

# **Concordia University Research Chairs Program**

## **Post-award Administrative Guidelines**

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

**December 18, 2017**

## Post-award Administrative Guidelines

This document is an administrative guide for the Concordia University Research Chairs (CURC) Program. It complements the [Policy on Research Chairs](#) and the related [Procedures and Guidelines for Research Chairs](#), which outline the internal principles that govern all types of Research Chairs at the University, independent of their title and source of funding.

While this document is meant specifically for the Concordia University Research Chairs (CURC) Program, its guidelines are to be applied to other types of Research Chairs at Concordia University in the absence of specific requirements from external sponsors or donors.

### *CURC established prior to 2013*

Concordia University Research Chairs established before 2013 are subject to the terms and conditions that were in place at the time of their establishment, and which may be different from what is described in the present document. This could include different annual amounts for salary support and research allocation, different term length for Tier I chairs, and the possibility to renew the chair for a second term (involving a renewal evaluation process). For more information, please contact Mr. Philippe Jacques, Administrator, Strategic and Institutional Programs and Infrastructure, in the Office of Research.

## Section 1 - 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 (URC) is responsible for the allocation of new Chairs based on ranked and justified 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 on the Financial Services website. Chairholders are also responsible for submitting annual reports and mid-term review documents as outlined in the [Policy on Research Chairs](#) and the related [Procedures and Guidelines for Research Chairs](#).

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

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

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

Administrative support for the program is centralized in the Office of the Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies (OVPRGS). The OVPRGS:

- maintains files for each Chair including documentation on nomination and appointments, research program, budget, reports, evaluations, and termination;
- compiles data, prepares reports, and provides information as required for reporting purposes on behalf of the VPRGS;
- informs Financial Services (Research 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, and practices; and,
- provides assistance to researchers and other University staff on administrative processes and responds to queries regarding the program.

#### *Financial Services, Research Funds*

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

- opens two accounts at the beginning of each new Chair term: One account for the research allocation 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 mother account to the research allocation and salary stipend accounts;
- 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 program guidelines and appropriate University policies.

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 [Policy on Research Chairs](#) and the related [Procedures and Guidelines for Research Chairs](#).

## **Section 2 - Administering a Chair**

This section covers the basic parameters of the appointment of new Chairs and covers such topics as the Letter of Appointment, duration, and Chair titles.

### **2.1 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: New Scholar, Tier 2 or Tier 1
- Annual amounts: research funding allocation and salary stipend (including benefits)
- Start-date and end-date of the appointment
- Course remission (cost to be covered by the researcher's Faculty)

The Letter of Appointment is sent from the Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs to the nominated chairholder with copies to the Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies, Faculty Dean, Faculty Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies, 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 and Vice-President, Academic Affairs (with copies as listed above). Upon receiving the acceptance notice, the Chair is formally installed.

### **2.2 Duration of CURC appointments**

Awards for Concordia University Research Chairs are tenable for five years. While Chairs cannot be renewed, it is possible to re-apply through another call for nominations at the Tier 2 and Tier 1 levels, subject to the eligibility guidelines of the specific call for nominations. Upon expiration of a Chair appointment, CURC program funding is discontinued to that Chair.

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 Retirement).

Should a chairholder resign from 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.

## 2.3 Chair titles

The title of a Chair will be formulated as follows:

- Concordia University Research Chair in [Area of Expertise] (Tier 1)
- Concordia University Research Chair in [Area of Expertise] (Tier 2)
- Concordia University Research Chair in [Area of Expertise] (New Scholar)

The area of expertise should provide a more focused depiction of the chairholder's expertise and goal of her/his research program for the chair term.

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

A CURC chairholder may concurrently hold other Research Chairs, Distinguished Professorships, awards, or fellowships, with the notable 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 will be coordinated by the Office of Research.

### *Joint titles*

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

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

### *Honorary titles*

Retired Tier 1 chairholders may continue to refer to their CURC title, if the appointment was held up until the time of their retirement. Honorary Chair titles are to be written as follows:

- Honorary Concordia University Research Chair in [Area of Expertise] (Tier 1)

## **Section 3 - Terms and Conditions**

This section covers a variety of terms and conditions of the CURC Program including; research support and salary stipends, teaching load, policies governing research compliance, leaves of absence, and retirement.

