Research Assistant
Institute for the Study of Teaching and Learning in the Disciplines and Faculty of Health Sciences

The Simon Fraser University (SFU) Institute for the Study of Teaching and Learning in the Disciplines (ISTLD) and Faculty of Health Sciences invites applications for a Research Assistant (RA) appointment for the Teaching and Learning Development Grant project Decolonizing the scientific method in a first year breadth science course to begin October 2018, exact date TBD.

This project aims to develop a set of lesson plans that provides a counter-narrative to the dominant Western or Eurocentric biomedical science model. The module will be implemented in HSCI 100 - Human Biology and will focus on answering the question “how do we know?” and will broadly compare and contrast the “classic” scientific method and local Indigenous knowledge gathering approaches. Students will also consider how the environment (and to some extent culture) inform and influence these practices. The context for this module will consider how knowledge is gained with respect to the medicinal use of native plants in both Indigenous and Western contexts. At SFU, we have the resource of a western academy as a model for the scientific method and the traditional lands of Burnaby Mountain to explore Indigenous knowledge building systems. The RA will assist in developing a new lesson plan and assessment, develop survey questions, create an online survey instrument, oversee data collection, complete data analysis, and help prepare the final report.

Research assistant responsibilities include:
- Information search to identify content on local Indigenous knowledge gathering practices and plants used in traditional Indigenous medicine. Information may be found as literature or disseminated through interviews with traditional healers.
- Write and implement a survey that uncovers student attitude shifts with respect to Western and Indigenous science and knowledge systems
- Assist with ethics review application
- Assist with developing lesson plans and teaching tools
- Assist with assessment and rubric design
- Analysis of final data and assist with drafting a final report
- Attend regular team meetings
- Maintain clear records of all work completed

The ideal candidate will have the following skills:
- Excellent knowledge and understanding of Indigenous cultures and traditions
- Ability to exercise cultural sensitivity when interacting with members of Indigenous communities
- Currently enrolled in a graduate program (MSc, MA, MEd or PhD) at SFU
- Works well independently
- Strong oral and written communication skills
- Experience with qualitative data analyses
- Experience with instrument design (specifically surveys, grading rubrics)
- Experience with qualitative data analysis using software such as NVivo
- Ability to use Microsoft Office suite

Experience and skills that would be an asset:
- Experience with education research

Rate of pay: $20 - $25/hr (incl. vacation and statutory holiday pay, no medical or dental benefits) - based on experience, qualifications and degree program (Masters or Doctoral level). Total appointment hours: up to 240.

To Apply: Applicants should submit: (1) a 1-page cover letter structured to address the qualifications, skills, and responsibilities as listed above, this should include a description of 1 – 2 projects that exemplify your fit for
this position, and (2) a 1-2 page résumé with two references listed. These two items should be organized as one PDF attachment and addressed to Nienke van Houten, and emailed to nvanhout@sfu.ca with “RA application – Decolonizing Science” in the subject line.

Note: References will only be requested from short-listed applicants.

Complete applications received by October 15th are assured of full consideration. We appreciate all replies to this position posting, however, we will only contact short-listed applicants.