Effective Mentoring IV - *Tools for Advancing Undergraduate Research*  
Georgia College & State University  
2014-2015

**Circle Members:** Jennifer Hammack (Government); Robin Lewis (OGSP); Rebecca McMullen (Special Education); Doreen Sams (Marketing) – Chair

**Project Description**

This year the circle focused on two outcomes only. The proposed work expands the intellectual possibilities of students, staff, faculty, and the broader community through the following desired outcomes, which were collaboratively developed by circle members.

**Outcome I – Contribute to the development** of the 2016/2017 Georgia Undergraduate Research Conference (GURC) to be held at Georgia College and State University.

Team Members:
- **October 2014:** Met to discuss plans on moving forward
- **November 2014:** Members attended the GURC on the 14th and 15th of 2014 meeting at Georgia Southern and met with the Steering Committee
- **December 2014:** Team member (Robin Lewis) has been in contact with the Continuing Education Offices at Columbus State and Georgia Southern gathering information on previous GURC events.
  - **NOTE:** The event will require multiple reviewers and a call has gone out to GC faculty to serve as reviewers
- **January 2015:** Key faculty were identified (Kalina Manoylov, Whitney Heppner, Rebecca McMullen, Jennifer Hammack, Robin Lewis, and Doreen Sams in December and charged with helping secure reviewers for the 2016 event.
  - **NOTE:** Plans are in place to contact other faculty over the summer 2015 asking them to serve.
- **February 2015:** Did not meet with other entities to determine constraints; but, these were covered in previous discussions and will be an ongoing discussion over the next 12 months. Discussed publication of the abstracts and posters and determined that the best plan is to use Georgia Southern’s Digital Measures system (agreed upon by Georgia Southern). The GC library has agreed to assist in the process. A meeting is planned for the Circle Group to meet in August 2015 with multiple stakeholders (e.g., continuing education, library, review team leaders, room reservations, etc.) in the planning process for GURC 2016.
- **March 2015:** Team met but not with GC decision makers. The team will meet in August 2015 with key GC decision makers.
- **April 2015:** An announcement was made at the URACE Symposium the plans to bring GURC to GC and guest were asked to help make it happen.

**Outcome II – Extend research on mentoring** previously published with one publication under revisions in refereed journal and two conference proceedings.

Team Members:
- **October 2014:** Met to discuss plans on moving forward
- **November 2014:** Members shared research and research ideas to be explored
- **December 2014:** Research questions were identified and decisions were made to participate in two venues at the USG Teaching and Learning Conference in Athens, Georgia; to participate in CUR in Celebration, Florida; and to present at CUR in Norman,
Oklahoma. A journal article in CUR Quarterly was published “Measuring Self-Efficacy and STEM-Fluency as Value-Added Outcomes of Undergraduate Research Mentoring: Scale Development” for which the team members were four of the six authors.

- **January 2015**: A timeline for developing a research instrument and purifying it was set and responsibilities of team members were identified.
- **February 2015**: Team discussed progress and agreed upon the content of a survey instrument; finalized the presentations for USG Teaching and Learning Conference in Athens, Georgia; and discussed the Norman Oklahoma presentation.
- **March 2015**: Team presented at the USG Teaching and Learning Conference in Athens, Georgia; finalized the survey instrument; and discussed other ongoing research plans.
- **April 2015**: The survey instrument was administered, data collected and partially analyzed; team participated at the URACE Symposium and presented some of the preliminary findings; the team began working in earnest on the Normal Oklahoma poster, discussed plans to meet in May to work on all of the ongoing research endeavors of the team.

**Assessment of Circle**: All members participated at every meeting and event; (b) this circle consists of a group of faculty who have worked successfully together for years and agree to continue working as a group, while seeking additional members; (c) feedback from disseminations were positive; and (d) presentations at the identified conferences/workshop were positive. Sustainability of this project was realized in several ways. First, this circle is diverse in ethnicity, gender, and academic placement; this brings richness to discussions; as does, the cross-disciplinary composition of members from business, education, government, and grants. Second, circle members plan to continue to function as ambassadors for undergraduate research in their respective departments and form the base of a core group of peer mentor-leaders to faculty interested in or already conducting undergraduate research.

**Project Management**: The circle was chaired by Doreen Sams. Sams was responsible for budget tracking, maintaining the circle’s blog, and the final report; Sams was responsible for calling meetings and for the coordination of teaching circle activities. The Chair together with circle members coordinated the dissemination of the circle’s outcomes.

**Budget**: We requested $100 for the Teaching Circle program to subsidize travel cost to offset the cost of the GURC Conference in Savannah, Georgia to meet with the GURC Steering Committee. Circle members received a budget of $150 (funds expended for fuel) and used other professional development funds to participate in the symposium where needed. Circle members successfully secured $500 per member to travel to and participate the Council of Undergraduate Research: Undergraduate Research in the Social Sciences Institute, Celebration, Florida in March from the URACE Faculty/Teaching Staff UR Professional Development through Conference/Symposium Learning Sessions Supplementary Travel Assistance Reimbursement grant.