

# **Concordia University Research Chairs Program**

## **Post-award Administrative Guidelines**

**Office of the Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies**

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## **Post-award Administrative Guidelines**

This document is an administrative guide for the Concordia University Research Chairs (CURC) Program. It complements the *Interim Framework for Research Chairs and Distinguished Professorships at Concordia University* (December 6, 2007) which describes the mandates, processes, and procedures that govern the research Chairs and distinguished professorship programs at Concordia. In general, pre-award activities such as nomination, selection, and appointment processes are described in the *Interim Framework* while the *Post-award Administrative Guidelines* describe the post-award administration of appointed Chairs.

### **1 Administering a Chair**

This section covers the basic parameters of the appointment of new Chairs as well as the renewal of previously existing appointments and covers such topics as the Letter of Appointment, duration, Chair title, awarded amounts, and instalment information.

#### **1.1 Letter of Appointment**

A Letter of Appointment is issued by the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs upon recommendation from the Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies.

The Letter of Appointment includes the following information:

- Title of the Chair
- Tier level: One (Senior) or Two (Junior)
- Annual amounts: research funding and salary stipends
- Start-date and end-date of the appointment
- Course remission

The Letter of Appointment is sent from the Office of the Provost to the nominated chairholder with copies to the Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies, Faculty Dean, Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies (i.e. of the faculty in question), chairholder's Departmental Chair, Office of Research, and the Concordia University Faculty Association. The candidate responds to the offer in writing to the Office of the Provost (with copies as listed above). Upon receiving the acceptance notice, the Chair is formally installed.

#### **1.2 Duration of CURC appointments**

Awards for Tier One Chairs are tenable for seven years; awards for Tier Two chairholders are for five years. Given a positive evaluation for renewal, both Tier One and Tier Two chairholders may be reappointed for a second term. Only one renewal is possible for Tier One and Tier Two chairholders. Upon expiration of a Chair appointment, CURC program funding is discontinued to that Chair.

Should a chairholder leave the University, or become otherwise ineligible to hold a Research Chair because of a change in employment status, the Faculty must immediately

notify the Office of the Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies in writing. This notification should include the effective date of the change in the chairholder's employment status as well as any other relevant information pertaining to the termination of the appointment and the chairholder's research program. The Chair's appointment will be considered terminated as of the date when the change of employment status comes into effect.

If a change in employment status occurs due to retirement before the end of a chairholder's CURC appointment, the chairholder may retain her/his Chair title and research funding (not salary stipend) until the end date of her/his Chair appointment (see Section 2.8 Retirement).

### **1.3 Chair title**

The title of a Chair will be formulated as follows:

- Concordia University Research Chair in [Area of Expertise] (Tier One)
- Concordia University Research Chair in [Area of Expertise] (Tier Two)

The area of expertise should provide a somewhat more focused depiction of the chairholder's expertise than the name of her/his department.

#### *Joint titles*

In the event of a joint appointment with a CURC and another organization the title of the Chair should always include "CURC". (For example, a joint Chair with UNESCO would be entitled):

- UNESCO-Concordia University Research Chair in [Area of Expertise] (Tier level)

#### *Honorary titles*

For Tier One Chairs, chairholders who held two consecutive terms may choose to keep the Chair title after the termination of their appointment by prefixing the title with the word, "Honorary." No funding from the CURC Program is attached to such an honorary title.

Retired chairholders may also continue to refer to their CURC title, if the appointment was held up until the time of their retirement and they are completing their proposed CURC research program. Honorary Chair titles are to be written as follows:

- Honorary Concordia University Research Chair in Area of Expertise (Tier One)

### **1.4 Start and end dates and annual instalments**

The annual start (June 1) and end (May 31) dates for CURC appointments correspond to Concordia's academic year. The Office of Research will notify Financial Services and the Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs prior to the beginning of each academic year of awarded amounts for new, renewed, and ongoing Chair

appointments. By exception, other start and end dates may be suggested by the Faculties and be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

## **2 Terms and Conditions**

This section covers a variety of terms and conditions of the CURC Program including; research support and salary stipends, teaching load, the holding of other Chairs/titles, tier advancement, policies governing research integrity and scholarship, leaves of absence, and retirement.

