Title: Belmont SURFS: Early Engagement in Research

Abstract Body: In the summer of 2015, the Department of Chemistry and Physics piloted the Belmont University Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships (SURFs) program for the College of Sciences and Mathematics (CSM) with the goal of engaging rising sophomores and juniors in research earlier in their careers. Fellows participate in a six-week research project in exchange for a small stipend and housing, and present a poster at the end of the program and during the following fall semester. Since that first summer, the program has grown to include faculty and students from all four departments in CSM and faculty from Belmont’s graduate College of Pharmacy. The SURFs program has been highly successful in encouraging students to engage in research outside of their field, often interdisciplinary in nature, with a number of students continuing research with their faculty members after the summer and beyond what is required for graduation. Here we present details of the program, a breakdown of the first three cohorts and how successful the program has been on encouraging students to continue research beyond the end of the six-week period. We will also present cases in which the student has been motivated to seek or consider a career in research as a result of the SURFs program.

Special Instructions: If possible, I would prefer not to be scheduled to present on Thursday afternoon or Friday of the meeting due to travel plans and limited funding. If necessary, I can make it work. Thank you for your consideration.

Presentation Type: Oral

Unit: 24.0 Physics Education (FED)

Sorting Category: 24.5 Undergraduate Education (For Undergraduate Research, see 26.1)

Category Type: Experimental

Authors (First Name, Last Name): Davon Ferrara¹, Robert Magruder¹, Thomas Spence²

Institutions (All):
1. Chemistry and Physics, Belmont University, Nashville, TN, United States.
2. College of Sciences and Mathematics, Belmont University, Nashville, TN, United States.

Teams: (none)