

THE CARRM JOURNAL

The Canadian Association for Research in Regenerative Medicine Monthly Newsletter

PROCRASTINATION AND PERFECTIONISM

Pooja Ravi Sankar, Bio-Medical Sciences, 3rd Year

Whether it's a new episode that catches your eye or a book you just can't seem to put down, we have different reasons for pushing back our academic tasks and studying. This may even take us to the day before the assessment where we may frantically try to cram every lecture slide and note into our head. Although this may lead to the result we hope for, we sometimes find ourselves falling short of our goals and expectations. Being aware of why we procrastinate can help us look out for some signs in order to manage it better. Knowing the ways some students tackle that initial bump in getting started could also help us recognize potential ways to use our time better and channel our energy and efforts into finishing our tasks and achieving our goals.

Recognizing the five W's is a good first step to take when you find yourself procrastinating. What makes you do it? Is the task not as interesting or is there just too much to finish in a limited amount of time? Do you find yourself not being as resourceful with time when you try working in one

location and not the other? Does working with certain peers work better or do you work better alone? These are all important questions to ask yourself to then focus on helping manage learning habits better. Self awareness is truly critical in this process of improving learning habits.

Once you take the time to reflect, it's good to start by setting small goals, using organizational systems and tracking time consciously. Whether it's using a daily task list, monthly calendars or even sticky note reminders throughout the day as deadlines come up, try a few different strategies to stay on task and see what works best for you! If you are unsure whether a specific organizational tool is right for you, try it out and make changes according to your personal and academic needs. Behavioural goals –small, concrete tasks such as simply opening up your notes or your laptop—can be a good first step that brings you closer to completing the task. Another type of goal setting includes minimal goals. These goals ensure you complete the small, simpler tasks

such as doing a 2% quiz or completing a discussion post. Setting minimal goals requires the student to recognize and know "what's good enough" to help students who specifically deal with procrastination as well as perfectionism to finish simpler tasks so they can move onto the more challenging ones.



Last but not least, always keep in mind that at the University of Guelph, we hope to create a positive inclusive atmosphere and build a strong community. Studying with peers, even if it just means keeping each other accountable to attend group study sessions can be beneficial for learning. Faculty and professors are also often a great support. In case you find yourself needing clarifications for class content, jot the questions down right away and meet with your professor. Attending extra office hours and asking your questions early could be beneficial and even allow you to stay motivated throughout the semester! If you would like to learn more about managing procrastination, studying strategies or time management, please feel free to book an appointment with a Learning Services Consultant through the UofG Library website!

Important Tool - REWARD YOURSELF!

This means understanding yourself better and taking time to relax, decompress and even prepare for the task at hand. However, sometimes it is easy to find ourselves distracted by activities like watching TV and thus, it is critical to know what reward brings you closer to your goal and which brings you farther away

DISCOVERING CANCER TRAITS FROM COMMERCIAL GENETICS KITS

Mehak Mohindru, Bio-Medical Sciences, 3rd Year

Looking at your ancestry and going back to see your genes to see if you could have a carrier of a cancer gene is something that's increasing due to how convenient it is to check. 23&me is an organization that provides home-based genetic health and ancestry kit at a cost and eventually sends a report that contains all your health and genetic information down to your 0.1% ethnicity. It offers two packages, the first one being the Health + Ancestry Service which provides insight on your genetic health risks, carrier status, traits, wellness and ancestry. The second one is an Ancestry Service that provides information on who you are and where your DNA and family history come from. Since it is a home-based kit, it doesn't require blood samples or needles, a simple saliva sample that is sent back to labs to process. This type of testing gained them the "Invention of the Year" by Times magazine in 2008.

As a private biotechnology company, it has had its fair share of disagreement with FDA approval due to the genetic tests, but eventually, it was FDA approved. Recent articles from their blog have been looking into genes for cancer that are hereditary, explicitly looking at hereditary colorectal cancer syndrome. MUTYH-associated polyposis (MAP) is an inherited condition where the person develops multiple colon polyps, which is essentially clumps of cells formed on the lining of the colon. Most of these cases have developed into colorectal cancer. The MAP report has been FDA approved and would be included in the Health +Ancestry Service kit but giving the consumer the option to use it only if they desire.

MAP report that 23&me offers only accounts for two variants that lead to MAP but those two are the most prevalent in people of Northern European descents. If the person is a carrier of both of these variants or even two copies of one option increases the risk of colorectal cancer. In cases, where only one copy of one variant is present, it could still present a risk since colorectal cancer increases with family history. These tests will give people a chance to ensure at an early stage if they are at risk of this cancer if they have heard of other family members suffer from it before. If clients do decide to go forward with the MAP report, they will put into additional training to educate them on the possible outcomes and how to go ahead with the results once they're provided. MAP reports also offer the same 99 percent accuracy as their other options in the reports.



SO YOU WANT TO GET INTO RESEARCH?

Jocelyn Lee, Bio-Medical Sciences, 4th Year

Getting into undergraduate research is a goal for many science students. Research experience allows students to both develop specific skills and reach interpersonal goals. Keep reading to learn how you can land an undergraduate research position!

