

# NISTS 2022

FROM MOMENT TO MOVEMENT: SHAPING THE FUTURE OF TRANSFER  
FEBRUARY 2-4 | ST. LOUIS • FEBRUARY 23-24 | VIRTUAL

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## *Educational Session*

### **2342 - Founding an Undergraduate Social Science Research Lab at a Community College**

Credits and Degree Pathways, Partnerships and Collaboration

Undergraduate social science research labs are drawing the attention of faculty and administrators across higher education. Community colleges, which serve the widest diversity of students, are increasingly considering how to "teach research" to better prepare students for the rigors and opportunities at their chosen 4-year university. This session will describe in detail the process of founding the Civil Grand Jury Lab at Cuyamaca Community College in east San Diego county, California.

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Cuyamaca College

# Founding an Undergraduate Social Science Research Lab at a Community College

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CUYAMACA COLLEGE

NISTS 2022 ON DEMAND

# Learning Objectives

Define	Define undergraduate research lab
Explain	Explain how an undergraduate social science research lab can be established at a community college.
Describe	Describe how the functions of a lab can be disaggregated into component parts for students to engage in and with.
Evaluate	Evaluate the utility of an external lab advisory committee can contribute to the short-term and long-term efforts of the lab.

# What is Undergraduate Research?

“Undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative inquiry is fundamentally a pedagogical approach to teaching and learning. With an emphasis on process, CUR defines undergraduate research as: A mentored investigation or creative inquiry conducted by undergraduates that seeks to make a scholarly or artistic contribution to knowledge.”

- “Mission and Vision.” n.d. Accessed February 4, 2022. [https://www.cur.org/who/organization/mission\\_and\\_vision/](https://www.cur.org/who/organization/mission_and_vision/).

## What is an Undergraduate Research Lab?

A research lab is a place where individuals work together to ask questions and seek answers using the scientific method.

Laboratories are typically associated with biology, chemistry, physics, engineering, and computer science. However, more laboratories are being established in the arts, humanities, and social and behavioral sciences.

# Why start an Undergraduate Research Lab?

## What do you believe?

- I believe students who attend community colleges should have the opportunity to conduct research in a space that is welcoming and supportive with a faculty member who is conducting research themselves.
- Belief derived from personal experiences and opinions.

# What are Broader Impacts of Conducting Research at a Community College?

## Introduce

- Thoroughly introduce 2-year undergraduate students, most of whom are first-generation, low-income, or minoritized students, to the entire research cycle.

## Serve

- Serve as a model of 2-year undergraduate students conducting original research.

## Result in

- Result in unique research accessible to students, faculty, researchers, policy makers, media, and interested public.

# Founding a Lab



# How?

1. Just Do It
2. Focus on Group or Institution
3. Research Questions
4. Identifying Functions of Lab
5. Establish Lab Advisory Committee
6. Recruit Students
7. Partner with Others
8. Apply for a Grant
9. Integrate Lab into Courses as Options for Students



# Let's Unpack These Steps with a Case Study

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# Civil Grand Jury Lab



C U Y A M A C A  
• C O L L E G E •



# Civil Grand Jury Lab at Cuyamaca College

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## Vision

- The vision of the Lab is to advance the scholarship and practice of civil grand juries at the local, state, and federal level.

## Mission

- The mission of the Lab is to scholastically, socially, and professionally mentor undergraduate students conducting original research on California's civil grand juries, maintain a database of California civil grand jury reports, findings, and recommendations, and local government responses to these reports, develop and disseminate teaching and learning resources on civil grand juries, and advance public policy based on civil grand jury reports.

## Lab Focus. How?

### Follow Your Mind and Heart.

#### My Story

- Dissertation: [Judicial Pork: The Congressional Allocation of Districts, Seats, Meeting Places, and Courthouses to the U.S. District Courts \(escholarship.org\)](#)
- *Overlooked relationship between Congress and the lower Courts*
- Local level actors and institutions are generally overlooked in my field.

# How Did I Get Started on Lab Focus?

Submit Conference Paper Proposal to Conference.

- I submitted proposal to American Political Science Association in early 2020.
- By mid-Spring, I learned proposal was accepted! 😊

Wrote Conference Paper and Presented It.

- [Quasi-Judicial Oversight of Legislative and Executive Branches at the Local Level | American Government and Politics | APSA Preprints | Cambridge Open Engage \(apsanet.org\)](#)

Got Feedback.

Submitted next iteration of Paper to next Conference.

# Research Questions. What?

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How can our present state of knowledge on oversight, accountability, representation, and transparency be informed by the theoretical essence and empirical existence of local civil grand juries?

What is the effect of a third-party actor with complete discretionary investigatory and information revelation power on the behavior of other political actors and institutions?



# Identify Functions of Lab. How?

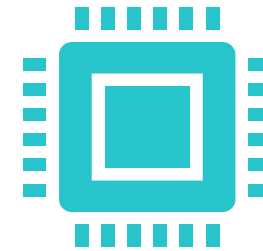
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Every Lab Will Have:

Lab Administration/Facilitation.

Research.



The following depends on  
Lab's Vision and Mission:

Database.

Simulation.

Public Policy.



# Lab Function: Facilitation

Facilitation includes assisting the Lab Founder with fulfilling the mission and vision of the Lab by supporting Lab members in their activities, maintaining the Lab's website, creating and disseminating Lab materials through our YouTube and Twitter accounts, and preparing the Lab's quarterly newsletter.

