



# Center for Student Research Report 2022

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## The Center for Student Research Report 2021-2022

The 2021-2022 academic year was an exciting time for change and transition for the Center for Student Research as campus continued to adapt to the changing pandemic situations, and the CSR launched long-awaited programs to support student-faculty collaborations. The CSR, along with the Office of Research, transitioned back to campus during the 21-22 academic year and with that came further expansion of our team and pivots to make our Center's offerings better align with student and faculty mentor needs. The CSR and OOR moved to Cragmor 108-110 in early 2022 to share space with the Graduate School. We welcomed a new graduate student to our team in early 2022 to assist in the development of the Graduate Peer Aspirational Mentor Program and assist on other outreach projects. With added support/funding from the College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences, the Presidential Diversity Grant funds, and the Cybersecurity Program, we were able to support the two largest Undergraduate Research Academy cohorts in the history of the program, in the summer of 2021 and 2022. The CSR also began tracking for-credit undergraduate research participation more accurately as the first students signed up for the new 9499 course designations in the fall of 2021. We also rolled out a pilot test of new application criteria, to remove GPA barriers for participation in the URA. Overall, the transition back to campus has helped streamline our efforts to support students and their mentors and accomplishing our mission is made easier and more fulfilling with a fully staffed team.

### Center members

The CSR has steadily increased its member numbers, and this year we are happy to report 326 student members and 100 faculty affiliates. Members are recruited in a variety of ways including through email, Microsoft Teams, in-person events, and via induction into the Undergraduate and Graduate Research Academies. Unfortunately, this means it is difficult to accurately and consistently track member demographics to understand any gaps and areas of improvement in our membership, though in the past three years we have been able to capture demographics for the subset of our members in the URA, and we are working on new intake processes to improve data collection and analyses.

### Center activities

#### **Workshops**

We hosted three workshops in the fall of 2021 including an in-person session on help finding a faculty mentor and a poster design workshop in collaboration with the Kraemer Family Library. We also hosted a virtual informational session on the Undergraduate Research Academy – two of the attendees at this



event were funded in the 2022 award cycle. In the spring of 2022, we hosted only one in person event on creating professional development plans for graduate students and advanced undergraduates. As echoed by other centers on campus, attendance at events – whether in-person or virtual – is often hit or miss. Despite different efforts to advertise events, especially sharing event information with CSR members and affiliates, and RSVPs indicating many will join an event, attendance is rarely more than 1-2 students. Indeed, most communication with our student members comes from individual emails with the director where she addresses questions and provides assistance individually. This seems to indicate students want more personalized, one-on-one services rather than attending a workshop. This is, of course, labor-intensive as each email regularly requires compiling of resources and directing students to specific faculty or on-campus support. Based on these numerous communications, we believe it may be in our interest to move away from regularly scheduled workshops to building support for more one-on-one meetings and on-demand content for common questions. The Aspirational Graduate Peer Mentor Program (described later in this report) provides just such a mechanism for offering this support for students. As social connection and community-building is still a core mission for the CSR, we plan to host an informal mixer near the beginning of the academic year where CSR student members can meet the Aspirational Graduate Peer mentors and each other.

### ***Travel awards***

In 2020, the CSR established the Undergraduate Research Travel Award to help students defray the cost of attending conferences for professional development and/or to present their work. This was modeled after the Graduate School's Professional Development Award and provides up to \$400 annually for student's travel-related expenses. In its first two years, no student took advantage of this opportunity, however in the spring of 2022, the CSR awarded two travel awards to undergraduate students to help cover the cost of attendance to present at national conferences. While funding is limited, we hope to be able continue to support undergraduate student travel in the coming years.



### ***Tabling at Student Club Fair***

Campus gradually increased in-person events through 2021 as vaccines and boosters became more widely available and the CSR was able to promote its services and support at these events. The Student Club Fair held in the fall and spring semesters was one particular event that was very successful in helping us recruit more than 30 students. Many of the students in attendance at these events are first-year students and having the opportunity to share the possibilities of

undergraduate research and creative works early on in their academic career will hopefully encourage them to get involved in mentored work during their time at UCCS. For future tabling events, we will also include our graduate peer mentors to help introduce the first-year students to a network of near-peers that can help foster their interest in research and creative works.



### ***Graduate Peer Mentor Program Developer***

A core aim of the CSR since it began has been to establish an aspirational near-peer mentoring program where graduate students and advanced undergraduates serve as inspirational role models and advisers to novice students first beginning their research or creative work journey. We intended to bring on a graduate student from the SAHE program to help the CSR establish a training program for these mentors and recruit fellow graduates to fill this role. With pandemic delays and inadequate funding, it was difficult to find a suitable student to help us develop this program. However, in 2021, the CSR was awarded one of the \$25,000 Presidential Diversity Initiative grants from the CU system. Funds from this were set aside to hire a graduate student for a paid position and in April 2022, Branden Schaff was hired as the Graduate Peer Mentor Program Developer for the CSR. Branden holds two bachelor's degrees in both Psychology and English and is currently a MA student in Clinical Psychology with a Geropsychology subplan in Dr. Rachel Weiskittle's lab. In this position, Branden is responsible for assessing needs of the undergraduate research community here at UCCS while simultaneously developing training plans/materials for potential graduate students who will serve as near-peer mentors for the undergraduate students. Branden is a current member of the National Council of Undergraduate

Research (NCUR) and in June 2022, attended the virtual ConnectUR conference hosted by NCUR to learn about the latest work being done at other universities to foster undergraduate research programs.

