Hi students:

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY (there is a lot of information):

MBB DEADLINE for students and supervisors:
By Thursday, January 23, 2020 at 9:00 am NSERC USRA applicants must submit their online application to NSERC and a paper copy to the MBB office, and VPR USRA applicants must submit their paper application, to the MBB office. Note that this include uploading transcripts and having a supervisor complete form 202 (Part II).

NOTE: The MBB department has a different process and deadlines are different from what is posted on the Graduate Studies website. ENSURE you follow the MBB process and deadlines in this email. Interested students have to find a supervisor first and then apply. Make sure to email your supervisor to complete Part II of Form 202 before you submit your final application to NSERC and the MBB office.

About the Awards
The USRAs are granted to undergraduate students working in a research capacity with an academic supervisor for a 16 week duration. While meant to stimulate interest and encourage undergraduate students to pursue graduate degrees and/or a research career, they are also a great way to recruit students into our graduate programs.

NEW this year:
1. Supervisors are no longer required to hold an NSERC grant in order for their student to receive an NSERC USRA*. Supervisors are still responsible for paying the faculty supplement.
2. The Big Data USRA is no longer available.

*The subject of research is still required to be in the field of the natural sciences and engineering to qualify for the NSERC USRA.

There are two types of USRA Sciences available for MBB:
- NSERC USRA Program
- VPR USRA – Sciences

Value & Tenure of USRA (Sciences)
The award portion of the USRAs is $4,500 for the 16-week period at 35 hours per week. The student must also receive a faculty supplement valued at a minimum $3,676 + 8% benefits.

Basic Eligibility
1. **NSERC USRA Program** (full student eligibility on NSERC’s website):
   - be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada;
   - be registered in a bachelor's degree program (at time of application);
   - have been registered in at least one of the two terms prior to the award term;
   - have obtained a CGPA of at least 2.67;
   - hold the USRA for full time research activities in the natural sciences or engineering, with a supervisor who holds major grant funding or other funds to pay the student’s supplement;
   - not have started a Graduate Program at any time while applying for or holding the USRA.

2. **VPR USRA Sciences Program** (full student eligibility on Grad Studies website):
   - be an SFU undergraduate student;
   - be registered in a Bachelor’s degree program (at time of application);
   - have been registered in at least one of the two terms prior to the award term;
   - have obtained a CGPA of at least 2.67;
   - hold the USRA for full time research activities in the natural sciences or engineering with a supervisor who holds major grant funding or other funds to pay student supplement.
Student Eligibility: More information

- If you are eligible to apply to the NSERC USRA you need not apply to the VPR awards. If you are B-listed and not successful at NSERC you will be considered for the VPR award.
- Applicants who only apply to the VPR award need only provide unofficial transcripts. Make sure you choose UNOFFICIAL and NOT Advising transcript when printing your transcripts.
- When submitting the paper copy of your application to the MBB office, students applying to the NSERC USRA need only provide a copy of your official transcripts. You can keep the original for your records.
- Regarding transcripts: The NSERC website states: "Official, up-to-date transcripts for all university programs must be provided. In this context, official transcripts are those that show the name of the institution, the program in which you are enrolled, your complete course of study, your marks and the legend explaining acronyms etc. Therefore, you need to request official transcripts. Be sure to also upload the legend on the back of the transcripts - only upload the legend once at the end of your transcripts.
- For NSERC USRA: applicants must email the selected supervisor to complete Form 202 Part II well in advance of the deadline date; the supervisor will need to know the applicants reference number to do so. The proposed supervisor must complete Form 202 Part II online. The supervisor submits their form online.
- For VPR USRA: applicants and the supervisor complete and print the form found at: http://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/awards/undergraduate-awards/sciences-awards.html

HOW TO APPLY
Students eligible for both NSERC and VPR awards should create an NSERC Online Account and complete the application for an Undergraduate Student Research Award Form 202 (Part I)

Students who are only eligible for a VPR USRA must complete the application form found on the Grad Studies website: http://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/awards/undergraduate-awards/sciences-awards.html

Payment Information

Payment – Award Portion
For SFU students: The $4,500 award portion will be paid through go.sfu.ca in one lump sum payment in the first month of their appointment. The funds will be applied to their SFU account, paying any fees owing; remaining funds will be processed by direct deposit or via check.

For non-SFU students: non-SFU students will be paid their award portion through payroll as a ‘national scholarship’. They will receive a lump sum payment of $4,500 in the first month.

Students will receive a T4A slip (instead of a T4 slip) for the NSERC or VPR award portion ($4,500).

Payment - Faculty Supplement
The faculty portion of the USRA is paid through SFU Payroll, on a biweekly basis. Faculty members who hire USRA students are responsible for covering the cost of mandatory benefits.

Student Eligibility:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quick Summary</th>
<th>NSERC USRA</th>
<th>VPR USRA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can International students apply?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can non-SFU students apply?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does funding held by the Supervisor have to be an NSERC grant?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can the student take courses while holding award?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enrolment information for USRA holders
Although students cannot be enrolled in classes full time while holding the award, undergraduate students can get Co-op work term credit for a USRA towards their Co-op degree designation. By enrolling in a Co-op practicum
course, students maintain their full-time status and are eligible for U-Pass, health plan, etc. Please contact Susan Mandley, MBB Coordinator at smandley@sfu.ca for further details.

**USRA students with Study Permits**

International students must comply with the conditions of their temporary resident status and ensure they have the proper work authorization.

Requirements for international students holding a USRA vary depending on the term:

*Fall or Spring terms:*

To hold a USRA in the *Fall* or *Spring* terms, international students must show full-time enrolment through Co-op.

*Summer term:*

International students can hold a USRA in the Summer term, as either:

- A "regularly scheduled break" without the requirement of full-time enrollment
  To be eligible, they must have maintained their full-time enrollment in the previous Spring and upcoming Fall terms; OR
- As a co-op work term.

**Holding a USRA as a Co-op work term:**

Students may hold their USRA in a co-op practicum course as part of the SFU Co-op Program. **Note: the student must have previously joined the co-op program and have a valid co-op work permit at the time of the USRA offer acceptance.** Students must apply to join the co-op program, which is typically done two terms in advance of their desired co-op work term period. This is to allow sufficient time to secure the required co-op work permit prior to the start of their employment. *If this is not the case, the USRA must be deferred to a subsequent term.*

Prior to accepting the USRA, international students are advised to check with an International Student Advisor, Immigration Specialist at intl_advising@sfu.ca to confirm their work eligibility, and review Co-op Program requirements at www.sfu.ca/coop/apply.

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Please contact me should you have any questions.

Regards,

Mimi Fourie
MBB Graduate Program Assistant
mbb@sfu.ca

December 23, 2019