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

#### *Tier 1*

Tier 1 chairholders are awarded a total of \$35,000 annually from the CURC Program. Of the \$35,000 annually awarded, \$20,000 will be allocated to support the chairholder's research program as described in the chairholder's CURC proposal and \$15,000 is allocated to the chairholder as a salary stipend (including benefits).

#### *Tier 2*

Tier 2 chairholders are awarded a total of \$32,000 annually from the CURC Program. Of the \$32,000 annually awarded, \$20,000 will be allocated to support the chairholder's research program as described in the chairholder's CURC proposal and \$12,000 is allocated to the chairholder as a salary stipend (including benefits).

#### *New Scholar*

New Scholar chairholders are awarded a total of \$29,000 annually from the CURC Program. Of the \$29,000 annually awarded, \$20,000 will be allocated to support the chairholder's research program as described in the chairholder's CURC proposal and \$9,000 is allocated to the chairholder as a salary stipend (including benefits).

Should a chairholder's rank change during the term of the chair (for example, from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor or from Associate Professor to Professor), the chair tier and support stay the same until expiration of the term. An active chair is not allowed to be nominated for a new chair until the last year of the term of the chair.

Salary stipends for Concordia University Research Chairs are not to be used to defray a portion of the chairholder's regular salary or other special stipends. It is provided to the chairholder over and above the chairholder's regular total salary. The research support should be no less than the amounts stated above.

### **3.2 Course remission**

CURC chairholders are entitled to a reduced teaching load by a minimum of one course per academic year (usually a three-credit course). The Faculty is responsible for the cost of the reduced teaching loads (e.g. teaching replacement) and makes the final decision on course remissions for each individual Chair. The Faculty will report annually to the OVPRGS on the reduced teaching load provided to its chairholders.

### **3.3 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 outside of the CURC program.

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

The annual start date and end date for CURC appointments are June 1 (start date) and May 31 (end date).

### **3.5 Mid-term evaluations and end dates**

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 mid-term evaluations and end dates.

### **3.6 Compliance with policies, procedures, and guidelines**

Research involving human participants 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 of CURC funding until all required certification has been issued.

CURCs must conform to University policies and procedures pertaining to research including but not limited to: health and safety of staff working in research laboratories, compliance certification for research, recovery of indirect costs on research grants and contracts, conflict of interest guidelines, and University approval to engage in formal partnerships with other universities, industry or other organizations.

### **3.7 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 is meant to allow some flexibility to accommodate certain types of leaves, where the chairholder may choose to either 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 goes on sabbatical leave, it is expected that she/he will continue full research activities while on leave and 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*

For other types of leave (such as for a leave without pay, maternity/paternity/parental leaves, etc.), it is anticipated that the leave will involve interruption of the research activities, and the CURC program will allow deferral of the funding (research support and salary stipend). Once the leave ends, and the chairholder returns to the institution full-time, the CURC will resume and the end date of the chairholder's appointment will be extended for a time period that is equal to the duration of the leave. A deferral extension due to a leave cannot be carried over from one appointment to a second appointment. In the case of a leave without pay, should the leave extend beyond one year, the CURC appointment will be automatically terminated.

It is the responsibility of the Faculty to inform the Office of Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies of all leaves of absence taken by its chairholders before the commencement of the leave period. A written notice should include information on:

- type of leave
- duration of the leave: expected start and end dates;
- information about the chairholder's plans to either postpone or continue the research activities while on leave.

When applicable, a chairholder may request to change the intended cessation or continuation of research activities during the leave. In such cases, the Chairholder must immediately inform the OVPRGS of the rationale for the request. The OVPRGS, in consultation with the Faculty, will review the request and decide whether it can be approved. The Office of Research will inform Financial Services, the Faculty and the Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs regarding temporary changes of a Chair's term due to a leave.

The impact of a chairholder's leave on the proposed research program should be explained in the annual chairholder's report and will be taken into consideration in the mid-term review and in future nominations.

### **3.8 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 chairholder's 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, annual reporting, and leaves. Due to the changed employment status, a retired chairholder will not receive the salary stipend from the CURC program.

