

Watch NASA announce their [new findings about the moon](#), live at 10am on Monday!

BIOBEAT

Oct. 26, 2020

Random fact:
Oct. 24th was Calgary's windchilliest day (avg -18.6C) since records began in 1953.

Are you interested in research?

For some of you, this might be a difficult question to answer. Maybe you aren't sure what research is, what it involves, if you're capable of doing it, or how to get involved in it at MRU.

If you want to get involved, get to know your professors. Introduce yourself and let them know what you're interested in. Maybe your interests will align and you'll get to work with them later. The earlier you do this the better, but anytime is good. Not everyone is comfortable reaching out to their professors but it's just a conversation and they're looking to get to know you too.

Furthermore, you don't have to be the top student, you just have to be curious and interested in getting experience. So talk to your professors and find out if they are taking on any students in the near future. Not everyone works with students every semester, and generally have one, maybe two spots open if they do, but it varies depending on the work they are doing and both your interests.

There are two types of credit-based courses you can complete. BIOL 3299 and 4299 are Directed Reading courses. This involves finding a topic that is mutually interesting for you and your supervising professor. Over the course of a semester, you'll delve into this topic, write a comprehensive research paper, and present a talk to the Department at the end. If you prefer to work in the lab, generate data, and analyze data, then the Independent Project courses, BIOL 5201 and 5202, are for you. Again, you'll produce a final paper and present your findings. Both types of courses require you to discuss it first with a potential supervisor and get approval from the Department.

Aside from courses, however, you may also be able to work with a professor as a Research As-



sistant. This is usually, but not always, done over the summer and may be a paid position.

If neither course-based work, nor research assistant positions are available, there is usually the opportunity to volunteer your time. Go into the labs and see what other students are doing or, better yet, volunteer as a subject in a human physiology experiment and get experience that way. And no, it doesn't matter if you're an ecology student, you can still be a subject in another area! Of course, COVID is wreaking havoc with this at the moment, but keep it in mind for the future when things are back to "normal."

In summary: Talk to your professors. Find one whose work interests you and who has availability to take on a student. Together, come up with a project to work on and they will help you decide whether it will be an Independent Project, a Directed Reading, or a research assistant position. Remember that these are all limited positions but there's usually room to volunteer in the lab, or see if you can be a subject.

Stay tuned for next week when you'll get a list of people in the Department and their research and scholarship interests.

GET TO KNOW... JON MEE

What's your favourite concept to teach? "I love teaching about evolution and the origins of biodiversity. We can't conserve and protect biodiversity if we don't know where it comes from!" (Teaches ecology, evolution, genomes)

Health note: The pharmacy in Wyckam is offering walk-in flu shots. As are many pharmacies around the city.