I feel I learned how to be a researcher, as much as I learned about the project I was researching. Just having the opportunity to do academic research genuinely helped my career as a researcher.

URA 2020 Student Member

One of Branden's main tasks is to assess the needs of undergraduate students regarding research and creative works. The Undergraduate Research Academy cohort for 2022 was selected near the time Branden started and he leaned on feedback gathered from this particular sample of 33 undergraduate students. This sample of course is limited in that these students already have a faculty mentor with whom they are working and, in some cases, have already been involved in research for over a semester. This means information gleaned from their specific feedback misses what more novice students might need. With this in mind, Branden will intentionally work to fill in training gaps for near-peer mentors to help them best support very novice

undergraduate students. Several email communications the director has had with first-year students looking to get involved in research and creative works has provided a good deal of insight into the skills and knowledge novice researchers will need support in from a near-peer – specifically concerning finding faculty mentors.

To ensure the near-peer mentors are adequately prepared to offer support to undergraduate mentees, Branden is creating a guidebook/resource manual for the mentors to use. Additionally, each mentor will take part in a two-hour training based on CIMER workshop materials from the Entering Mentoring series to prepare them for possible scenarios that may arise. Other skills the training and guidebook will cover includes active listening techniques, establishing ground rules, and mitigating implicit bias.

In the summer of 2022, we began creating a new webpage to host mini-bios of the graduate peer mentors we have recruited so far (<https://studentresearch.uccs.edu/graduate-peer-mentors>).

Beginning in Fall 2022, undergraduates interested in connecting with a peer mentor can do so via this webpage by completing a brief contact form. To date, we have 12 confirmed graduate peer mentors from a variety of disciplines, two of whom are former URA students.

## Mentor Match

Another major activity to facilitate student-faculty collaborations was the development of a Mentor Match webpage modeled after examples at the University of New Orleans and Purdue University. This platform will provide faculty and students the opportunity to intentionally connect over shared needs and interests with faculty posting open positions in their labs where students can search for and apply to projects of interest. The most common question the CSR receives involves how students can find what faculty are researching and how they can join projects. Additionally, some faculty – particularly those seeking NIH R-15 grants – have indicated they have trouble finding an adequate number of undergraduates to assist in their lab. It is our hope with this new platform students and faculty can more easily connect. We will begin sharing this opportunity with faculty in the summer of 2022 to build a base of open positions which students may begin searching and applying for in fall of 2022. We also hope to expand this opportunity for PhD students (with the permission of their faculty advisor) to recruit undergraduate research assistants to help on their projects. For all connections made using the Mentor Match, the CSR will follow-up regularly to provide support for mentors and students. This will include: providing templates for mentoring agreements to align expectations, personal invitations to meet with a graduate peer mentor or the director to explore career and degree paths, connecting them to the graduate school to learn about applying, invitations to submit their projects to the Undergraduate Research Academy, and contact information for campus resources for presentation and statistical help from the Excel centers or career help from the Career Center.

## ***Faculty Mentor Support***

The CSR remains committed to supporting faculty mentors in addition to our student members. While the Office of Research already hosts a number of well-attended events for faculty the CSR's activities over the past two year primarily involve helping student and faculty connect over shared research interests – which the Mentor Match Program described above should help streamline. These activities include not only helping connect faculty to students, but we also provide several samples of mentoring agreements to support clear communication between mentor and mentee, we help them navigate the student hiring process, and we recommend external grants they can use to fund their students. We will continue to offer this same support to our faculty affiliates and hope to expand the number of CSR faculty members in the coming year.



## Mountain Lion Research Day and

### CSURF

The CSR again helped support planning efforts for the student research and creative work showcase Mountain Lion Research Day in December of 2021. After going to a virtual format in December of 2020, MLRD was back in person with over 80 poster presentations from undergraduate and graduate students.



The event included Top Scholar Awards for best Undergraduate and Graduate research as well as the Outstanding Mentor Award. As a requirement of their award, 17 of the 27 Undergraduate Research Academy student members presented their work at MLRD.

The director also serves on the planning committee for the Colorado Springs Undergraduate Research Forum – another research showcase that is a collaboration between UCCS, Colorado College, The US Air Force Academy (USAFA), and Pikes Peak Community College (PPCC). In 2022, the event was held for the first time ever at the PPCC campus. There were 176 presenters sharing their research in poster format or in oral presentations or creative performances. Though the largest participating campus, UCCS had only



36 presenters at CSURF. A goal for CSURF 2023 is to increase UCCS student presentations by sharing the opportunity widely beginning in mid-to-late fall of 2022. This event will be on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, and the host campus will be Colorado College.

### ***Highlighting Student Researchers on Campus***

In an effort to draw attention to the incredible work our URA students do with their faculty mentors, we partnered with Anna Squires of the UCCS Communique to create a series titled the Student Research Showcase (<https://communique.uccs.edu/?tag=ura>). These stories involved the 2021 URA students engaging in a question-and-answer format story describing their work with faculty. We plan to host the same series for the 2022 cohort and expand the highlights to include video interviews and tours of the student-faculty research space. Two of the 2021 URA members were also featured separately in the Communique for their exceptional accomplishments.

