POLICY ON EXTERNAL RESEARCH CHAIRS

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Approval Authority: Vice-President, Research, Innovation and Impact

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PREAMBLE

Concordia University (the "University") recognizes and values the role played by External Research Chairs (as defined below) in creating and mobilizing knowledge with the aim of achieving excellence in research. As leaders in their fields, Chairholders play a critical role in deepening our knowledge base and in strengthening our teaching, training of highly qualified personnel, and research capacity. As catalysts and builders, they contribute to the positioning of the University in given areas of scholarly pursuit and to the enhancement of the research training environment.

PURPOSE

This Policy is intended to ensure that research areas and candidates for External Research Chairs are selected in a coherent and visionary manner to support and advance the strategic priorities of our Academic and Research Units (as such terms are defined below).

Additionally, the purpose of this Policy and its related *Procedures and Guidelines* is to set University-wide principles for the establishment, allocation and support of External Research Chairs at the University, as well as to prescribe effective and transparent procedures for reporting and performance evaluation, renewals and discontinuation of existing External Research Chairs.

SCOPE

This Policy outlines the internal principles that govern all External Research Chairs at the University, independent of their title and source of funding. It complements external institutions' requirements for the governance and administration of External Research Chairs, including the terms and conditions of appointment, evaluation and renewal. In the event of any conflict or contradiction between the provisions of the present Policy and the requirements and regulations of external institutions, the requirements and regulations of the latter shall prevail.

The principles that govern Internal Research Chairs are outlined in the *Policy on Internal Chairs* (VPRII-15).

The *Procedures and Guidelines* reflect current institutional practices and cover such items as:

- Composition and role of the University Research Committee (URC) and the Faculty Research Committees (FRC) (as such Committees are defined below);
- Internal processes for the allocation, recruitment, nomination, and formal designation of External Research Chairs;
- Budget guidelines for Canada Research Chair (CRC) and Canada Excellence Research Chair (CERC) nominations;
- Reporting, evaluation and renewal of External Research Chairs;
- Discontinuation and termination of External Research Chairs.

This Policy, which relates only to the terms and conditions of External Research Chairs, shall not replace or supersede any provisions set out in the Concordia University Faculty Association (CUFA) Collective Agreement.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions shall apply:

"Academic Unit" means, as outlined in the CUFA Collective Agreement, a department or college within a Faculty in which a CUFA member may hold an academic appointment.

"External Research Chairs" are positions funded by external institutions such as government agencies, hospitals, charities, foundations, or other sponsors. The administration of the programs' rules, regulations, and funds for these chair positions is governed by the external institution. While the University receives the funding and ensures compliance with the terms and conditions of the chair positions, it does not administer the funds or the associated program.

The "Faculty Research Committee" (FRC), or its equivalent, means the Faculty-based committee which makes recommendations to the URC in light of the Faculties' context, culture and strategic priorities.

"Research Unit" means a non-departmental unit, such as centers, institutes, networks, and the like, with specific objectives to advance the research-related goals of the University. Research Units are governed by the *Policy on Research Units* (VPRII-8).

The "University Research Committee" (URC) means the central committee which oversees procedures for the internal allocation, nominations and renewals of External Research Chairs, ensuring an institutional perspective.

POLICY

External Research Chairs

1. External Research Chairs are prestigious academic designations held by outstanding researchers who are acknowledged by their peers as leaders in their fields and recognized as internationally renowned researchers.

2. External Research Chairs, as defined in this Policy, encompass, but are not limited to, the two main federal research chair programs:

    a. Canada Research Chairs (CRC)

    The CRC program, established in 1999, is an initiative funded by the Government of Canada. Each eligible institution receives an allocation of Research Chairs calculated on the amount of research funding received from the Tri-Council (NSERC, CIHR, and SSHRC).

    b. Canada Excellence Research Chairs (CERC)

    As amended from time to time, the CERC program, established in 2008, is an initiative funded by the Government of Canada. The program awards world-renowned researchers and their teams either $8 million or $4 million over 8 years to establish an ambitious research program. At the outset of each competition cycle, each institution is assigned a funding envelope that establishes a total dollar amount. Institutions retain discretion to determine the value of each application, selecting either $4 million or $8 million, provided the total requested funding for all applications remains within the allocated

envelope. The institution's decision on the value of each application will ultimately determine the number of applications that it can submit. The allocation serves as a submission quota and does not constitute a guarantee of funding. The CERC program operates as a national competition, wherein all submitted applications are assessed against the entire pool of submissions.

Establishment and Allocation of External Research Chairs

3. Establishment of an External Research Chair is a prerogative of the University and aims to advance research goals and reinforce graduate and highly qualified personnel training as envisioned by the University's Strategic Research Plan.

4. A new External Research Chair is established when funding for the External Research Chair is made available by external institutions, such as when the University receives a new CRC from the Government of Canada. For a new CERC, this is dependent upon the call, the priority areas identified by the Government of Canada, the allocated envelope, and the competition results.

5. When an External Research Chair is available, Academic and Research Units are invited to submit letters of intent (LOIs) demonstrating the strategic impact of allocating an External Research Chair in a given area. Strategic prioritization is carried out at the Faculty level so that the URC can subsequently make a well-informed final decision with a University-wide perspective, as outlined in the *Procedures and Guidelines*.