### **2.1 Faculty contributions**

The Faculties may contribute funds over and above the amounts provided under the CURC program, additional course remission, research space, etc. Such contributions are to be made at the discretion of the Faculty in question and are negotiated between the Faculty Dean and the chairholder. Faculty contributions are managed and administered by the Faculty.

### **2.2 Research support and salary stipends by tier level**

#### *Tier One*

Tier One chairholders are awarded a total of \$50,000 annually from the CURC Program. Of the \$50,000 annually awarded, \$30,000 will be allocated to support the chairholder's research program as described in the chairholder's CURC proposal and \$20,000 is allocated to the chairholder as a salary stipend (including benefits).

#### *Tier Two*

Tier Two chairholders are awarded a total of \$25,000 annually from the CURC Program. Of the \$25,000 annually awarded, \$15,000 will be allocated to support the chairholder's research program as described in the chairholder's CURC proposal and \$10,000 is allocated to the chairholder as a salary stipend (including benefits).

Salary stipends for Tier One and Tier Two Chairs are not to be used to defray a portion of the chairholder's regular salary. It is provided to the chairholder over and above the chairholder's regular salary. The research support should be no less than the amounts stated above.

### **2.3 Course remission**

CURC chairholders are allowed a reduced teaching load by a minimum of one course per academic year (usually a three-credit course but this may vary from Faculty to Faculty). The Faculty is responsible for the cost of the reduced teaching loads (i.e. teaching replacement) and makes the final decision on course remissions for each individual Chair.

### **2.4 Holding other research Chair titles/awards**

A CURC chairholder may concurrently hold other Research Chairs, Distinguished Professorships, awards, or fellowships with the exception of a Canada Research Chair.

Other Research Chairs or Distinguished Professorships that may be combined with a CURC appointment are as follows:

- Endowed Chairs or Distinguished Professorships supported by funding from external sponsors;
- Research Chairs of distinction with no external funding attached, such as UNESCO Research Chairs; and,
- Industrial Research Chairs supported by funding from industry and/or public sources such as an NSERC Industrial Research Chair.

The funding for a CURC may be used to leverage external funding for another Research Chair, Distinguished Professorship, Research Award, or Fellowship. The Office of the Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies must approve the use of the CURC program funds for leveraging purposes. The initial set-up and the administration of co-financed Chairs will be handled on a case-by-case basis depending on the nature of the opportunity and coordinated by the Office of Research.

### **2.5 Tier advancement**

After either one or two Tier Two appointment terms, a Faculty may nominate a Tier Two chairholder for a Tier One appointment. Such nominations will be evaluated according to the same procedures and criteria as other Tier One nominations and are likewise subject to the availability of funds from the CURC Program.

### **2.6 Mid-term evaluations and Chair renewals**

The Office of Research maintains files documenting all CURC chairholders and their status. The Office of Research will contact each Faculty once a year to confirm chairholder information and to advise on upcoming renewals and mid-term evaluations.

### **2.7 Policies governing research integrity and scholarship**

Research involving human or animal subjects, hazards, biohazards, radioactive materials possible environmental impact, field work, all requires certification. The university will release research funds only after verifying that researchers have obtained all required certification in accordance with the current procedures at the University. Non-

compliance with the University's procedures for research ethics, animal care, and health and safety regulations may result in the freezing CURC funding until all required certification has been issued.

## **2.8 Leaves during a Chair's term**

Chairholders are eligible for a variety of leaves (e.g. sabbatical, maternity, parental, family) in accordance with the Collective Agreement between Concordia University and the Concordia University Faculty Association. The CURC Program allows flexibility to accommodate such leaves and the chairholder may choose to continue research activities as planned or defer the research activities for the duration of the leave.

