

# Researcher profiles: Teaching students to cultivate a successful online presence



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# Introductions



## **Amanda MacDonald** Undergraduate Research Services Librarian

Liaison to:

- **Office of Undergraduate Research**
- **Honors College**
- **Human Development**

# Current UR Library Training Support

- **Advanced Research Skills Program**
  - 7 week, 6 workshop online program introducing students to high-level research skills
- **ALS 1984: Introduction to Research Practices**
- **Undergraduate Research Guide**
  - [guides.lib.vt.edu/ur](https://guides.lib.vt.edu/ur)



# Introductions



## **Rachel Miles**

**Research Impact Librarian**

**Liaison to:**

- **Psychology**
- **Neuroscience**

# Current Library Research Impact Support

- **Professional Development Network Workshops (faculty)**
- **Graduate Student Workshops**
- **Skills taught:**
  - **Scholarly publishing, researcher profiles, research metrics, science communication**
- **Tell Your Story guide:**  
<https://guides.lib.vt.edu/TellYourStory>

WHAT KIND OF ONLINE PRESENCE  
ARE WE DISCUSSING HERE?

# Online presence

## Standard academic profiles



ORCID  
Connecting Research  
and Researchers

Google Scholar



ResearchGate

# Why cultivate an online scholarly presence?

- **Controlling your public image and PR online for professional reasons**
  - Future potential employers
  - Potential collaborations
  - Potential opportunities (e.g., committees, research, etc)
  - Disseminating and promoting your research and other projects
  - Self promotion and networking
  - Engaging at conferences (e.g., Twitter)
  - Author disambiguation (get credit for your work)
  - Linking profiles for maximum visibility



# WHAT IS UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH?

**“An inquiry or investigation conducted by an undergraduate student that makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline” (CUR, 2019)**

# AUDIENCE POLL

**How many of you cultivate active  
online presences for your research?**

**How many of you actively teach  
students how to do this?**

**If so, what are you teaching them?**



HOW DO WE CURRENTLY TRAIN  
FACULTY ON ONLINE PRESENCE?

# TRAINING FACULTY ON ONLINE PRESENCE

- **Key concepts:**
  - Author disambiguation & author IDs
  - Author rights & publisher copyright policies
  - Role of Open Access in visibility & impact
  - Comparison of researcher profile systems
  - Interpretation of research impact indicators
- **Key skills:**
  - Sharing work in online repositories
  - Linking to works on profiles
  - Linking profiles together for ease of maintenance
  - Finding and using metrics to find key audiences

# TRANSLATING ONLINE PRESENCE INSTRUCTION FOR UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCHERS

- Know your rights - secure them
  - Indicate authorship / ownership / copyright of your work
  - Optional: use [open licensing](#) for further impact
- Visibility, curation, and preservation of work:
  - VTechWorks & other repositories
- Building online presence in concise, effective manners:
  - LinkedIn
    - Online CV
    - Link to preserved works (e.g., VTechWorks)
    - Control public image and professional identity

# Advantages of Storing Items in VTechWorks

- **Very well indexed by Google, Google Scholar, Microsoft Academic, Unpaywall**
  - Easily found
- **Persistent URL**
  - No worries about items being wiped
  - Can link to something - people can go follow the link
- **Guaranteed preservation**
  - File types will always be cared for
- **Downloadable statistics**

# TRANSLATING ONLINE PRESENCE INSTRUCTION FOR UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCHERS

- **Mentorship - a symbiotic relationship**
  - Discover and explore established professional profiles in the field
  - Help students curate & polish their online presence
    - Help yourself do the same (together)!
- **Track usage statistics on repositories and LinkedIn (downloads, views)**
- **Promote your work on communication channels for more discoverability: Twitter, LinkedIn, listservs, etc.**



# Appeal to Administration & Strategic Planning Efforts

- **Assessment of alumni**
  - **Percentage of employed alumni and employed alumni in professional positions**
    - e.g., reported for accreditation purposes
  - **Building these skill sets will help improve:**
    - **Likelihood of obtaining professional positions**
    - **Professional skills**
    - **Collegiate relationships**
    - **Virginia Tech's image!**

HOW DO WE CURRENTLY TRAIN  
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCHERS?

# Advanced Research Skills Program

1. **Using Data & Information Ethically**
2. **Managing & Organizing Data**
3. **Managing & Organizing Information**
4. **Writing Successful Proposals**
5. **Sharing Your Research**
6. **Becoming A Researcher**



# Options for UR instruction



- **Co-curricular workshops**
- **Embedded modules via Canvas**
- **In-person instruction or workshops**
- **Integrating learning objects from the Undergraduate Research Collection in Odyssey**

WHAT COULD TRAINING FOR  
UNDERGRAD PROFILES LOOK  
LIKE?