Madison Fox (pictured here) worked with Dr. Kovacs on developing an enzyme to break bonds in Perfluorinated Compounds which are common contaminants in drinking water right there in Southern Colorado (and elsewhere). Madison graduated in May 2022 and has now gone on to a fellowship in Bethesda, Maryland to conduct virology research on HIV and COVID-19 under Dr. Anthony Fauci. After this fellowship experience, she plans to pursue a Ph.D./MD. Before leaving, however, she was instrumental in creating the [UCCS STEM Outreach Program](#), which will invite 24 high school students from marginalized/minoritized backgrounds to campus to explore labs in chemistry, biology, biochemistry, and human anatomy. She said of her time working with her faculty mentor:



"Working under Dr. Kovacs has been an incredible experience and learning from someone as smart as he is has taught me not only biochemistry lab techniques and bioengineering skills, but a new way of thinking, asking questions, and how I can go about answering these questions."

Madison Fox BA Biochemistry '21 and URA Member



In the same 2021 URA cohort Hadeel Khammash also stood out as an exceptional researcher, student, and an involved campus member. Hadeel worked with Dr. Amy Klocko examining yeast survival in inhospitable environments to understand how these simple organisms may adapt to their surroundings. In the spring of 2022 Hadeel was awarded the UCC Student Achievement Award recognizing her considerable contributions to the UCCS campus and its students. During her time at UCCS Hadeel took part in the Chancellor's Leadership Program, was a peer-mentor for GPS courses, and started the Middle and Northern African Club (MENA) where she served as Vice President. Her research experience as part of the URA was instrumental in helping catalyze her path to graduate school as she mentioned in her

interview with the Communique saying:

I was unsure if I wanted to apply to graduate school, so I decided to get some exposure in the field before making a decision. This experience has allowed me to determine that going to graduate school is exactly what I was meant to do after graduation.

Hadeel Khammash, BA Biomedical Sciences '21 and URA Member

## 9499 Courses

The 2021-2022 academic year was the first year with nearly every department offering a 9499 Undergraduate Research and Creative Work course (or an equivalent). Only the College of Education does not have such a course number. This course was created to offer students another option for earning credit for their work with faculty besides independent study credits and has the added benefit of specifically listing “research” on their official transcripts. The College of Education and the Computer Science department are the only campus units that did not choose to add a 9499-course option. However, we created an INDS 9499 course which, as an interdisciplinary course area, can be used by students in any department, including those in the College of Education and Computer Science. Over the academic year, we had 99 students that signed up for research credit with 28 specifically for 9499 courses. Other students registered for their department’s previously established research credit courses (e.g., CHEM 4904). Most students registered for research courses in Biology and Chemistry (n = 66). We hope to encourage more students to register for the 9499 courses in the coming academic year.

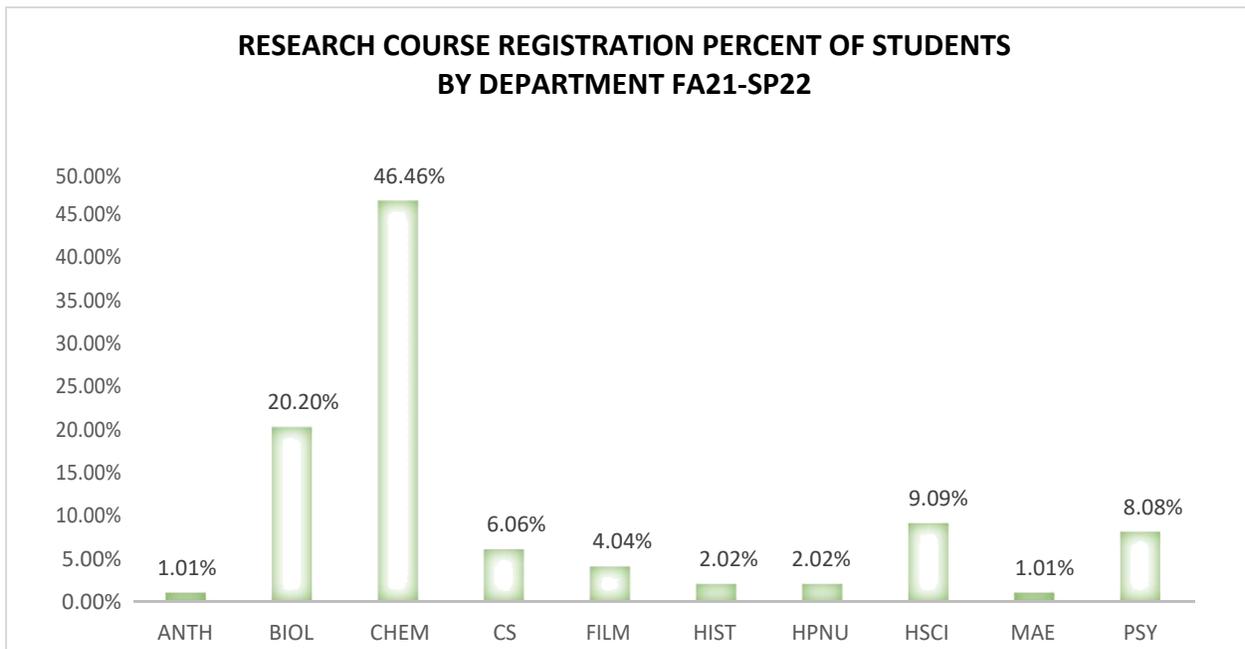


Figure 1: Percent student registration in 9499 courses or equivalent.