### *- Leave without interruption of research activity*

If the chairholder continues full research activities while on leave (e.g. sabbatical leave) the status of the Chair appointment will remain unchanged. The annual instalment of funds (research support and salary stipend) for the Chair will continue for the period in question and the appointment will continue without interruption. The Office of Research will inform Financial Services and the Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs accordingly.

### *- Leave with interruption of research activity*

If the leave involves interruption of the research activities the CURC program allows deferral of the funding (research support and salary stipend) during the leave. Once the leave ends, and the chairholder returns to the institution full-time, the transfer of funds will resume. The end date of the chairholder's appointment will be extended for a time period that is equal to the duration of the leave. An extension due to a leave cannot be carried over from one appointment to a second appointment.

The Faculties must inform the Office of Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies of all leaves of absence taken by chairholders before the commencement of the leave period. A written notice should include information on:

- duration of the leave: expected start and end dates;
- information of the chairholders plans to either postpone or continue the research activities.

While on leave, the chairholder may choose to change the intended cessation or continuation of research activities. In those cases, the Faculty must immediately inform the Vice-President of Research and Graduate Studies. The Office of Research will inform Financial Services and the Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs regarding temporary changes of a Chair's term due to a leave.

Impact of a chairholder's leave on the proposed research program should be explained in the annual chairholder's report and be taken into consideration in the mid-term and the renewal evaluations.

## 2.9 Retirement

When a chairholder retires the Faculty must notify the Office of the Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies in writing prior to the change in the chairholder's status and provide the following information:

- date of retirement;
- information of the chairholders plans to either continue or end the research activities.

According to current practice and procedure at Concordia University, retirement is a voluntary action and is not dependent upon age. As long as the chairholder continues her/his research activities she/he is eligible to keep the title and receive the research support portion until the end of the Chair's appointment. All terms and conditions, except the salary portion, apply to retired chairholders, such as mid-term evaluation, renewal, annual reporting, and leaves. Due to the changed employment status, a retired chairholder will not receive the salary stipend from the CURC program.

If the retired chairholder does not wish to continue her/his research upon retirement, a phase-out period of up to six months after the retirement date can be used to allow the chairholder to wrap up the research program and expend remaining research funds as needed. Retired chairholders with ceased research activities may keep the Chair title with the added prefix "Honorary".

## 3 Roles and Responsibilities

The CURC Program and funding envelope are managed by the Office of the Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies. The University Research Committee is responsible for the allocation of new Chairs and renewal of existing Chairs based on recommendations by the Faculties. Below is a description of the roles and responsibilities of the principal units involved in the post-award administration of the CURC Program.

### *CURC chairholders*

Chairholders are responsible for exercising financial control over the research funds allocated through the CURC program as per the University policies and procedures outlined in the Researcher's Guide available at the Financial Services website. Chairholders are also responsible for submitting annual reports as outlined in the *Interim framework*.

### *Provost and Vice-President Academic Affairs*

The Provost and Vice-President Academic Affairs approves the formal appointment of faculty to the Chair positions and issues the Letters of Appointment based on recommendations from the Vice-President of Research and Graduate Studies



### *Office of Research*

Administrative support for the program is centralized at the Office of Research on behalf of the Office of the Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies. The Office of Research:

- maintains files for each Chair including documentation on nomination and appointments, reports, evaluations, renewals, and termination;
- compiles data, prepares reports, and provides information as required for reporting purposes on behalf of the VPRGS;
- informs Financial Services, Restricted funds on the opening of new accounts, closing of accounts, annual allocations for all chairholders, and related changes;
- administers ethics compliance reviews and approvals;
- advises the VPRGS on matters pertaining to the operation and performance of the CURC program, policies, practices, and performance; and,
- provides assistance to researchers and other University staff on administrative processes and responds to queries regarding the program.

