The Mentored Undergraduate Research Program and Faculty Development at Norwich University: A Symbiotic Transformation of Campus Culture – Meeting Room 9

Session Type: Interactive Session
Presenters: David S. Westerman, Norwich University
Karen E. Andresen, Norwich University
Travis Morris, Norwich University
Amy Woodbury Tease, Norwich University

This panel will explore the impact of establishing a well-supported undergraduate research program on the simultaneous evolution of faculty development. We will explore questions about how such programs can develop in parallel, what constitutes success, and how that success can be assessed. Activities will include breakout periods with participants exploring, among other things, a range of modes for overcoming obstacles to success. Over the past decade, the research culture at Norwich University has been transformed as faculty now identify themselves as active teacher-scholars with personal expectations of producing peer-reviewed products. This transformation has been intentional, and has been driven in part by creation of a faculty-mentored Undergraduate Research (UR) program in 2003. In addition to all the traditional good reasons for providing students with opportunities to be both producers and consumers of knowledge, the Norwich UR program was established to nurture a campus-wide climate of research consistent with the institution’s size and resources. In 2013, the program had 27 internally and 15 externally funded UR projects, up from the two internal and two external fellowships of the first year. Concurrent investment in faculty development has included establishing an office of academic research staffed full time by an academic vice president for research, an academic grant writer/manager, and an administrative assistant. The Trustees, the President, and the Chief Academic Officer have given UR and faculty development their full support by directing that specific endowment income be used to supplement support derived from external grants. A competitive quarter-time research release program for faculty has been in place for seven years, with nearly a quarter of eligible faculty supported each year. Critical support has been made available for faculty participation in the CUR Institutes, Dialogues, national meetings, and business meetings across academic disciplines.

Applications of Excellence: Initiatives from COEUR Year 2 – Meeting Room 16

Session Type: Panel Session
Presenters: Sandra K. Webster, Westminster College
Amy M. Buddie, Kennesaw State University
Kathy Sexton-Radek, Elmhurst College
Scott Bates, Utah State University

This panel will present examples of new initiatives on Undergraduate Research that were inspired by the Characteristics for Excellence in Undergraduate Research (COEUR, Rowlett, Blockus, & Larson, 2012) and how these initiatives have fared in the second year since COEUR was published. The initiatives address student-centered issues such as access to research opportunities and training, dissemination, recognition, and peer mentoring. Faculty-focused initiatives address faculty development, resource allocation, and attitudes of faculty toward the barriers and benefits of Undergraduate Research for faculty members. A third focus is the use of COEUR for institutional assessment of Undergraduate Research through audits, interviews, focus groups, and surveys of students and faculty members. After the panelists present the initiatives, a discussant will tie them together, making connections and leading the panel audience in an interactive discussion of other ways that COEUR can be used to implement institutional initiatives for improving Undergraduate Research. The panel members represent four different geographic regions and different approaches to applying the COEUR at an institutional level. The first panelist serves on the college Undergraduate Research Advisory Council and has led in assessment activities based on COEUR including an institutional audit, interviews of senior administrators, focus groups of faculty committees, and faculty and student surveys. One outcome has been an institutional workshop on the place of undergraduate research in the tenure and promotion system. The second panelist serves as the Associate Director of Undergraduate Research/Creative Activity and has implemented a number of initiatives based on the COEUR, including increasing student accessibility to undergraduate research (through an Undergraduate Research Club), increasing publicity about undergraduate research (through a newsletter), and creating a community of scholars (through a faculty/student learning community focused on publishing undergraduate research). The third panelist will discuss the utility of COEUR excellence points in reviewing the faculty student research activity.