## 2021 Undergraduate Research Academy

The URA cohort of 2021 had 28 members across 13 departments. This was the first year the CSR partnered with the Cybersecurity Program which was able to fund 6 additional students working on projects relate to cybersecurity and we received funding from Academic Affairs. We did not use all the available funding from the Cybersecurity program, and those unspent funds were set aside for the following year. As discussed in last year's report, the inclusion of

I think one of the most valuable things I learned was how to collaborate with a mentor. I really enjoyed my mentorship throughout this program, and it really built my confidence about asking for help and clarification. It showed me what I can and should expect from a mentor and how to be a good mentee as well. I think this is really important because in science mentors will always be one of the best ways to grow so I plan to use these skills a lot in the future.

URA 2021 Student Member

marginalized/minoritized students in the URA is lacking with 71% of students identifying as white. As the 2021 cohort was the first cohort that we began carefully tracking student demographics, we hope that this can provide a baseline measure from which we can demonstrate improvements in addressing the diversity, equity, and inclusion of all our students. These data, in part, provided us an important starting point when we sought to apply for funding from the Presidential Diversity Initiative grants in 2021 which the CSR received. We dedicated the majority of these funds to provide URA awards specifically for students with marginalized/minoritized identities and/or who are working on project related to DEI issues. These awards were given in the 2022 award cycle.

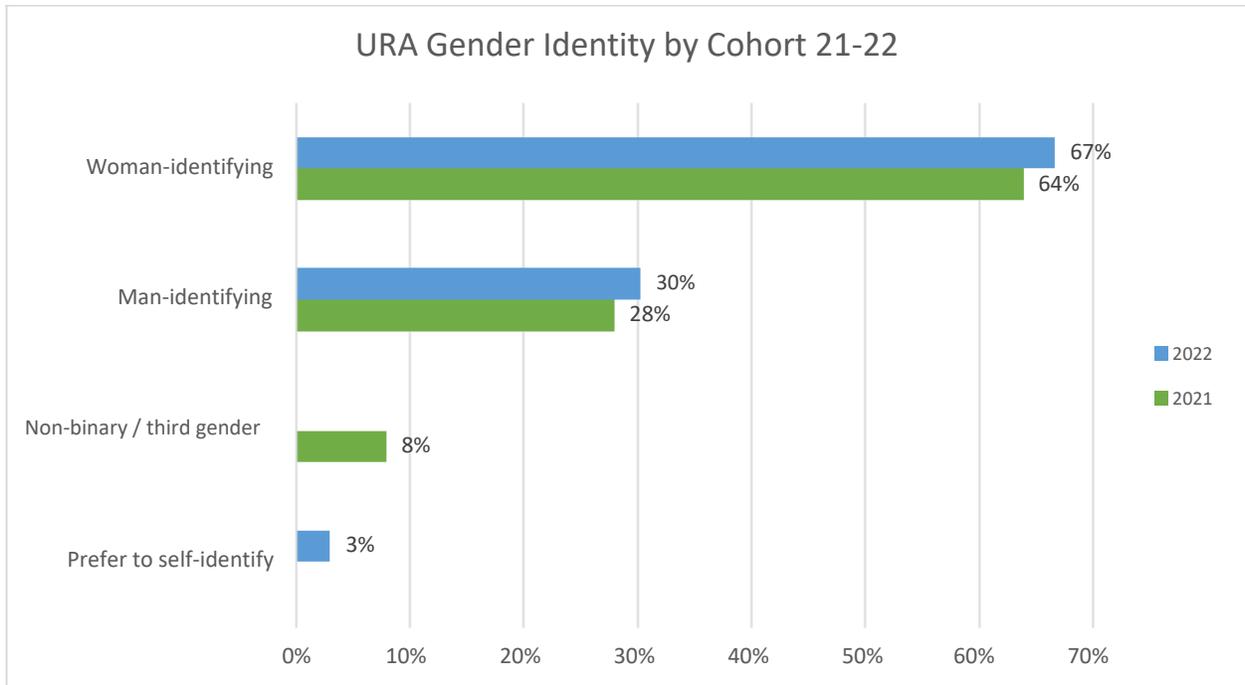


Figure 2: Gender identity percentage of URA cohorts in 2021 and 2022.

