

# *Mentoring Research Students Effectively in a Pandemic*

September 24, 2020

Introduction: Lance Barton

Panelists: Dave Baker, Tom Blake, & Renee Countryman

# Faculty Resources for Mentoring

- Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research ([www.cimerproject.org](http://www.cimerproject.org))



- 2020 WisCUR Workshop “Mentoring Undergraduate Research Remotely During COVID-19” (<https://sites.uwm.edu/wiscur/2020/08/25/2020-wiscur-workshop-mentoring-undergraduate-research-remotely-during-covid-19/>)

- CUR Community (<https://community.cur.org>)



**CUR Conversations: Virtual Research Skill Building**

Virtual | October 13, 2020 @2PM ET

**CUR Conversations: Ethics in Virtual Research**

Virtual | October 20, 2020 @2PM ET

**CUR Conversations: Offering UR to Diverse Groups  
in a Virtual World**

Virtual | October 27, 2020 @2PM ET

# 5 effective strategies that work (in person)

- Make Yourself Available
- Foster Community
- Encourage Participation in a Broader Research Community
- Be Attentive (Communicate)
- Be Understanding



<http://www.cur.org/assets/1/7/333Spring13Pita11-15.pdf>

- Among all demographic groups, good mentors are described as *experts* in their field, *accessible*, *communicative* about goals/plans

Ishiyama, J. (2007). College Student Journal, 41, 540-549.

# Does it Change virtually?

- Set up a shared workspace
- Meet with students once a week
- Encourage writing, reflection, notebooks
- Provide social support structures
- Be generous with praise and encouragement
- Schedule a culminating experience

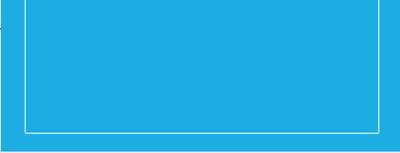


<https://ugresearch.utk.edu/2020/04/28/mentoring-undergraduate-research-virtually/>

<https://leadershipallianceresources.blog/2020/04/27/leadership-alliance-guide-to-mentoring-undergraduates-in-a-virtual-summer-research-and-professional-development-program/>

# Stories from Panelists & Community Discussion





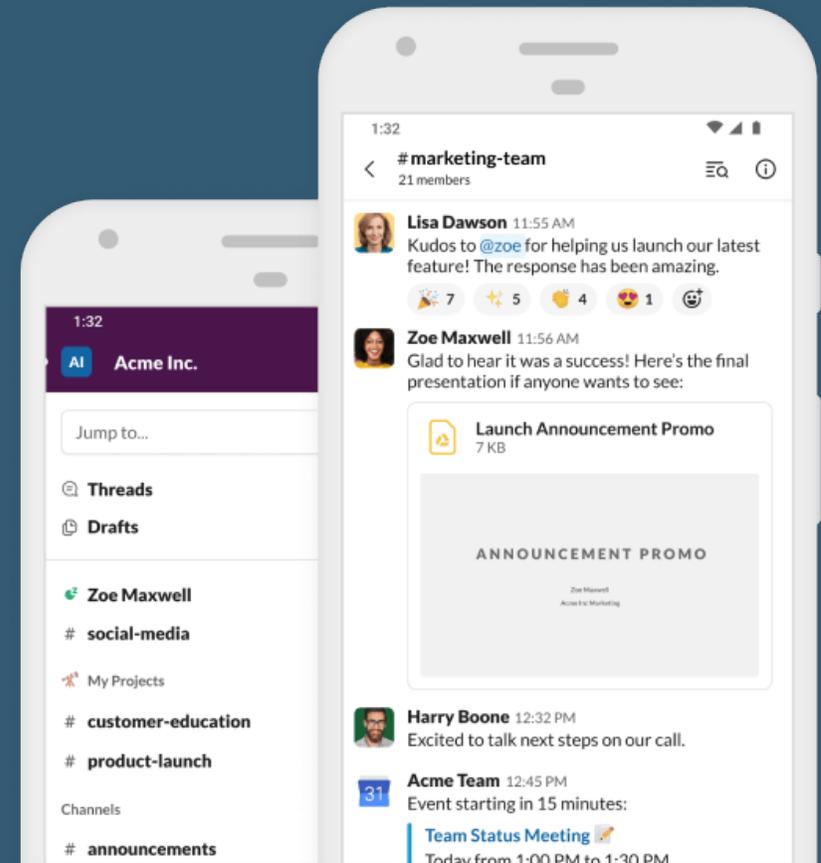
MENTORING HUMANITIES  
RESEARCH STUDENTS IN A  
PANDEMIC

# My Research Mentoring Journey at Austin College

- I first began sponsoring student posters and panels at the ACSC and joined the ACSC Ad-Hoc Committee as a Humanities Representative
- I attended the CUR Institute for the Humanities at Lincoln University with Wolfgang Lueckel and Lisha Storey in 2018 to learn about strategies for improving humanities research and for engaging more students in research
- I mentored two Scarbrough Fellows, one of whom is a current student writing an Honors Thesis in the pandemic
- I co-organize a local undergraduate conference for North Texas medievalists where Austin College students have participated in panels for the past two years

# Making Yourself Available Remotely

- Having a regular time works best, though schedules are more likely to change in a hyflex semester (theirs and ours)
- Flexibility is key. Students are more likely to be working, may be isolating or quarantined, etc.
- The Slack or Remind apps (or giving your phone number) can be really useful if you want to be able to contact them or them to be able to contact you on the fly
- Students are feeling more stressed, depressed, anxious, and uncertain generally because of (but not only because of) the pandemic (and so are we). Taking that extra step to check in on them as human beings is really important and we can do that to the degree we feel comfortable



# Fostering Community in a Pandemic

- Research Groups: Scarborough research students have been collaborating on Slack and Zoom to share research updates and goals as a kind of research and writing group
- ACSC: Encourage students to present their research at the ACSC which will be taking place virtually in March (abstracts due Nov. 16)
- Recruiting: Keep in mind who you are asking to participate and why. Implement practices that will actively encourage students to do research. Do your research students represent your majors?



Wright Campus Center 254B

Translating Gender in  
Chaucer



# Fostering Community: Pandemic Advantages

- Because of the pandemic, it is now easier for students to interview or discuss research with experts in the field beyond North Texas. Often a simple email introduction and then a student email can facilitate this branching out into the research community.
- I would also encourage having students interview with other experts in the field locally where possible so that they get a better sense of local scholarly communities.
- Also due to the pandemic, undergraduate conferences are more likely to be virtual and students can now apply to and attend conferences they might not have been able to afford or spare time to go to before the pandemic.
- Again, having students participate in local conferences where available is great for opening up that broader local community of student scholars.



# Stories from Panelists & Community Discussion