# Just Like Other Options for UR instruction

- **Co-curricular workshops**
- **Embedded modules via Canvas**
- **In-person instruction or workshops**
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# Training Tip #1: Mentor/Mentee Relationship



- **Mentor develops or improves their online presence alongside their mentee**
- **Mentee learns from observing their mentor's process**

# Training Tip #2: Build Upon Student Experience



- **Students are already familiar with many social media platforms**
  - **Which platforms make sense personally versus professionally**
  - **What are some good tips for professional behavior in online platforms**



# Training Tip #3: Your Audience Matters



- **Keep your audience in mind when sculpting online profiles**
  - **Industry**
  - **Academia**
  - **Specific fields**
  - **Associations/societies**
- **To do this consider:**
  - **Terminology**
  - **Networking**

# Training Tip #4: Author Rights & Responsibilities



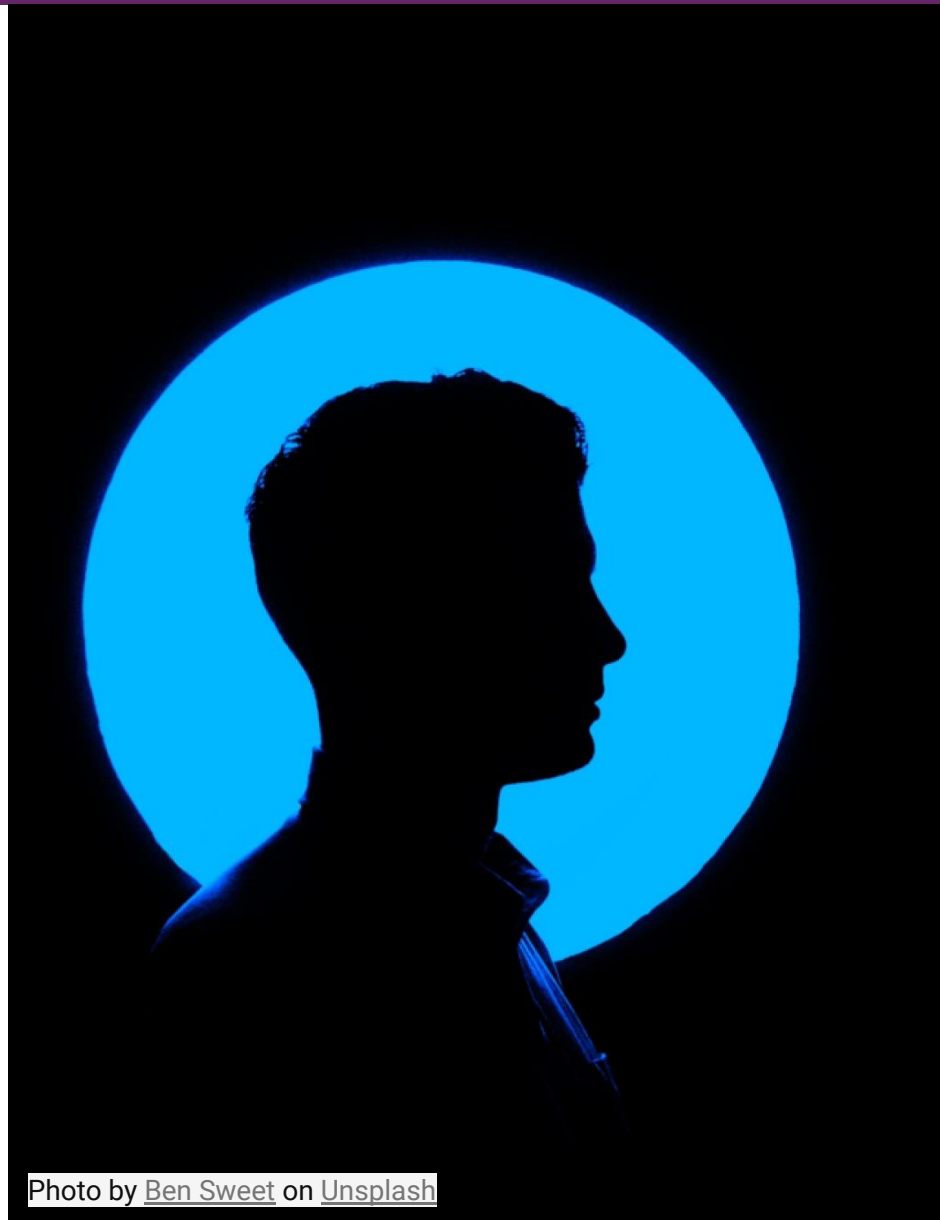
- **Consider copyright, privacy, ethics, and other legal ramifications**
  - **Sharing your own work**
  - **Exploring copyright and published works**
  - **Sharing collaborative work**
  - **Trade secrets**
  - **Sensitive information**

How to do this in your class?

# Everything Starts with LinkedIn!

Three items to focus on:

1. Headline
2. Summary
3. Keywords



# Step 1: Locate Potential Job Descriptions

- **Provide subject-specific job lists**
  - ALA Joblist
  - INALJ
- **Provide general job lists**
  - Higher Ed Jobs
  - ChronicleVitae
  - Indeed



## Step 2: Identify keywords

Print the job ads (or save as PDF if they prefer)

- Read the descriptions closely
- Highlight any important keywords
- Draft a list of the keywords

# Step 3: Review examples of effective profiles

There are 2 options here!