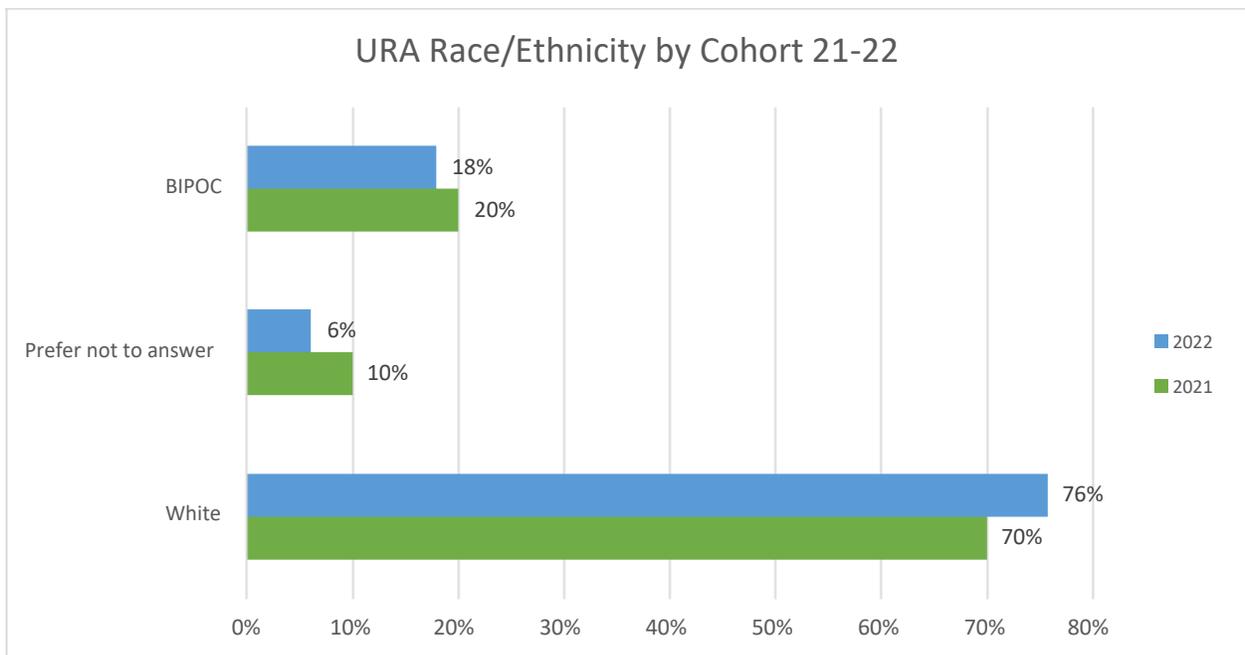


Figure 3: Race/ethnicity percentage of URA cohorts in 2021 and 2022.

### 2022 Undergraduate Research Academy

The 2022 URA cohort includes 26 students from LAS, 6 from Engineering and 1 each from the College of Education, the School of Public Affairs, and Beth-El. Of these students, 66.67% were woman-identified, 30.3% were man-identified and 3% identified as non-binary or preferred to self-identify. Similar to the previous year, 76% identified as white; while 18% were from marginalized/minoritized backgrounds and 6% preferred not to answer. Interestingly, while the 2021 cohort all identified as continuing generation students, 25% of this year's 2022 cohort stated they are first-generation college students. It is unclear what exactly may have led to this, as it is not explained by a change made to the GPA criteria – only one student with a GPA below our preexisting cutoff of 3.5 is a first-generation student. Because we had several funding sources this year, we were able to fund all but one applicant to the URA, thus one possible concern was that in the past first-generation student applications were rated low and thus not likely to be funded. Thankfully, that was not the case with this cohort as there was no significant difference in application scores between first-generation students ( $M = 26.45$ ,  $SD = 1.87$ ) and their continuing generation peers ( $M = 27.29$ ,  $SD = 2.23$ ;  $p = .177$ ).

### **GPA Requirement Change**

As stated above, the CSR Executive Committee agreed in 2021 that the next URA award cycle should drop the GPA requirement of 3.5. This was brought about in part because of evidence that GPA requirements could increase inequity in who applies for and is successful in research. A total of six students with GPAs below the previous 3.5 cutoff received funding for their projects with a cumulative GPA of 3.28 (the overall cohorts GPA is 3.7). The student's GPA was significantly correlated with the score given on their applications ( $r = .489$ ). Additionally, when comparing application scores between those with GPAs above the original 3.5 cutoff ( $M = 27.62$ ,  $SD = 1.68$ ) and those students with GPAs below 3.5 ( $M = 24.85$ ,  $SD = 2.49$ ) we find that there is a significant difference in the scores their applications received ( $p = .001$ ). The majority of the URA applications are generally written by the faculty mentor while the students are responsible for submitting a personal statement, their

Since starting research, I've really been able to understand what I like and don't like regarding a future career, and my mentor has helped guide me in the right direction since he is extremely knowledgeable and wants me to succeed.

URA 2021 Student Member

transcripts, and two letters of reference. These results suggest student applicants could benefit from support in writing their personal statements, though a more thorough look at how their individual

statements were rated should be conducted as well.

“The experience of working with my faculty mentor has been enlightening, inspiring, enjoyable and meaningful. I have learned so much about both our research topic and nursing research as a whole. Through URA workshops, I have learned about presenting research, verbal communication skills, research posters, career planning, networking, graduate school and much more. I have thoroughly enjoyed being part of the URA program and have discovered a new interest in nursing research and evidence-based practice.”

2021 URA Student Member

Latency Communications and Edge Computing in Vehicular Networks”, “Towards Developing an End-to-End Simulator for Low Latency Communications and Edge Computing in Vehicular Networks”, and “Development of a CubeSat Small Satellite Demonstrator”. Gretchen Bliss, the Director of the Cyber Security Program has helped to support cyber-related programming for these students including a visit to USAFA’s Cyber City training ground and a broader discussion of emotional intelligence in the workplace which will be available to all the URA cohort this August.

### ***DEI Presidential Grant Awardees***

As mentioned, we set aside the majority of the Presidential Diversity Initiative funding we received in 2021 to fund six URA students who are from marginalized/minoritized backgrounds and/or who are working on projects to address issues related to these groups. We had eight applicants apply specifically for this funding. Thanks to additional funding we received from the college of Letters, Arts, and Sciences, we were able to award all eight of these students with our combined funding. There project titles include: “Gentrification and Hispanic Community Displacements in Colorado Springs”, “Totally Tubular:

### ***Cyber Security Program Awards***

This was the second year we received funding from the Cybersecurity Program and, though we reached out to departments and faculty to explicitly advertise these additional funding opportunities, none of this year’s cohort specifically selected these funds. Instead, the reviewers made note of which applications had a strong cybersecurity component and those were selected to receive these funds. This resulted in three URA students being funded for their projects with working titles including “Towards Developing an End-to-End Simulator for Low

Determination of the Effect of Sonication on the Length and Purification of Single Walled Carbon Nanotubes”, “How Targeted Coursework Impacts In-service Teachers' Practices in Classrooms with Multilingual Learners”, “Transgender Embodied States of Recognition”, “Developing Praxis: A Comparative Study of Two Denver-Based Social Justice Groups”, and “Race on campus in the aftermath of Black Lives Matter”.

