

NCUR 2023 Executive Summary

Background

The National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) is an annual undergraduate, student-focused academic conference sponsored by the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR). The NCUR Oversight Committee (NOC) of CUR manages the conference, with members drawn from Councilors of different CUR divisions who are faculty members and university administrators. UW-Eau Claire was selected to host the conference on Thursday-Saturday April 13-15, 2023. The conference typically attracts more than 4,000 student researchers, faculty and administrators from across the country. On the UW-Eau Claire campuses, academic classes will be “redirected” on Thursday and Friday to make facilities available for the conference.

The Chancellor and the Executive Team have supported NCUR 2023 throughout the bid and planning processes. They have recognized that this will be a landmark and transformative event for our students, the university and our region.

Programming

The conference will have two primary themes:

- **Raise the profile of creative and scholarly work in the arts** | encouraging cross-disciplinary work that integrates the arts and the humanities with research in other disciplines.
- **Foster undergraduate research at two-year campuses** | develop programming that highlights research at these institutions and “bring together” institutions with four-year schools.

In addition, we will focus on equity, diversity and inclusion and sustainability throughout all facets of the conference programming and logistics.

The conference will be an opportunity to expand the number of UW-Eau Claire faculty and students who participate in research and to engage our staff in support for the conference. It will include academic and social programming, including:

- **Oral presentations** | about 1500 presentations on Thursday, Friday and Saturday; likely in Centennial, Schneider and Hibbard Halls.
- **Poster presentations** | about 2000 posters spread across multiple sessions on Thursday, Friday and Saturday; approx. 200 posters at a time in Zorn Arena.
- **Graduate & Career Fair** | tables available for graduate schools and employers, likely in Zorn Arena in coordination with the poster sessions.
- **Opening plenary session** | typically a large welcome session with a big-name speaker for all attendees on Thursday morning, likely at the Sonnentag Centre and streamed to multiple venues on campus.
- **“Sub-plenary” sessions** | we envision offering multiple “sub-plenary” sessions with interesting, cross-disciplinary speakers to take advantage of our mid-size venues in Schofield, Haas, Davies, Centennial and Pablo.
- **Faculty & Administrator Network (FAN) sessions** | sessions specifically for faculty and administrators attending the conference, focused on supporting research and students
- **Visual & performing arts** | in support of the conference’s focus on creative works in the arts, we will host gallery shows, theater productions, film productions and more. This can be anything the

planning team and campus can envision to support the conference's focus and highlight UW-Eau Claire and the community's strong history in the arts.

- **Pre-conference sessions** | held on Wednesday as attendees arrive in town; may include welcome sessions and events, open houses, visual and performing art events, orientation events, and more. Pretty much whatever we would like to do to kick off the conference and to showcase our university.
- **On-campus activities** | fun and interactive activities throughout campus and the campus mall during the conference to engage attendees and highlight unique aspects of campus life to attendees.
- **Friday "Big Event"** | the conference's large social event; we envision hosting an Eau Claire Jazz 52nd Street-style event in Downtown Eau Claire with multiple music venues, concerts at the Pablo, restaurants, closed off streets, street performers and more; this will support local business and artists.
- **Excursions** | Typically held on Saturday as optional activities for attendees before they leave town; could include local tours or experiences throughout our region and the Twin Cities.

Logistics

In support of the conference, we will need to plan multiple logistical programs.

- **Abstract review** | this will occur before the conference and require leadership and oversight by faculty.
- **Transportation** | help attendees with flights to Minneapolis and the Chippewa Valley Regional Airport, help with transportation to Eau Claire, provide bus loops from local hotels to campus for Thu-Sat, provide transportation between campus and the Pablo.
- **Hotels** | arrange room blocks at local hotels (yes, we do have enough rooms in Eau Claire, Hallie, Chippewa Falls and Menomonie).
- **Dining** | we need to provide breakfast and lunch on Thursday through Friday and breakfast Saturday for all attendees; likely to occur in Davies and on the campus mall (weather permitting); also want to promote local dining for the evenings.
- **Volunteers** | we will need to provide hundreds of volunteers to support programming and attendees; typically student organizations, faculty and staff.
- **Marketing & communications** | a team will work to provide all visual and communication aspects of the conference, both internal and external to attendees.
- **Registration** | we will work with the national office to register attendees and provide check-in at the conference at our new Visitor's Center.
- **Technology** | conference technology will include support for oral presentations, streaming of events, an immersive and interactive conference app, support of registration, campus WiFi infrastructure and more.

Planning

The planning team is led by three co-chairs (Catherine Chan, Mike Carney & Kyran Hamill) and four directors: programming (TBD), planning & project management (Corry Mahnke), logistics (Maranda Mahr) and finance & administration (Amber Schultz). Multiple teams will report to each director to produce the conference. In addition, four officers will provide leadership in EDI (Demetrius Smith), risk management (TBD), external communications (Mike Knuth) and external partnerships (Jake Wrasse). The co-chairs report to the Chancellor's Executive Team.