THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Irving K. Barber Faculty of Science
Okanagan Campus

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NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA)

GUIDELINES & EVALUATION PROCEDURE

Role of the Associate Dean, Research and Faculty

The Associate Dean Research will determine the number of awards that will be allocated to each academic Department. For the 2021-22 competition cycle, UBC will determine the internal distribution of NSERC USRAs factoring in both number of NSERC grant holders and NSERC grant dollars, across Faculties/Schools. The approach will be weighted 75% (number of eligible grant holders) and 25% (eligible grant dollars), for each Faculty/School, to determine proportionate award quota distribution. The research grant list contains the same grants that NSERC uses when calculating the number of USRAs allocated to each institution. Note that this formula will be a one-year trial period which will be revisited in Fall 2021 by the Faculty Advisory committee. The Associate Dean Research will also ensure that all applicants meet NSERC's criteria prior to applications being forwarded to the Departments for ranking. The Associate Dean of Research approves the list of final rankings.

Role of Coordinator (in the I.K. Barber Faculty of Science, Dean's Office)

The Coordinator will receive the applications, check that the application packages are complete, make appropriate numbers of scans and send them electronically to each Department.
In order that students who have transferred to UBC's Okanagan campus are not disadvantaged, the Coordinator will work with the registrar's office to convert marks from other institutions to percentage marks. The Coordinator will inform students and their supervisors, by email, of the outcome of the evaluation of their applications.

Evaluation procedure

Applications will be screened initially and ranked by each Irving K. Barber Department Committee according to their established procedure. Each Department Committee will apply the two selection criteria: academic record and research aptitude. Rankings must be based solely on materials in the application package; committee members must not provide or consider additional information on applicants because this would disadvantage any applicants who are not known by the Department committee members. Preference will be given to upper level students, but outstanding 2nd year students will be considered. Once distributed, all application packages will be considered confidential. Any discussion of individual applications is confidential. The Associate Dean, Research and Faculty will confirm the list of Aboriginal applicants/ awardees.

Announcement of results

Results will be announced in March. The Coordinator will contact all students and supervisors by email with the results of the competition. Except under exceptional circumstances, students awarded a USRA will not be allowed to change supervisors from the one listed on their application. If any student chooses to not accept a USRA, then the next student in the ranking will be offered the award. Students may not hold both a USRA and a Irving K. Barber Undergraduate Research Award at the same time. If a student is awarded both, s/he will be allowed to choose between them without penalty once the results of both competitions are announced.

Procedure approved by Faculty Council Feb 19, 2007; Revisions December 2009; Revisions December 2010; December 2011; Updates November 2012; Updates January 2013; Revision February 2013, Revision August 2013; Revision January 2021