

ALURE: The Apprenticeship-Style Large-Scale Undergraduate Research Experience Project

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The first recommendation of The Boyer Commission Report (1998) was that research-based learning be made the standard experience for students at university. Two other key recommendations were that universities (i) link communication skills to coursework; and (ii) use information technology creatively. The Australian university system has come a long way since 1998, but if we compare our tertiary sector to the USA, we still have a long way to go before our students have large-scale access to apprenticeship-style UREs, and avenues for communicating their findings. The ALURE project has been funded for 2013-2014 under the OLT National Leadership initiative. It uses a Community of Practice (CoP) to develop and resource academics to help students conduct and communicate undergraduate research on a large scale. The current foci for the programme are science and maths students and the academics who teach them. In this sixty-minute showcase four of our ALURE CoP members will present the undergraduate research programmes they have devised and championed. The projects address a range of subjects from Microbiology and Bioinformatics through to Chemistry and Earth Sciences. We aim to highlight the scope, quality, and impact of the programmes so that potential new CoP members can appreciate the power and flexibility of ALUREs while considering the possibility of mentorship for their own teaching context. We are currently welcoming new CoP members to the ALURE project. Interested educators are encouraged to attend the showcase.