### ***LAS funding for 2023***

As mentioned above, LAS provided additional funding for several of the URA students this year that were from LAS. This was in part because they have been unable to run their student-faculty research award program for the last two years. In discussions with their finance administrators, the staff that helps recruit the student-faculty pairs, and the dean of LAS Lynn Vidler, we felt this was an effective use of funds that allowed LAS faculty and students to work together. The URA has the added benefit of including URA-specific programming and workshops for the student researcher to help bolster their research skills and independence – something that was not traditionally a mandatory part of the LAS student-faculty research awards. LAS has committed to provide \$17,500 in additional funding in the 2023 award cycle to support URA applicants from their college.

### [Graduate Research Academy](#)

The Graduate research Academy was originally intended to provide programming for the graduate fellows that are awarded each year similar to the programming the Undergraduate Research Academy members experience. Because graduate students tend to have much busier schedules and are more likely to live off campus, requiring attendance at any events did not seem to be the best approach. Instead, we have shared resources and content with GRA members virtually. This includes sharing the mentoring agreements we also give to our URA members, letting them know about grants and fellowship deadlines they can apply for, and offering to cover expenses for participating in programming from the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity. In 2021 and 2022, the CSR partnered with the Graduate School to pay for graduate students to participate in the WriteNow Access platform offered by the NCFDD in the summer. This is a 14-week program that is designed to build consistent writing habits and has built-in accountability for meeting writing goals. The summer program is not yet finished, and we are currently collecting feedback from the 7 participating GRA members to evaluate the usefulness of the program.



Awardees in this year's cohort includes 3 former URA members and two of these graduate students have agreed to serve as Aspirational Graduate Peer Mentors for the CSR beginning in the fall of 2022. This is an exciting opportunity for these students to inspire the next generation of undergraduate researchers to pursue graduate school and a career in research.

Moving forward, the CSR and Graduate School intend to partner more closely to establish programming and resources for the GRA (and graduate students more broadly). In fall 2022, the SR and Graduate School will co-host two events on how graduate students can find funding for their research and how to create a professional development plan to help them successfully reach their career goals. Both of these events will be based on materials from the Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research (CIMER) of which the CSR director is a trained facilitator. These events will be open to all graduate students, but individual invitations will be sent to the GRA members as well.

Another planned partnership with the Graduate School will be to offer input on the 2023 Survey of Graduate Students at UCCS. This will provide both our units with vital feedback on how best we can each support our graduate students and where gaps may currently exist in the resources they receive.

### Looking Ahead

The CSR is thrilled to be back on campus and sharing a new space with the Graduate School and the upcoming year has many exciting projects we look forward to dicing into. Two major tasks described earlier are to officially launch the Aspirational Peer Mentoring Program and the Mentor Match Platform. Importantly, we are in the process of establishing protocols for tracking outcomes for students and faculty that are involved in one or both of these programs so that we may course-correct as needed and share our success with the campus community. Beginning in July 2022, the director increased their hours per week dedicated to managing CSR activities to help support these two programs as they are rolled out.

### ***Workshops and Video Content***

Another important task will be to create on-demand content for students with less reliance on real-time workshops. Although we will still host a handful of in-person events through the fall of 2022 including a social mixer for CSR members to meet one another, we will also begin drafting materials for short video tutorials to answer the most common questions as well as a "how-to" for the Mentor Match and Aspirational Peer Mentor Programs. These videos will be hosted on the CSR website and shared via email with CSR members.



***Increase in URA Stipend***

The award amount for the Undergraduate Research Academy members has remained unchanged for many years – possibly even since it began in 2013. We will ask the CSR Executive Committee members in the fall meeting whether we should increase the award amount from the current \$3,500 to \$4,000 or \$4,500. This would of course mean we would not be able to fund as many students in summer 2023, however, with the cost of living and inflation increases, it could help these students offset expenses enough that they would not need off-campus employment during the summer and could focus on their research or creative project with faculty.

***Recruitment and Data Tracking***

It is evident from our URA demographics from the previous two cohorts that continue to struggle recruiting applicants from the humanities and visual and performing arts as well as students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. Our hope in the coming years is to continue to partner with MOSAIC and the humanities and VAPA departments to share the URA opportunity as widely as possible. One plan for sharing the URA and CSR more broadly will be to continue collecting and disseminating student researcher interviews and testimonials. In partnering with the Communique, the University Advancement Office, and with the help of our student worker, we will gather student interviews and videos through fall 2022 and share these via our office's Facebook, Instagram, Twitter pages, as well as UCCS's official social media platforms. This will help ensure we reach a large number of students to let them know opportunities for mentored research and creative work are on campus and accessible to them. Additionally, we plan to continue partnering with the Institutional Research Office to gather aggregate data on URA member demographics. We hope that this can also be expanded to include the other CSR student members that are not part of the URA. Finally, we will also leverage our 9499 course registration, track student employees hired as research assistants, and gather names of students that have submitted a IRB application to provide a hopefully sizable list of student researchers that we can offer support.

