central OK (2018), Kennesaw State (2019)

Convener of multi-session dialogical group before and during CUR Biennial Conference (Washington DC, 2018)
Topic: Best Practices for Student Learning in Undergraduate Research Events. 12 active participants.
Outcomes: *Learning from Presenting: Self-Perceived Learning Gains from Presenting Scholarly Research* (survey instrument) with IRB Approval at Florida Gulf Coast University (PI C. Gunnels), informed consent forms, and pilot distribution; Presentation at CUR Virtual Biennial Conference, June 2020 (C. Gunnels, L. Barton, S. Johnson, and D. Galli)
Guided URSCA Establishment and Expansion Opportunities, Pre-conference workshop facilitator and post-conference consultant for Kutztown University (2020-2021)

Publications

- Blockus, L. (2018). "Working with a research team and mentors" (chapter 4), in Research as a Transferable Skill. Online course published by Epigeum/Oxford University Press.
- Blockus, L. and Renoe, S. (Summer 2016). "Undergraduate Research and NSF's Broader Impacts". CUR Quarterly, 36 (4): 46-47.
- Blockus, L. (March 2016). "Strengthening Research Experiences for Undergraduate STEM Students: The Co-Curricular Model of the Research Experience." A commissioned paper for the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine for the report Undergraduate Research Experiences for STEM Students: Successes, Challenges, and Opportunities, released June 2017.
http://sites.nationalacademies.org/cs/groups/dbasse/website/documents/webpage/dbasse_177286.pdf
- Kinhead, J. and Blockus, L. (Eds.). Undergraduate Research Offices and Programs: Models and Practices. Council on Undergraduate Research. (2012).
- Rowlett, R.S., Blockus, L. and Larson, S.J. "Characteristics of Excellence in Undergraduate Research". Council on Undergraduate Research. April 2012.
- Blockus, L. Issue Editor for Spring 2012 issue (vol. 32, no. 3) of the CUR Quarterly. Issue topic: The Challenge of the Count. Issue Editor Column, pp. 4-8.
- Beyers, S., Omoile Mickleson, J., and Blockus, L., (2011). "The Undergraduate Research Ambassadors Program at the University of Missouri." In Kinhead, J. (Ed). Advancing Undergraduate Research: Marketing, Communications, and Fundraising, pp. 41-42. Council on Undergraduate Research.
- Blockus, L. "Opening a gateway to research for freshmen and sophomore students: Providing opportunities and mentoring." pp. 341-344. In Boyd, M.K., & Wesemann, J.L. (Eds). (2009) Broadening Participation in Undergraduate Research: Fostering Excellence and Enhancing Impact. Council on Undergraduate Research.
- Chubin, D. E., DePass, A. L., & Blockus, L. (Eds.) (May, 2009). The research experience: Creating a vertical networking community. In A. L. DePass (Co-chair) & D. E. Chubin (Co-chair), *Embracing a Breadth of Purpose*. Conference conducted at the Understanding interventions that broaden participation in research careers, Bethesda, MD.
- Bender, C., Webster, M. and Blockus, L. "Creating Community in Your Undergraduate Research Program: It Doesn't Happen Spontaneously!" CUR Quarterly, Summer 2008. 28 (4): 8-12.
- Kardash, C. M., Wallace, M., & Blockus, L. "Undergraduate research experiences: Male and female interns' perceptions of gains, disappointments, and self-efficacy." pp 191-205. In Taraban, R., & Blanton, R. L. (Eds.) (June 2008). Creating effective undergraduate research programs in science: The transformation from student to scientist. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Kardash, C.M., Wallace, M., & Blockus, L. (2008). "Science undergraduates' perceptions of learning from undergraduate research experiences." In R.L. Miller, R.F. Rycek, E. Balcetis, S.T. Barney, B.C. Beins, S.R. Burns, R. Smith, & M.E. Ware (Eds.), Developing, promoting and sustaining the undergraduate research experience in psychology (pp. 258-263). Retrieved February 26, 2008 from the Society for the Teaching of Psychology Website: <http://teachpsych.org/resources/e-books/ur2008.php>.
- Blockus, L. (2003). The growth of undergraduate research opportunities at a research university. CUR Quarterly, 23 (3), 126-129.
- Blockus, L., Kardash, C., Blair, M. and Wallace, M. (1997). "Undergraduate research internship program evaluation: A comprehensive approach at a research university". CUR Quarterly, 18 (2), 60-63, 91.
- Placier, P., Moss, G. and Blockus, L. (1992). "College student personal growth in retrospect: A comparison of black and white alumni". Journal of College Student Development, 33 (5), 462-271.

