ICON RA Policy

This document identifies 1) a general policy about the expectations and responsibilities of ICON Research Assistants (‘RAs’), and 2) how opportunities to fulfill these expectations through involvement with ICON and CICR will be communicated with ICON RAs. An “ICON RA” is defined as any student funded by an ICON research assistantship and does not apply to any ICON student funded by other university or department sources (e.g. GSAs, Presidential Fellowships, departmental funding, research grants). Furthermore, the ICON RA funding is assigned to the student, and should the student change advisors or departments, the funding remains with him/her and new arrangements between the student, ICON, and their advisor should be discussed. The primary motivation of this document is to ensure that the creativity and participation of our ICON RAs will help contribute to the ICON program and CICR, and the experience ICON RAs gain through these projects and activities will strengthen their research, communication, and collaborative skills while broadening their network of colleagues and faculty. Opportunities for participation in ICON/CICR projects and committees are not limited only to ICON RAs. Instead, all ICON students are encouraged to find ways to participate in various activities of ICON/CICR, but ICON RAs are required to participate as part of their funding arrangements.

1. At the beginning of fall semester, ICON RAs will meet with ICON leadership to discuss the ICON/CICR related projects they will contribute to during the academic year. All funded ICON RAs are required to participate in this meeting. During the first 2 weeks of each semester the RA agreement form will be completed and/or updated. It is the responsibility of the ICON RA to communicate with his/her advisor about the responsibilities he/she assumes at the beginning of each semester.

2. The ICON Director will serve as the main point of contact for students on their projects as part of their ICON RA responsibilities. However, CICR sub-committees and/or faculty may arrange a meeting with their assigned RAs to discuss the roles/projects of the RAs at the beginning of the semester (and as needed during the semester thereafter) to provide students with a sense of their semester workload.

3. Students should work no more than 16 hours per week, or the amount specified in their funding letter. The 16 hours a week should first be allocated to ICON/CICR responsibilities, and the total hours of ICON/CICR and advisor-related activities may not exceed the specified hours of work. In the event a student feels he/she is working more than the assigned hours, he/she should speak with the ICON Director about the situation.

4. The use of remaining weekly RA hours should be negotiated between student and faculty advisor. Preferred arrangements include: remaining RA time to be used by student on his/her own research; remaining RA time to be dedicated to advisor research that is directly related to the student’s research. Work not directly related to the student’s research or education should not be used for ICON RA hours.

5. In the event an ICON RA is not adequately fulfilling his/her responsibilities, a meeting will be arranged between the ICON Director, the student, and his/her advisor to discuss the situation and identify solutions.

Possible Opportunities for ICON RA responsibilities to be fulfilled:
It is up to the ICON Graduate Coordinator to identify ICON RA (and general ICON student) opportunities for participation before the beginning of each academic semester. This can include any combination of general items that occur every year and special events/projects. Examples of projects may include (but are not limited to):

- Provide ongoing support to CICR programs and events
- Assist with social media for ICON and CICR
- Plan the annual *Symposium on Integrative Conservation (SIC)*
- Coordinate Integrative Mechanism events

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