***GPS Course on Undergraduate Research Fall 2022***

As another avenue to help more students learn about undergraduate research and creative work as an option for them during their time at UCCS, the CSR director will launch a new GPS course in the fall of 2022 – Research in Higher Education – Everything They Didn't Tell You in High School. As a mandatory course for first-year students, this presents a great opportunity to encourage early participation in

undergraduate research, giving the students (and their faculty mentors) more time to collaborate on projects as they develop their skills. The course will cover basic practices in the research process. We intend to keep this broad as students will likely be majoring in a variety of areas. We will also host panel discussions with faculty mentors and undergraduate researchers to share their experiences and facilitate lab tours on campus. Many students are unaware that as undergraduates that they can join faculty labs to assist with ongoing projects. Reaching these students in their first year maximizes the amount of time they have to find their research interests and build their skills with the guidance of faculty and graduate students.

### Final Thoughts

Our team is excited to begin this academic year and to roll out the long-awaited Aspirational Peer Mentor Program and the newly developed Mentor Match. We are hopeful that the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic is behind us and we can more easily move forward fostering an on-campus community for student research and creative works beyond the Undergraduate Research Academy. The success of the CSR and these new programs will rely on the support of our campus members and – in particular – faculty participation in sharing their research assistant needs for the Mentor Match Program and encouraging undergraduates to seek advice of the aspirational peer mentors. We look forward to continuing to build partnerships across campus to ensure our research community is well-connected to the numerous supports and resources UCCS has to offer to fuel their success in their education and research careers.

Appendix

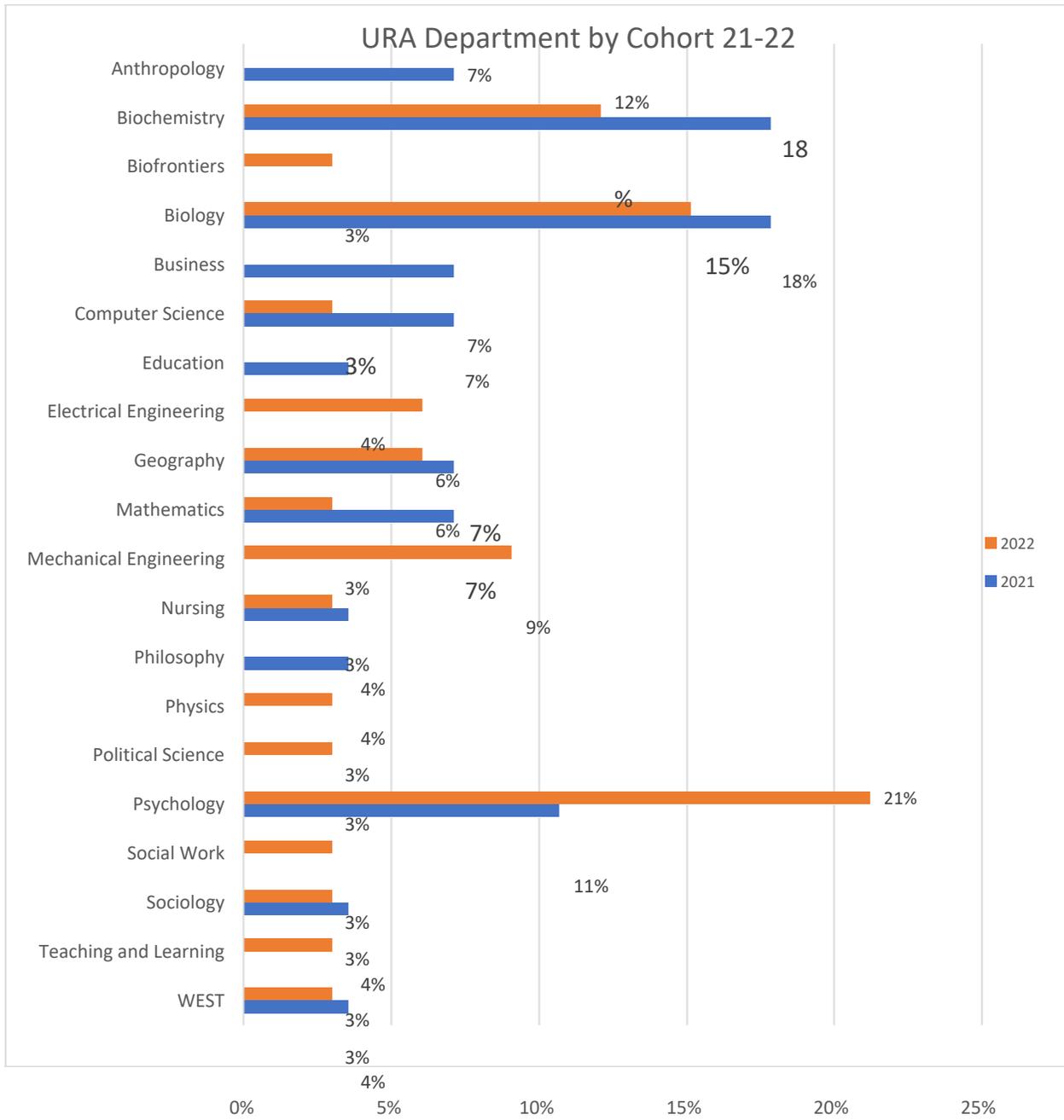


Figure 4: Percentage of URA students from campus units in 2021 and 2022.

