Feedback is a critical component to making these undergraduate research programs better. With each successive iteration of our program, we have ensured to collect assessments of the program from mentors, mentees, and the leadership team. We’ve broken down the feedback into general categories below:

* **A sense of community**: when social events were scheduled, students reported a greater sense of belonging with their cohort and mentors. Closeness with their cohort provided solidarity with peers in a similar position, while feeling connected to their mentors allowed more candid conversations regarding lab dynamics and questions about graduate school. Students requested that we plan more social events to foster this positive atmosphere.
* **A liveable stipend**: in past years we provided a relatively high summer stipend compared to other research programs on-campus, however, this did not include housing. Students reported this being a financial burden, especially because off-campus housing in San Diego is extremely expensive and our program did not allow part-time jobs while conducting full-time research. For this upcoming summer we were able to secure a higher stipend based on their feedback.
* **Guaranteed mentor support for all students**: during our second year, we accepted a larger cohort with the expectation that the quality of mentorship would remain the same. We hoped that more graduate students would participate with a financial incentive, however, even with this mentor stipend, we tested the upper limits of our graduate mentors’ time and students did not receive the same support as the prior cohort. Because of this, we decided to cap the number of accepted undergraduates in order to safeguard from a lack of mentorship.
* **Useful summer workshops**: part of our summer program included workshops on topics we thought might be beneficial to emerging scholars, such as “How to Read a Scientific Paper”. Based on student feedback, we re-evaluated both the topics of these workshops and the amount of workshops. More specifically, students didn’t feel the need to have a workshop every single week, and that time could better be used with social bonding activities. Furthermore, there were workshops students requested that didn’t exist, such as “How to Manage Your Time as a Scientific Researcher”.
* **Independence from the university**: most undergraduate research programs on our campus exist under a “Summer Research Programs” (SRP) umbrella, which coalesces the programs in weekly workshops and a final presentation. During our first year, we were a part of this campus-wide group, however, after feedback from students about the quality of workshops and the lack of community from the larger groups of people, we chose to primarily operate on our own schedule. We did appreciate the SRP end-of-year presentations, so we kept this as a final benchmark at the end of summer in combination with our own final symposium.

**Ideas:**

* ~~Cohort size~~
* ~~Stipend increase, pros and cons~~
* ~~Creating a sense of community~~
* ~~Workshops (with UCSDs SRPs vs On our Own, what worked, what didn't, e.g. some workshops scholars did not find useful, we don't need 5 workshops, it's better to have 3 really good ones even if they're a little longer than 1 hr)~~
* ~~Number of Scholars in one lab~~
* ~~Encouraging Mentor-Mentee interaction, $$ was not an efficient incentive~~
* Our program, our rules
* ~~Our own symposium plus/versus large UCSD SRC~~
* URM Speaker for Symposium
* Ensure generational knowledge of program gets passed down effectively
* Sending surveys for feedback before and after the summer program (getting this info from each cohort is useful especially if the program is brand new)
* How to divide leadership roles (what roles are needed, how many per role)
* How to track success of alumni