6. In situations where an external institution targets a specific research area, discipline, profile, or candidate for an External Research Chair, the allocation process outlined above might not be relevant or appropriate, in which cases the relevant Faculty framework shall apply.

7. An External Research Chair is not permanently allocated to a specific research area or to an Academic or Research Unit at the University, unless such condition has been clearly stipulated by the external institution at the time of the establishment of the External Research Chair.

8. If an existing External Research Chair becomes vacant due to resignation, retirement, non-renewal, or any other reason, the relevant external institution is notified, and following

their policies and guidelines, the External Research Chair position is either revert to the University pool or otherwise phased out. In case of reversion to the University pool, the allocation process described in the *Procedures and Guidelines* is to be followed. Similarly, an External Research Chair position shall revert to the University pool should no candidate accept a given nomination.

Nomination to External Research Chairs

9. A Chairholder normally holds a full-time tenured or tenure track appointment at the University while the External Research Chair designation is in effect.

10. Nomination of an external candidate to an External Research Chair involves the recruitment of the candidate to the University with the nomination to the External Research Chair to follow at the appropriate time. In the recruitment process, all interested candidates are notified that the position is related to an External Research Chair and all conditions related to the External Research Chair designation are clearly outlined. For External Research Chairs that are based on a national competition (e.g., CERC), the recruitment is conditional on the final outcome of the application.

11. The procedure for the recruitment and appointment of faculty members is defined and governed by the CUFA collective agreement, including the formation of a Department Hiring Committee (DHC) to consider chairholders' appointments, when applicable.

12. The authorization to fill an allocated External Research Chair may be revoked and the External Research Chair reallocated if:

    - the search process is not completed as per delays outlined in the *Procedures and Guidelines*.
    - the candidacy is not approved by the external institution.

Formal Designation of External Research Chairholders

13. To obtain an External Research Chair designation (e.g. CRC, CERC, or others), the selected candidate must comply with the respective program requirements and any relevant guidelines of the external institution. Where the program is funded in part or entirely by

an external Institution, the external institution grants the approval and the formal designation.

14. At the discretion of the respective Faculty Dean, the appointment to a faculty tenure or tenure-track position may be made conditional upon the approval of the candidacy by the external institution.

15. In the case of an External Research Chair allocated to a research area that crosses departments or Faculties, the individual must have a primary appointment in one Academic Unit.

Terms, Conditions and Support of External Research Chairs

16. External Research Chairs are subject to the terms and conditions of their awards as defined by the external institution, and subject to University rules, regulations, policies, standards and practices. In the case of CRCs and CERCs, the terms and conditions of University support are outlined in the *Procedures and Guidelines*. In the event of any conflict or contradiction between any of the regulations, policies and guidelines of the University and those of the external institution, the regulations, policies and guidelines of the latter shall prevail.

Reporting, Evaluation and Renewal of External Research Chairs

17. Annual reporting and mid-term reviews are required of all External Research Chairs as outlined in the *Procedures and Guidelines*.

18. Additional requirements for annual reporting are governed by the rules of the external institutions.

19. For External Research Chairs that are renewable after a completed term, the chairholder must undergo an internal performance evaluation. The FRC coordinates the evaluation of renewable External Research Chairs in the final year of the term. Each Faculty Council establishes a committee to review the renewal and submit a recommendation to the URC for final decision.

20. Following a positive decision by the URC, a chairholder may proceed with the development of the renewal dossier. A successful renewal nomination by the external institution results in the continuation of the External Research Chair designation.

Discontinuation and Termination of External Research Chairs

21. External Research Chairs may be discontinued by mutual agreement between the University and the external institution. In such cases, the chairholder presents a plan for the phasing out of the position, which is communicated by the Office of the Vice-President Research, Innovation and Impact (OVPRII) to the external institution. Special consideration should be given to the implications for students and the highly qualified personnel involved in the External Research Chair's activities.

22. If the chairholder moves to another eligible institution, and if the external institution allows the reallocation of the External Research Chair to the new institution, the chairholder presents a plan for the transition that considers existing commitments at the University.

23. The external Research Chair designation may be terminated when:

- the status of the faculty appointment is changed to a non-eligible status as defined by each External Research Chair type.
- the outcome of the performance evaluation is unsuccessful or if they are terminated in accordance with the provisions of the CUFA collective agreement.
- the chairholder is non-compliant with the rules, regulations, policies, standards and practices of the University or the external institution.

24. The procedure for the termination of an External Research Chair designation is outlined in the *Procedures and Guidelines*.

Policy Procedures and Guidelines

25. Any amendments to the *Procedures and Guidelines* are subject to the approval of Faculty Deans.

26. Centralized procedures for allocation, nomination and designation might not apply in cases of External Research Chairs targeting a very specific research area, Academic Unit, or candidate. In order to reflect the principles enshrined in this Policy, each Faculty shall have an administrative framework governing these External Research Chairs, a copy of which should be on file with the OVPRII.

Policy Responsibility and Review

27. The overall responsibility for implementing and recommending amendments to this Policy shall rest with the Vice-President Research, Innovation and Impact.

Policy approved by Senate on April 16, 2020, and amended on October 4, 2013; and on February 7, 2025.