### *Financial Services, Restricted Funds*

The financial administration of the CURC program is under the responsibility of Financial Services; more specifically, Restricted Funds:

- opens two accounts at the beginning of each new Chair term: One account for the research support for the chairholder and one account for the salary stipend on behalf of the Faculty (usually in the name of the Faculty Dean);
- closes accounts of expired Chair appointments;
- ensures that expenses are eligible as per CURC program guidelines;
- transfers funds annually from the CURC Program to Financial Services, Restricted Funds;
- records expenditures and monitors for over-expenditure; and,
- prepares and submits financial reports as required for institutional reporting purposes.

### *Faculty*

The Faculty in which the Chair is allocated is responsible for exercising financial control over the salary portion of the funds available through the CURC program. The Faculty Financial Controller (or equivalent position) authorizes expenditures from the chairholder's accounts in accordance with ethics compliance requirements and program guidelines.

The Faculty is responsible for communicating information in terms of changes in research activity and eligibility of chairholders, or any other information of relevance to the chairholder's appointment. The Faculty makes recommendations to the Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies on the CURC appointments and renewals. The Faculty is also responsible for carrying out mid-term evaluations of chairholders as outlined in the *Interim framework*.

## **4 Financial Administration and Funds Management**

The Office of Research, on behalf of the Office of the Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies will provide information to Financial Services, Restricted Funds, prior to June 1st annually, regarding the amounts to be transferred from the CURC Program envelope to each Chair.

Annual instalments to the Chairs' accounts from the CURC program envelope are made by Financial Services on June 1 each year for the academic year, June 1 to May 31. The chairholder manages her/his research account as per the regulations outlined in the *Researcher's Guide* provided by Financial Services. Payment of expenditures from the award may only begin on or after the start date of June 1.

### **4.1 Eligible and Ineligible expenses**

The following lists are examples of eligible and ineligible expenses under the research support portion of the Chairs' funding. Questions regarding eligible and ineligible expenses should be directed to the Office of Research.

In general, all expenditures related to the direct cost of research are eligible, for example:

- salaries and non-discretionary benefits of members of the chairholder's research team (students, postdoctoral fellows, research associates, technicians, administrators);
- cost of travel, computing, expendables, publications, materials and supplies for the chairholder or members of the research team;
- travel and accommodation expenses for speakers invited to research conferences and workshops;
- fees for memberships in scholarly associations related to the chairholder's field of research;
- cost of professional and technical services;
- cost of outfitting research and office space for the chairholder and her/his team;
- costs associated with the use of computers, modems, software, and any other computer-related materials necessary to conduct research;
- cost of acquiring, operating, and maintaining research equipment and other resources required for research; and,
- cost of organizing workshops, seminars, meetings, related to the research program.

Ineligible expenses include the following:

- the salaries of students and research personnel who are not under the supervision (or co-supervision) of the chairholder; and,
- discretionary severance and separation packages.

The portion for salary stipend should be for the chairholder only. Salary of any faculty member other than the chairholder is not eligible.

## **4.2 Residual funds and phase-out**

Any balance in a Chair's research account by the year end (May 31) will be carried over to the next academic year, until the last year of the chairholder's term. Generally, the salary account should not carry any balance at year end but there may be occasions when a significant amount of research funding has not been expended as projected in the Chair's budget (e.g., a student who leaves prematurely).

The reasons for significant leftover funds should be explained in the chairholder's annual CURC report and addressed in the mid-term evaluation or renewal evaluation. Any remaining research funds at the end of a chairholder's term may be expended during a phase-out period of up to six months.

Unspent funds after the phase out period or due to early termination of the appointment (for example the chairholder leaves the position) must be returned to the CURC Program.

## **4.3 Non-transferability of CURC awarded funds**

CURC Program funds are for CURC chairholders affiliated with Concordia University. Should the chairholder discontinue her/his affiliation with Concordia University, funding from the CURC Program cannot be transferred, in whole or in part, externally to another university, institution, organization, department, unit, or other party. The awarded CURC funds are for the chairholder's research activities as described in the CURC's proposed research program and must comply with the conditions and terms of the CURC Program. A chairholder may not use or transfer funds internally for purposes other than those described in her/his research program and as per the eligible expenses established for the CURC Program and the guidelines established for researchers by Financial Services, Restricted Funds.