# Lab Function: Research

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The Civil Grand Jury Research will serve as the experience for students to engage in the lifecycle of research. Specific

Knowledge, Skills, and  
Abilities

Learning Objectives

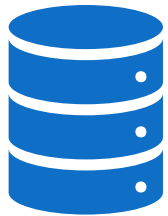
Deliverables



Visit [Research to learn more.](#)

# Lab Functions: Database, Simulation, and Public Policy

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Database



Simulation



Public Policy

# What is a Lab Advisory Committee?

A Lab Advisory Committee consists of individuals with knowledge, skills, and abilities that can help the Lab fulfill its Mission and Vision.

Modeled after CTE Advisory Committees

- “CTE Advisory Committees: Making Them Work for You!” n.d. Accessed February 4, 2022.

[https://asccc.org/content/cte-advisory-committees-making-them-work-you.](https://asccc.org/content/cte-advisory-committees-making-them-work-you)

What is the utility of a Lab Advisory Committee?



Accountability.



Idea generation.



Moral support.

# Recruit Students. How?

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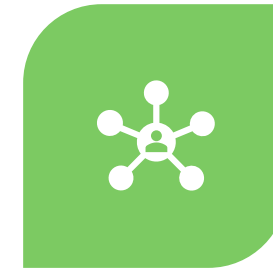
EMAIL FORMER  
STUDENTS.



SEND  
ANNOUNCEMENTS  
TO CURRENT  
STUDENTS.



INCLUDE IN  
OUTREACH TO  
POTENTIAL  
STUDENTS.



FEATURE IN  
ORIENTATION TO  
INCOMING  
STUDENTS.

## Partner with Others. How?

I emailed the California Grand Jurors' Association (CGJA) asking:

- “So far, I have presented at three conferences. I'd like to share and get feedback from practitioners, so I wanted to ask if it could be mentioned, or maybe the abstract included, in the Grand Jurors' Journal?”

Outcomes from Partnership (so far)

- Meetings with CGJA leaders.
- Letter of Support from CGJA for Grant.
- Presentation at CGJA Annual Conference.
- Establishment of CGJA Effectiveness Working Group.
- Presentation at local CGJA county chapter.

# Apply for a Grant. Why?

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I submitted a grant proposal

- Law & Science (LS) Program at the National Science Foundation in early fall 2021.

Odds low, but grant process demands clarity of:

- Merit
- Broader Impacts
- Budget Needs
- Timeline
- Seriousness

By late fall 2021, notified that proposal was not selected. 😞

- But helpful Reviewer feedback.



## Integrate Lab into Courses. Why?

“Given the high teaching loads at many institutions, faculty should operate research labs as classes” (Weinschenk 2021)

“Important to make sure that faculty members get formal recognition for offering undergraduate research experiences, which can be time-consuming and labor-intensive”. (Weinschenk 2021)

# Integrate Lab into Courses. How?

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## Create and teach

- Create and teach a Research Methods course.

## Create and include

- Create and include a “Research” assessment in your other courses.

## Allow

- Allow students to connect Lab work with their Course work.

# Concluding Remarks

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You Can Do It!

Your students deserve the opportunity to conduct research.

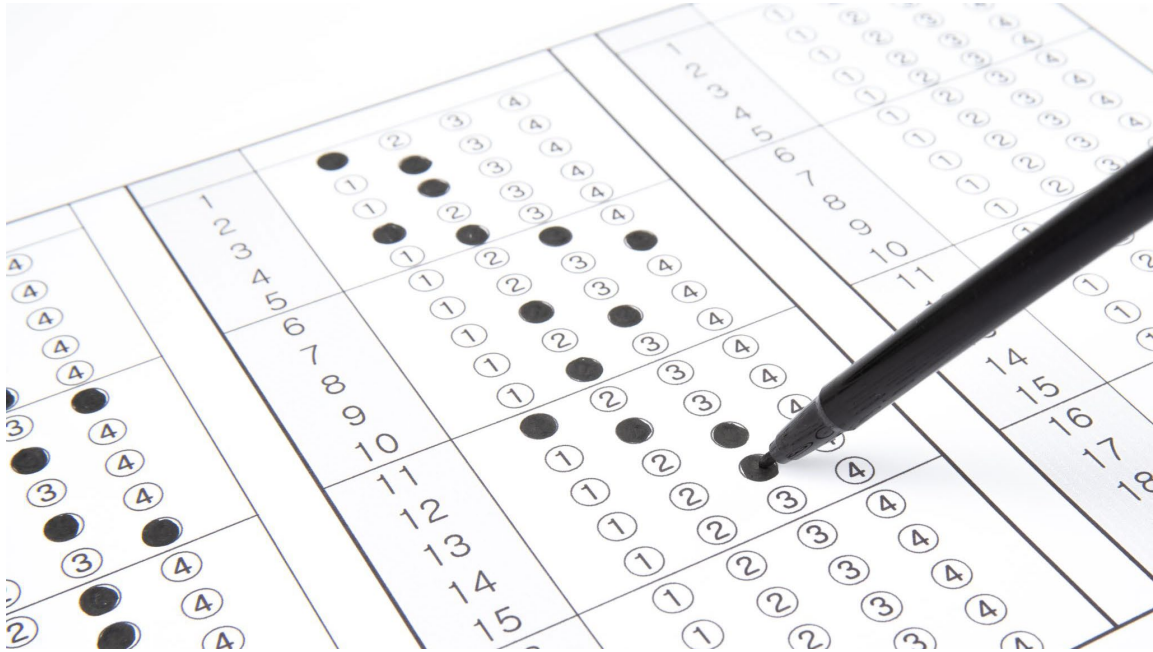
Support colleagues who want to create research opportunities for students.

# Thank You and Evaluation

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Thank you for taking time to watch entire on-demand presentation.

If you have any questions or comments, please email me directly at [josue.franco@gcccd.edu](mailto:josue.franco@gcccd.edu).



# Evaluation

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PLEASE COMPLETE THE SESSION  
EVALUATION.

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