TYPES OF POSITIONS

Different positions exist for those looking to get into undergraduate research - here are the most common ones

- Volunteer
- Laboratory Assistant (Work Study)
- Summer Student (USRA/URA/CBS Assistantships/Teaching hospitals)
- Research Student (Literature Review/4th Year Thesis)

Decide which position is right for you: typically, students start as volunteers or assistants and work their way up!

TIPS

THE EARLIER THE BETTER

Regardless of the type of position you're looking for, the earlier you inquire about positions, the higher the chance you have of getting one - generally, professors hire students on a rolling basis. For summer positions, start to inquire in January.

FIND SOMETHING YOU LIKE

Find a professor that does research you're genuinely interested in. A professor is much more likely to hire you when you show interest and enthusiasm! It's also much more fun to investigate something you're excited about.

BE RELENTLESS

Chances are, you won't find someone willing to take you on right away - this doesn't mean you should give up! Contact anyone and everyone whose research aligns with your interests. Email them! Meet them in person! Ask to set up a meeting.

BOOST YOUR RESUME

Why should the investigator choose you to be on their team? Do you possess certain lab skills? Do you communicate well with others? Do you show a strong interest in the sciences? Prove to the PI that you are an asset to the lab. Take classes that teach you laboratory techniques! Volunteer in the community! Join a club like CARRM! Show the PI that you're a well-rounded student!

BRUSH UP ON YOUR WRITING SKILLS

Need help with a cover letter? Don't know how to approach scientific writing? Ask your peers! Upperclassmen! Visit the Library's writing workshops! **USE YOUR RESOURCES.**

RESEARCH CHECKLIST

- **Identify your interests**
 - Do you like cardiology? Cancer? Nutrition? Identify what type of research you are most interested in.
 - Have a prof who seems really cool? Ask them if they're looking for students in their lab!
- **Identify your options**
 - Don't restrict yourself to what's offered in your school - there are positions available everywhere.
 - Did you know the Government of Canada has research positions designated for students every year?
 - The University Health Network has their own summer programs you can apply to!
 - Did you know you don't have to be a student at the university in order to apply for their USRA's?
 - Consider volunteering
 - A volunteer position can help you learn some skills and make connections with researchers
 - While this is valuable, it is not paid. Be careful to ensure you're not being taken advantage of - for example, a PI requiring a volunteer to be in lab 10+ hours a week is **UNETHICAL**
- **Contact potential advisors**
 - Do your research - who seems to have a positive lab dynamic? What type of research has this lab done in the past? How can I contribute to a positive learning environment?
 - In your email, briefly state who you are, what experience you have (if any), and why you're interested in working with them. It is also beneficial to include a resume and transcript here.



MEET SOME CARRM EXECUTIVES



VICE PRESIDENT - MEHAK MOHINDRU

Mehak is a 3rd year biomedical science major student at the University of Guelph. She has a keen interest in health science research and tries to explore different aspects of the area. She uses the opportunity of being with CARRM to explore the field of regenerative medicine. Mehak loves to get involved with the community and write, especially writing for the school newspaper.



VICE PRESIDENT/STEM CELLS TALKS SYMPOSIUM COORDINATOR - SHAIMA ALAM

Shaima is currently in her second year of study at the University of Guelph and is working towards obtaining a degree in Biochemistry. She can still recall the time that she was first introduced to the use of therapeutic stem cells. It had intrigued her that there was a method in medicine to replace what has degenerated. It seemed magical, and the perfect solution to so many illnesses that her family was plagued with. Only later did she realize that there was much to still be researched in the field of regenerative medicine. She believes that regenerative medicine offers unprecedented development of new treatments for debilitating diseases. Her goal as the Stem Cell Talk Symposium Coordinator is to raise awareness of these benefits so the new generation of researchers are inclined to innovate in this field. Shaima has been supporting her work of cancer research, therapeutic volunteerism, and wellness education using medical research, and hopes to now support medical research through the Guelph chapter of CARRM.

WE WANT AUTHORS LIKE YOU!

Want to be featured in next month's issue? Write about your own experiences in research/at school, science in the news, and much more!

Contact jlee57@uoguelph.ca for more information



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JOIN CARRM TODAY

THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR RESEARCH IN
REGENERATIVE MEDICINE IS ALWAYS RECRUITING
NEW CLUB MEMBERS

JOIN NOW FOR:

INFORMATION ABOUT UPCOMING EVENTS

ADVANCE NOTICE FOR MERCHANDISE SALES

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REFERENCES

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AT [HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/CARRMGUELPH/](https://www.facebook.com/carrmguelph/)

GUELPH CARRM / LETS TALK SCIENCE
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science



Undergrad Poster Presentations

Do you have a biological research poster ready to present?
Come present your research to High School students in an
hour-long poster session at the Stem Cells Talks Symposium
at UofG

Monday, February 24th | 10:30 - 11:30 AM
Peter Clark Hall

Email
guelphcarrm@gmail.com
for inquiries