Reviewer

Journal of Diversity in Higher Education (2008-present)

CUR Quarterly/SPUR (2009-present)

CBE Life Sciences Education (2009-present)

SACNAS Editorial Advisory Board Member (2014-2016)

Conference and Training Presentations (1994-Present)

- 20+ presentations at CUR Biennial and ConnectUR Conferences
- 5+ presentations at CUR Undergraduate Research Programs Conferences
- ~20 posters at CUR Biennial and Undergraduate Research Conferences
- Presentations at AAC&U; ABRCMS; Understanding Interventions; NIGMS Training, Workforce Development & Diversity; and Transforming Undergraduate Biology Education meetings
- Invited Keynotes: Florida Statewide Symposium (2014), Applied Learning in Higher Education (2014)
- Mentor Training: Center for Selective C-H Functionalization (NSF Center for Chemical Innovation) (2017); NSF EPSCoR Missouri Transect (2017)

Student Training Grants (co-PI)

2020-2023	NIH	Maximizing Access to Research Careers (MARC)
2012-2017	NIH	Initiative for Maximizing Student Diversity (IMSD)
1995-2013	NSF	REU in Cellular & Molecular Biology and Genetics
2008-2012	NIH	Initiative for Maximizing Student Diversity (IMSD)
2001-2007	NIH	MBRS Initiative for Minority Student Development
2001-2004	US Army	Summer Undergraduate Breast Cancer Research Program
1991-1999	NIH	Minority High School Student Research Apprentice Program

Other grant collaborations

2023-2025	NSF	REU in Psychology of Relationships	Coordinator
2017-2018	NSF	Missouri Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation	MU Representative
2014-2017	NSF	REU in Biocomplexity and High Performance Computing	Coordinator
2014-2017	NSF	REU in Physics: Materials & Modeling	Coordinator
2010-2014	HHMI	Life Sciences Collaboration, Computation & Communication	Leadership Team
2001-2003	NSF	Comprehensive Genetic, Physical, and Database Resources for Maize – REU supplement for 8 summer interns/year	Coordinator
1989-1998	HHMI	Undergraduate Biological Sciences Educational Initiative	Coordinator
1991-1995	NSF	REU in Cellular & Molecular Biology and Genetics	Coordinator

Teaching

Co-Instructor for Comm 4420W "Communicating your Research and Scholarship" (2019 - 2024)

Designated as a Writing Intensive Course with an Honors option

Freshman Interest Group (FIG) Seminar Instructor (1998-2004)

Freshman Seminar Instructor, Minority Scientists in Biology (1991, 1992)

Edd committees (Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis)

Nikki Carter (proposal defense, Fall 2023) *The impact of anti-diversity, equity, and inclusion legislation and clinician attitudes and beliefs of decision-making and care for marginalized patients*

Meghan Meyers (proposal defense, Fall 2023) *Transition from preclinical training among rural scholars*

Treka Young (proposal defense, Fall 2023) *Teacher's perceptions of implementing SEL in elementary schools*

K. Elise Bartley (dissertation defense, Spring 2023) *Faculty diversity and the starting salaries of business students*

Selected Campus Service & Activities – University of Missouri-Columbia

NSSE Campus Committee (2022-present)

Search Committee Member for Fellowships Director (2005, 2022), Vice Chancellor of Research (2008), Business Officer for Undergraduate Studies (2011, 2017), Director Service Learning (2023), Vice Provost for Libraries (2024)

Prestigious Fellowships Initiative working group (2021-present)
Artist-in-Residence Advisory Committee (2019-2022)
Initiative for creating Broader Impacts Infrastructure, co-leader (2011-13); Broader Impacts Network Advisory Board (2013-2015)
MU Honors College Review Committee, Member (2011)
MU Fellowships Office Review Committee, Member (2011)
Education Committee for Mizzou Advantage (Provost's Initiative), Member (2010-2013)
Leadership Committee for Howard Hughes Medical Institute undergraduate education grant (2010-2014)
President's Administrative Leadership Development Program (2008-2009)
Sophomore Initiative Task Force member and sub-committee chair (2007-2008)
Faculty Advisor for Club for Undergraduate Researchers in Life Sciences (CURLS) (2007-2014)

Honors & Awards

2023 Interdisciplinary Plant Group Community Award-service to the plant research community at MU
2012 Council on Undergraduate Research Volunteer of the Year (2011-2012)
2003 Missouri Biotechnology Association Excellence in Life Sciences Education (Program Award)
2003 Marj Leavene Outstanding Community Partner, MU Office of Residential Life
2000 Excellence in Education Award, University of Missouri, Division of Student Affairs
1992 Blue Chalk Advising Award, College of Arts & Science, University of Missouri

Personal Activities

Alumni Recruiter and Interviewer for Mid-Missouri region, Dartmouth College Admissions Office (1990-present)
Dartmouth Alumni Fund, volunteer agent for class to solicit donations from class members (2006-2010)
Dartmouth Class of '85 Executive Committee, Class Projects Co-Chair (2011-present)
Delta Phi Epsilon International Sorority
International Vice President (Collegiate Affairs, Programming) (1987-1996)
Publications Editor (1998-2004)
International Governing Board Nominations Committee (2006)
Scholarship Selection Committee (2017-2021)
Parents Advisory Council, Community Nursery Schools, Columbia MO (1996-1998), Chair 1998
Community Child Care Consortium, City of Columbia/Boone County, Board Member (1998-2000)
Parents Advisory Council, Child Development Lab, MU, Columbia MO (1999-2000)
P.T.S.A., Ridgeway Elementary School, Columbia MO (2001-2010)
Vice-President, 2003-2004, 2006-2007
Membership Vice-President, 2005-2006
Principal Candidate Screening Committee for Columbia Public Schools (2006)
Columbia Women's Lacrosse Club (2011-2018), served as publicity chair and chair [independent high school-aged team]