

**Project title:** *Empowering Freshman Students' Research-based Skills and Knowledge through Sustained Mentorship and Campus-wide Event*

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## Progress Report

There are two initiatives described in our proposal.

*Initiative 1* was designed to mentor ENGL1302 freshman students interested in participating in the Engaged Scholar Symposium (E2S) after completing the course. During the 2020 spring semester, we piloted the activity and mentored seven students who chose to apply to E2S. Due to COVID-19, the event got cancelled, yet these students felt validated as student-scholars when they received the acceptance email. We plan to recruit students again at the end of fall 2020 semester. We have scheduled a meeting with Estela de la Garza for 11/18/2020 to discuss best ways to assist students with the application process.

*Initiative 2* has not yet been implemented. Originally, in this initiative the Freshman Writing Program was going to host a face-to-face event at the end of 2020 fall semester where ENGL1302 students present their work and ENGL1301 students and others such as high school students, faculty from various colleges, and members from our local community serve as the audience.

As the situation with COVID-19 has progressed, we have re-imagined Initiative 2 to take place virtually in the format of an interactive website. Implementing Initiative 2 digitally ensures the safety of our students while at the same time maximizes local and institutional community participation. Our event revisions are based on virtual models other higher education institutions around the nation are adopting to celebrate, support, and showcase undergraduate research and creative works such as:

- California State University (<https://csumb.edu/uoc/summer-research-symposium-0>)
- University of Connecticut (<https://ugradresearch.uconn.edu/frontiers2020/#>)
- University of Nevada (<https://www.unlv.edu/news/unlvtoday/spring-2020-virtual-undergraduate-research-symposium-begins-may-1>).

In our revised Initiative 2, ENGL1302 students will submit complete research projects in their prefer mode (e.g. video of themselves presenting their research project, digital poster presentation, lighting talk, professional presentation, interactive infographic, podcast, dance) to be featured in the WP interactive website. Presentations will be arranged by categories of modality. Audience will be able to leave comments about presentations. Comments will be monitored by website creators for appropriateness (for an example see University of Nevada website).

On August 7, 2020 we submitted a revised budget. We got approval on the revised budget on September 9, 2020. So far, the research team has created a mock website. We plan to test it this semester with students in our respective courses. After we do that, in the spring 2021 semester we plan to purchase a license to formally create the website. The event is schedule to take place April 14-15, 2021.

To see pilot website, click here: <https://tomasguerrero01.wixsite.com/novarhet>

Sincerely,

Marcela Hebbard, P.I., Cyndy López Guerrero, Charles McGregor, and Tomás Guerrero