

Division of Research

Propelling Charlotte's Premier Research University

DIVISION OF RESEARCH (DR) NEWS

We're thrilled to launch our Division of Research (DR) newsletter for our UNC Charlotte faculty, staff and students. You will find research highlights, policy changes, new funding award announcements, professional development and training opportunities, division spotlights, and more. Going forward, watch for this communication the 3rd Wednesday of each month..... Go Green Research Wednesday!

Research is on the rise at UNC Charlotte! It's truly an exciting time with exceptional research happening across all corners of campus... research in all its forms, including scholarly inquiry, discovery, exploration, innovation, entrepreneurship, creative activities, community engagement and/or interdisciplinary endeavors.

We are at an inflection point with an unprecedented investment in a research culture that values and supports the faculty, staff and students reaching their fullest potential. We believe culture is foundational to all success. Growth in research awards and retention of faculty and staff is a byproduct of having a positive and encouraging culture. We hope by now you have all heard that we are slated to be a Research 1 (R1) University in 2025. That means we'll be a Top Tier University with very high research activity with a dedication to positive societal impacts. Make sure everyone in your circle of friends and family knows that!

Over the next few months, we will finalize UNC Charlotte's Research Implementation Plan with a feedback loop from various constituents. This plan will articulate the research vision and strategy for our University for the next 10 years. We look forward to sharing this and many other initiatives with you to ensure we capture your ideas and perspectives.

On behalf of our entire DR staff, we look forward to working closely with you as Charlotte's Great Research University!

~ John Daniels (Vice Chancellor for Research) & Deb Thomas (Associate Vice Chancellor for Research)



Announcing Our New ORCD Executive Director: We're elated to welcome Laura Peter to UNC Charlotte as the new Executive Director of the Office of Research Commercialization and Development. Laura brings over 25 years of cross enterprise leadership. She's overseen, designed, and executed a portfolio of legal areas including intellectual property, technology transfer, and international Joint Ventures. She's also negotiated 100+ complex multi-million-dollar federal and commercial contracts. During her tenure as Deputy Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Deputy Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), she managed 13,000 employees and executed the policies, priorities, and programs for an annual budget of \$3.5 billion.



DR NEWS CONTD...

Breaking Records: The Office of Research Commercialization & Development (ORCD) negotiated and signed 15 new agreements and filed 11 patent applications during the first 2 months of 2024. That's an all-time office record. And these are more than just numbers. This is an example of why and how ORCD is one of the country's best in putting intellectual capital to work and transferring technology to the marketplace. For example, they recently received trademark approval for PoleVolt (tm) for electric vehicle charging stations. You'll get to learn more about this Office in the coming months!

Increased Compensation for Graduate Assistantships: Starting in the 2024-2025 academic year, students receiving a graduate assistantship will see a permanent increase in their stipends. The increases are based on student eligibility and prorated based on a 20-hour per week assistantship, as follows:

- \$1,500 to doctoral students on an assistantship
- \$250 to master's students on an assistantship

More information to come regarding how the increases will be funded, including guidance on assistantships funded on grants.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES & CALLS FOR PROPOSALS

Mark Your Calendars: The 2024 ArtXSci call for proposals will be released on April 1st! Since launching two years ago, the UNC Charlotte Art and Science Initiative (ArtXSci) continues to foster collaborations between faculty in the College of Arts + Architecture (CoAA) and scholars in STEM fields. So, if you have in mind a cross-disciplinary project that combines the arts, design, and the sciences... and you believe it will have significant impacts on and off campus, then you may want to explore an ArtXSci grant. Please check the DR website for the new RFP on April 1st.

Networking Across Disciplines: Nexus is a program that fosters interdisciplinary research teams! And if you're faculty working or planning to work in Artificial Intelligence (including uses and social impact) or Online Misinformation and Deception, you're invited to apply for the program. Each faculty member in the Nexus program will receive a \$1,000 stipend for participating fully in the workshops beginning in May. You can learn more about Nexus in this [Application Instructions link](#). If you're ready to submit your application, please use this [Nexus Submission link](#).

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS!

On February 28, 2024, the PORTAL building turned 10-years young! The Office of Research Partnerships' PORTAL is a multi-use building bringing academics and industry under one collaborative roof. Over the decade, 161 Fortune 500, small and medium size businesses (SMBs), startups/early-stage, and business incubators have called PORTAL home.



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT

Did you know that UNC Charlotte is leading the way in something called dimensional metrology? [In this UCOMM article](#), we learn how UNC Charlotte "is really the only university in North and South America that has a program dedicated to dimensional metrology (the science of measurement)," explains Dr. Edward Morse - Director of the Center for Precision Metrology. He adds, "The real impact is in support of manufacturing." From airplanes to many of the cell phones used across campus... metrology matters and we're leading the way the Niner Way!