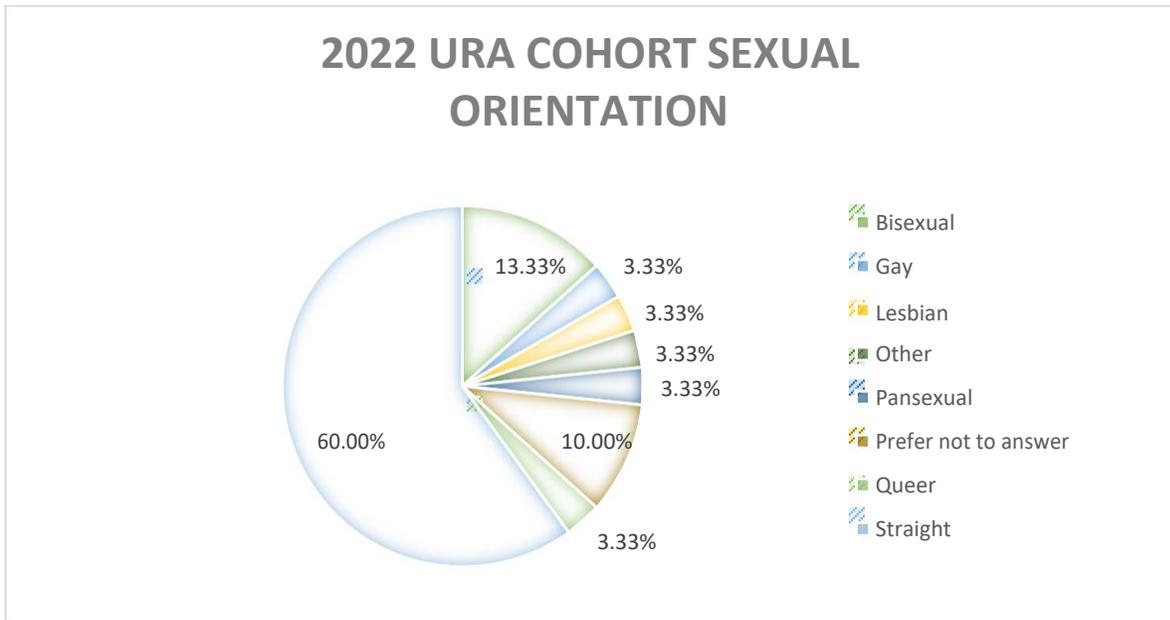


Figure 5: Percent of sexual orientations of URA cohort 2022.

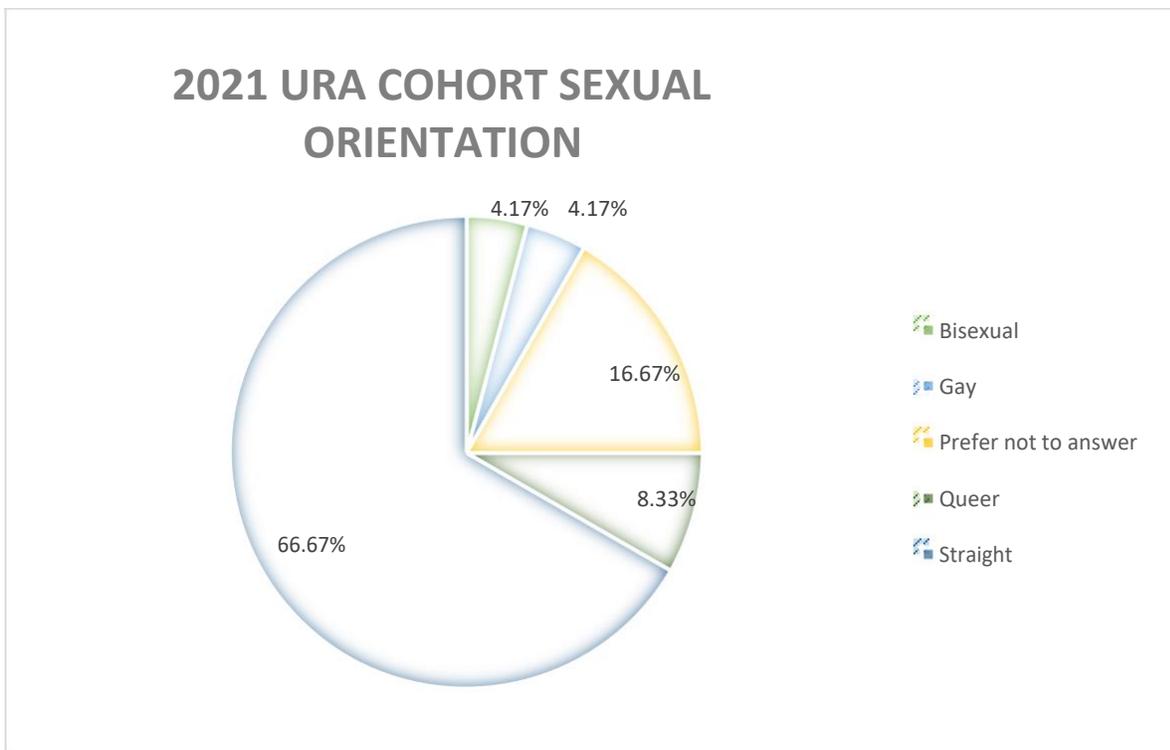


Figure 6: Percent of sexual orientations of URA cohort 2021.