Dr. Hussein Jirdeh is a senior executive with over 20 years of experience in higher education. He held positions with increasing responsibility in academic institutions in research and educational programs. He is currently, the Director of University Relations for the Universities Space Research Association (USRA), a consortium of 104 universities with over 400 employees that work closely with NASA and other government agencies to bring the talents of the university community to bear on important national problems.

Dr. Jirdeh received his doctorate in Mechanical Engineering in 1988 from the State University of New York, Buffalo. His primary research interest is in thermal systems and space technologies. Prior to joining USRA, he was on the faculty at Vanderbilt University in the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

The seminar will introduce the Universities Space Research Association (USRA) and focus on USRA's engagement with member universities. USRA was incorporated in 1969 in the District of Columbia as a private, nonprofit corporation under the auspices of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). Institutional membership in the Association has grown from 49 universities when it was founded, to the current 104 institutions. All member institutions are PhD granting universities in the space sciences or technology. USRA is dedicated to advancing space sciences and exploration through innovative research, technology, and educational programs. We accomplish this mission by providing a collaborative membership organization where universities and other research organizations may cooperate effectively with each other, with the United States government, and other entities to develop knowledge associated with space science and technology.

An overview of USRA research institutes and programs and opportunities for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows will be presented.