ANNOUNCING NEW FUNDING AWARDS

Award PI	Department	College	Other Personnel
Mei Sun	Civil and Environmental Engr	COEN	
Anthony Fodor	Bioinformatics and Genomics	CCI	
Constantin R Bunesco	Computer Science	CCI	(co-PI: Samira Shaikh)
Elizabeth Armstrong Cooper	Bioinformatics and Genomics	CCI	
Ishwar D Aggarwal	Physics and Optical Science	COS	(co-PI: Thomas Hutchens)
Robert Cox	EPIC	COEN	(co-PI: Michael Mazzola)
Wenhao Luo	Computer Science	CCI	
Minhaj Nur Alam	Electrical & Computer Engineering	COEN	
Glenn Boreman	Physics and Optical Science	COS	(co-PI: Scott M Williams, Daniel P Furr)
In Hong Yang	Mech Engineering & Engineering Sci	COEN	(co-PI: Shan Yan)
Gregory Needham	Division of Research		(co-PI: Devin A Collins, Rob Horton, Geraldine Gardner, John L Daniels, Bradley C Fach)
Sophia Yvonne Jordan-Marshall	Health & Wellbeing		
William Rea Brian	Mathematics and Statistics	COS	(co-PI: Hector A Barriga-Acosta)
Valentina Cecchi	EPIC	COEN	(co-PI: Mesut Baran, Badrul Chowdhury)
Stella Yun Kim	Educational Leadership	COED	
Tyler Allen	Computer Science	CCI	
Glenn Boreman	Physics and Optical Science	COS	
Wenwu Tang	Geography and Earth Sciences	CHESS	
Jessica Schlueter	Bioinformatics and Genomics	CCI	(co-PI: Alexis Dornburg, Cynthia J Gibas)
Tyler Rose Calloway	Undergraduate Education		
Dong Dai	Computer Science	CCI	
Kathryn M Zager	Urban Institute		(co-PI: Nicholas Occhipinti)
Rachel Marie Ladenheim	International Programs		
Ashli Quesinberry Stokes	Communication Studies	CHESS	(co-PI: Jeffrey H Gillman)

UPCOMING TRAININGS

Attention Staff Who Help Faculty Manage Awards: The Office of Research Services (ORS) is hosting its Spring Workshop Series to help staff navigate award management duties. You still have time to catch sessions covering the hiring of students, staff and faculty, and proposal development. [Sign up here.](#)

Launching a New Seminar Series: The Office of Research Protections and Integrity (ORPI) is excited to launch the *Research Integrity Seminar Series*. Experts will share hot topics and updates in various areas of research integrity and compliance for UNC Charlotte's community. The first session, "**Animal Care and Use - Spring Updates**," kicks off on Thursday, March 28th, from 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Grab your lunch and join us via Zoom! [You can find the registration link here.](#)

POLICY UPDATES

NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Changes: Among the changes that go into effect May 20th, The National Science Foundation (NSF) has: removed the 3-page limit for the Biographical Sketch; all proposals will require a 1-page mentoring plan be attached to the application submission if they include a postdoctoral researcher and/or a graduate student (and in some cases will be required for re-budgeting); and all postdoctoral researchers and graduate students who receive at least 1 month of support from an NSF award will be required to have a formal Individual Development Plan (IDPs) in place. [The full list of NSF changes can be found here.](#)

Coming Soon: Important updates next month regarding an increased focus on conflicts of interest and research security across all federal funding agencies, and its impact on you.

DIVISION SPOTLIGHT

INTRODUCING YOU TO THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH SERVICES

The Office of Research Services (ORS) helps faculty submit proposals for external funding, accept and negotiate funded awards, manage the expenditures on funded awards, and deliver research administration training. ORS is led by its Director, Peter Szanton, and encompasses three primary teams.

- **Proposal development team** - helps faculty prepare and submit proposals for funding for research.
- **Contracting and award negotiation team** - reviews and negotiates the terms and conditions of grants and other award agreements, and negotiates contracts.
- **Award management team** - helps faculty manage how award funding, and sub-awards are spent, and all the changes that happen over the lifetime of the project.

“At any given time, about 500 active awards are being managed with multiple proposals going out and contracts coming in weekly,” shares Szanton. Here are a few more fast facts about ORS:

- Submits over 700 proposals per year
- Amounts range from hundreds to tens-of-millions
- Our largest funders include the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD).
- Offers trainings and workshops for staff and faculty, and runs a certificate program for new staff members on campus.

Szanton stresses that funding comes from a large variety of sources, and that every award, no matter the dollar amount, is celebrated. “We like to think that all awards are important because the dollar amounts in humanities are generally going to be much smaller than the dollar amounts in STEM. But some of the awards that people get in the humanities may be much more prestigious or difficult to obtain.”

UPCOMING CAMPUS EVENT

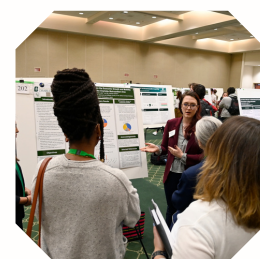


Undergraduate Research Conference (URC)

Art! Science! Humanities!

Celebrate 230+ student research projects representing every College!

[Registration Link](#)



2023 URC

NEWS HIGHLIGHT

CHANCELLOR SHARON L. GABER AND DIVISION OF RESEARCH VICE CHANCELLOR JOHN DANIELS TALK RI STATUS ON WBTV

UNC Charlotte was highlighted on WBTV's *On Your Side Tonight with Jamie Boll* as a soon-to-be Research 1 (R1) University. R1 signifies a doctoral university with very high research activity, making significant contributions, and awarding a high number of doctoral degrees. More specifically, an R1 status means “spending (at least) \$50 million on research, and awarding at least 70 doctorates, in any research field, in a year,” according to The Chronicle of Higher Education.



[Full Story](#)