However, in the case of a chairholder opting for an early/progressive retirement, both the salary stipend and the research allocation can remain available, provided the research activities of the chairholder remain at expected level for a CURC (and that the progressive workload reduction only impacts teaching and service activities).

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 Tier I chairholders whose research activities have ceased may keep the Chair title with the added prefix "Honorary".

## **Section 4 - Administration and Funds Management**

### **4.1 General guidelines for managing CURC funding**

Annual instalments to the CURC accounts are made by Financial Services, Research Funds in the beginning of June each year for the academic year, June 1 to May 31. The chairholder manages her/his research allocation account as per the following guidelines.

The funds from the CURC program must contribute towards the costs of the chairholder and her/his program of research for which the funds were awarded. The funds must be used effectively and economically, and the expenses must be directly related to the activities of the Chair for which the funds were awarded. Payment of expenditures from the award may only begin on or after the start date of June 1.

Contributions to shared expenses must be directly attributable to the funded chairholder's research program.

The following list provides examples of eligible and ineligible expenses under the research support portion of the CURC program funding. Justifications for specific expenses and how they relate to the chairholder's research program may be requested by Research Funds prior to approval. Questions regarding eligible and ineligible expenses should be directed to Mr. Philippe Jacques, Administrator, Strategic and Institutional Programs and Infrastructure, in the Office of Research.

### **4.2 Eligible Expenses**

In general, all costs that are directly related to the chairholder's approved research program 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 space (including specialized furniture) for the chairholder and her/his team;
- costs associated with the use, by the chairholder or members of the research team, of computers, modems, software, and any other computer-related materials necessary to conduct the chairholder's research program;
- costs associated with the use, rental or purchase of cellular telephones or smartphone devices (e.g., BlackBerry, iPhone, Pocket PC), including service plans, long distance or local charges, but only if they are required for data collection and can be satisfactorily justified in relation to the chairholder's research program;
- cost of acquiring, operating, and maintaining research equipment and other resources required for research;
- cost of organizing workshops, seminars, meetings, related to the research program (including non-alcoholic refreshments and meal costs); and
- reasonable hospitality costs (non-alcoholic refreshments or meals) for networking purposes in the context of formal courtesy between the chairholder and guest researchers and for research-related activities in the context of assemblies that will facilitate or contribute to the achievement of the research objectives (e.g., chairholder meetings with partners and stakeholders).

### **4.3 Ineligible expenses**

Ineligible expenses include the following:

- any costs that are not directly related to the chairholder's approved research program;
- costs of alcohol;
- costs of entertainment, hospitality and gifts, other than those specified above, including regular interactions with colleagues from the institution and staff meetings;
- monthly parking fees for vehicles, unless specifically required for field work;
- costs associated with the use, rental or purchase of cellular telephones or smartphone devices (e.g., BlackBerry, iPhone, Pocket PC), including service plans, long distance or local charges, that cannot be satisfactorily justified in relation to the chairholder's research program;

- costs of clothing;
- costs related to curriculum development and/or pedagogical activities ;
- accommodation and meals while the chairholder is on sabbatical leave (or any other type of leave);
- the travel costs of a chairholder's family member or research team member from the chairholder's home institution to the sabbatical leave location (or any other type of leave);
- 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 is for the chairholder only. Remuneration costs for any Concordia faculty member other than the chairholder is not eligible.

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

Normally, 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 research allocation account should not carry any balance at year end but there may be occasions where a significant amount of research funding has not been expended as projected in the Chair's budget (e.g., a student who leaves prematurely, delays in beginning a specific activity in the first year of the chair term, etc.).

The reasons for significant leftover funds must be explained in the chairholder's annual CURC report and also addressed at the mid-term review: a spending plan should also be presented for approval to the OVPRGS upon request. In consultation with the chairholder's Faculty, the OVPRGS reserves the right to reject a spending plan (in whole or in part) and recuperate unspent research allocation funding.

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, subject to approval by the OVPRGS.

Unspent funds remaining at the end of the chair term, or after the phase out period, or due to early termination of the appointment (for example the chairholder leaves the position) or because of the non-approval of a spending plan will be returned to the CURC Program mother account.

#### **4.5 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.