



Murray State University

ursa@murraystate.edu

Undergraduate Research and Scholarly Activity (URSA) Office

Director (1/2 time) and Program Specialist (1/2 time)

Advisory Board: Faculty representing all six MSU colleges and the university library

Programs/Activities

- **Scholars Week** – All-campus celebration of undergraduate research
- **Posters-at-the-Capitol** – Statewide event at the Capitol to educate legislators about the importance of Undergraduate Research
- **URSA Grants** – \$500 Grant in aid to support research, scholarly and creative activity
- **Undergraduate Research Fellowship Awards** - \$3500 fellowships to support student-faculty *projects*
- **Chrysalis: The MSU Journal of Undergraduate Research**
- **Distinguished Mentor Award** – Cash Award presented to recognize mentoring excellence
- **Faculty Development Workshops** – Periodic workshops to develop mentoring expertise
- **Research “Brown Bag” Luncheon Series** – Lunch meetings to highlight faculty research

Rationale for a Central “Institutional” Undergraduate Research Office

- Brings members of upper administration into the discussion and support picture
 - URSA Director sits on the Provost’s Deans and Directors Council
- Reduces “duplication of effort” among departments and colleges
- Allows undergraduate research to be encouraged and developed in all disciplinary areas (even those departments that are “resistant” to the idea)
- Serves as an information center for ALL students, faculty, and administrators
- Reduces “administrative burden” to individual programs, departments, and colleges
- Provides support to ALL faculty; not just faculty in departments with UR programs
 - Allows ALL faculty to focus on students, not UR activity/event logistics
- Works to ensure ALL students understand the need to go beyond the classroom, to build competitive resumes, and to develop faculty mentors/advocates
- Raises visibility of activities already underway on campus
- Aids in the development of “interdisciplinary” research
- Increases likelihood of a major gift to endow UR program (major gifts “generally” require presidential involvement/initiative)
- Can “lead the discussion” on the need to incorporate UR into “classroom work” if all students are to develop the skills (critical thinking, analytical, communication) that are essential in a competitive global economic environment

John Mateja, Director

<http://campus.murraystate.edu/services/URSA>