



# The VADA Program

Visual and Automated Disease Analytics  
Graduate Training Program

## Faculty Terms of Reference November, 2022

### What is the VADA Program?

The Visual and Automated Disease Analytics (VADA) Program is a graduate training program funded by the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) as part of its Collaborative Research and Training Experience (CREATE) grants program.

The goal of the VADA Program is to train Master's and PhD students to develop and use automated techniques and tools to collect, analyze, and visualize chronic and infectious disease data. The objectives of the VADA Program are to:

1. Advance student **technical skills** in the development and integration of interactive data visualization, visual analytics, and automated approaches for data mining, mathematical and statistical modeling, and predictive analytics;
2. Improve student **knowledge of applied problems** relevant to the detection, prevention and management of infectious and chronic diseases;
3. Develop student **professional skills** in communication and relationships, entrepreneurship, responsible conduct of research, and project management.

In brief, the VADA Program will assist students to develop technical and problem-solving skills to address the challenges of working with complex health data, as well as professional skills that focus on collaboration, project management, career development, ethics and privacy, and entrepreneurship.

### What are my obligations as a VADA Program faculty member?

1. I have agreed to participate in bi-monthly VADA Program team meetings.
2. I have agreed to join and actively participate in at least one of the VADA Program subcommittees:
  - a. Internship/Lab Exchange Committee
  - b. Summer School Committee
  - c. Sustainability Committee
  - d. Research Excellence Committee
3. I have agreed to supervise one or more VADA Program trainees.
4. I have agreed to serve on a VADA Program trainee's thesis committee if requested.
5. I have agreed to lead a class in the Foundations of Disease Analytics course and/or I agree to lead a session in the VADA Program Summer School and/or present as part of the VADA Program seminar series.

Failure to fulfill the obligations listed above can result in faculty (and associated students) no longer being affiliated with the VADA Program. If faculty members are unable to meet the above outlined obligations they are asked to discuss any mitigating factors with VADA Program leadership.

### Committee Structure and Term





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For each committee, membership will be re-evaluated annually and one committee chair must be identified. No more than 7 faculty members will sit on any given committee. Each committee is free to establish sub-committees for specific initiatives if that is deemed to be helpful.

## What are the responsibilities for each subcommittee?

**Internship/Lab Exchange Committee** – Works to identify potential partners, build and maintain relationships with them and match them to interested students. This subcommittee is also involved in evaluating the processes around and outcomes of the internship.

**Summer School Committee** – Works to organize and oversee the annual summer school, liaising with the George and Fay Yee Centre for Healthcare Innovation at the University of Manitoba or School of Health Information Science at the University of Victoria as needed. This includes recruiting speakers, setting up time tables and schedules, identifying the big data challenge and deciding on which technical/professional skills should be developed through the summer school. After the summer school has been completed, the committee also gathers to evaluate the summer school.

**Sustainability Committee** – Gathers on an as needed basis and works to find and discuss potential opportunities to sustain the VADA Program after funding from NSERC has finished in 2023.

**Research Excellence Committee** – Works to plan and execute a new VADA Program seminar series to feature students and faculty within the program. Also disseminates information about thesis committees, candidacy exam and dissertation news in order to facilitate cross-disciplinary appointments of VADA Program faculty members onto student thesis committees. This committee also oversees the journal club that the 2<sup>nd</sup> year PhD students participate in and works to establish terms of reference for the journal club and faculty leads for each of the sessions.