1. Students can locate the profiles of a couple of successful professionals in their potential field and review their headlines and summaries
2. Provide students examples of effective profiles for them to review the headlines and summaries

# Step 4: Focus in on the summary section

The summary is important because:

- Visitors to your profile will see the first 300 characters of your summary
- Recruiters will see the full summary
- The first few sentences are still most vital!!

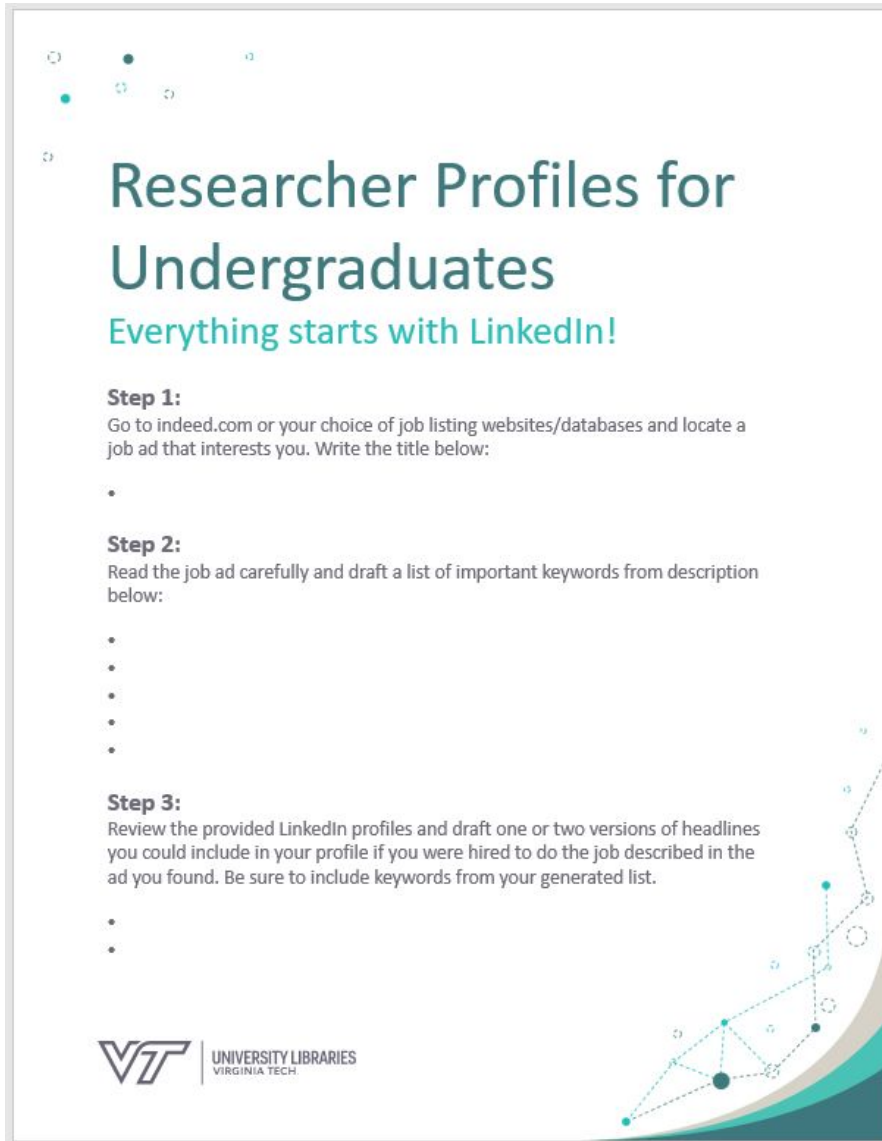
For homework, ask students to draft a summary of 300-350 words in length. The summary should include the keywords they identified in the previous example.

# Step 5: Optional

- Depending the amount of time you have with students, you could spread this exercise out or narrow it down
  - Narrow: Draft only a headline
  - Expanded: Draft entire profiles and provide multiple avenues of feedback for students, including peer review

PRACTICE!!

# Handout!



**Researcher Profiles for Undergraduates**  
Everything starts with LinkedIn!

**Step 1:**  
Go to indeed.com or your choice of job listing websites/databases and locate a job ad that interests you. Write the title below:

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**Step 2:**  
Read the job ad carefully and draft a list of important keywords from description below:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

**Step 3:**  
Review the provided LinkedIn profiles and draft one or two versions of headlines you could include in your profile if you were hired to do the job described in the ad you found. Be sure to include keywords from your generated list.

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**VT UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES VIRGINIA TECH.**

LinkedIn Profiles:

<https://tinyurl.com/urcheq>

# Discussion

- Do you think this type of training (including an activity like this) would be helpful for your students?
- Do you have ideas for other ways to help students cultivate an effective online presence?

COMMENTS? QUESTIONS?