

# Volunteers and Research Assistants (RA)

## Letter of Understanding | McArthur, 3F Research Group | 2021

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### **VOLUNTEER AND RA RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Attend and participate in all scheduled research group meetings
  - Participate in research group meetings by providing presentations as requested/needed, completing readings as requested prior to research group meetings (e.g., conceptual/theoretical/empirical articles), constructive feedback to other research group members (e.g., regarding conference posters) and on-going research projects
- Advise supervisor of times you will be away at least 2 weeks in advance
- Treat other research group members with respect, minimize noise disruptions in research group facilities
- Adhere to confidentiality requirements concerning data, protocols, and analyses
- Complete and maintain TCPS2 Core Certification (<https://tcps2core.ca/>) throughout the duration of studies
- Volunteers are encouraged to provide a photo and a statement of research interests for the research group website; students may opt out of website inclusion (e.g., for confidentiality reasons)
- Comply with Policies and Regulations on Safety and on Ethical Conduct of Research, and understand what constitutes plagiarism, misconduct and cheating, and abide by policies and rules and regulations in effect at the University
- Attend regularly scheduled research group meetings (approximately bi-weekly)
- Inform the supervisor, in a timely manner, of issues potentially impacting timelines of work completion (e.g., living arrangements, financial need, mental health difficulties, supervisor availability, quality/timing of supervisor feedback)
- Allow a sufficient and reasonable amount of time for completion of requests, or assistance, as requested of the supervisor (e.g., avoid last-minute applications requiring substantial revisions, reference letters)
- Reply to emails from the supervisor within 48 hours on weekdays
- Research activities and email correspondence are not expected on evenings (e.g., past 5 PM) or weekends unless otherwise agreed upon between the student and supervisor
- Maintain a recent and updated CV to be provided upon request to the supervisor to update lab resources/reports/website as needed

### **ADDITIONAL POLICIES FOR RAs**

- Regularly apply for external grant funding to attempt to provide continuous financial support for students (e.g., RA payments, conference attendance, open access fees)
- Provide research assistantship stipends or hourly funding to students, contingent on external grant funding (e.g., CIHR)
- Specific research activities and deadlines corresponding to RA payments/stipends will be specified in writing (e.g., via email, in progress reports)

- Student failure to satisfy agreed upon research activities may result in delay or termination of RA funding (amounts promised in letters of admission notwithstanding)
- Funding for RA activities as provided by the supervisor are only for a duration specified in the letter of offer, or otherwise directly stated in email correspondence (save for your records), with additional funding not guaranteed and to be agreed upon with the supervisor (e.g., extension of project, working on an additional project)

## **SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Mentorship**

- Provide in-person (or virtual) mentorship for theoretical/conceptual issues and research activities, as well as statistical analysis as per the expertise of the supervisor (e.g., regression)
- Supervisor concerns regarding unsatisfactory behaviour will be addressed in multiple personal meetings prior to changes in responsibilities
- The supervisor reserves the right to terminate research group participation/employment, if the student responsibilities are consistently not met (e.g., at least two personal meetings indicate a problem)
- Meet regularly with the volunteer or RA (e.g., bi-weekly research group meetings) and be reachable via email within a 2-day period (unless on vacation)

### **Research**

- Provide opportunities, as are available, to work with other students in the research group (e.g., of collaborators) on additional research projects
- Provide opportunities for co-authorship (as discussed below) on relevant posters and manuscripts prepared by the supervisor in accordance with the extent of participation in the project

## **ADDITIONAL RESEARCH POLICIES**

### **Data**

- Data collected as part of research group activities is to be treated as highly confidential given its often sensitive nature, and not disseminated without written consent of the supervisor
- Individual participants in studies conducted for research group research may be contacted only for purposes outlined in the original ethical approval documents

### **Authorship**

- Authorship may be considered for volunteers and research assistants who have dedicated significant time and effort to a research project, at the discretion of the supervisor.
- Authorship on a conference poster or manuscript submission is determined based on the proportion of the manuscript writing completed by the individual (e.g., an entire first draft written independently) as well as the statistical analyses completed; completion of statistical analyses and data collection alone does not warrant first authorship

- Participation in data collection, or the initial design of study protocols or materials, does not necessarily warrant co-authorship; acknowledgements in a footnote may be more appropriate
- Authorship on all conference submissions and manuscripts should be decided before the majority of the work in preparing this submission has been completed
- The process of assigning co-authorship will follow the ICJME guidelines (<http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html>)

## **Signatures**

The volunteer/RA and supervisor indicated below agree to participate in an advisory relationship in accordance with the aforementioned guidelines.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_