POLICY ON INTERNAL 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 Internal 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 Internal 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 Internal Research Chairs at the University, as well as to prescribe effective and transparent procedures for reporting and performance evaluation, renewals and discontinuation of existing Internal Research Chairs.

SCOPE

This Policy outlines the internal principles that govern all types of Internal Research Chairs at the University, independent of their title and source of funding. It complements external funding partners' requirements for the governance and administration of Internal Research Chairs, including the terms and conditions of appointment, evaluation and renewal.

The principles that govern External Research Chairs are outlined in the *Policy on External Chairs* (VPRII-14).

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, nomination, and formal designation of Internal Research Chairs;
- Creation and renewal of an Endowed Research Chair or Special Professorship;
- Post-award administration, including budget guidelines, of the Concordia University Research Chair Program (CURC);
- Reporting, evaluation and renewal of Internal Research Chairs;
- Discontinuation and termination of Internal Research Chairs.

This Policy, which relates only to the terms and conditions of Internal 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.

"Internal Research Chairs" are positions funded by the University's internal resources or by external funding partners, such as individual donors or corporate entities. The administration of the programs' rules, regulations, and funds for these chair positions is governed by the University, taking into account, when applicable, the terms and conditions set by the external funding partners.

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 Internal Research Chairs, ensuring an institutional perspective.

POLICY

Internal Research Chairs

1. Internal 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. Internal Research Chairs, as defined in this Policy, encompass, but are not limited to:

    a. Concordia University Research Chairs (CURC)

    The CURC program, created in 2000, is designed to build research capacity, leverage external funding, and provide direct support to graduate students. In exceptional circumstances, CURCs may be considered as a mechanism to retain faculty members. The Office of the Vice-President Research, Innovation and Impact (OVPRII) annually assigns a budget to support the CURC program and the number of CURC chairs depends upon the availability of funds in any given year. Available CURC designations are Tier 1 and Tier 2.

    b. Endowed Research Chairs

    With the support of individual and/or corporate partners, Endowed Research Chairs are a resource that serves to attract or recognize renowned researchers in a variety of disciplines.

    Funds to create an endowment may come from several sources, generally a donation to the University.

c. Special Professorships

Special Professorships reflect naming opportunities for funding partners over a defined period of time. The duration is governed by the amount of funding available and the activities included in the professorship. A professorship with a research focus is administered under the same conditions as an Internal Research Chair.

Establishment and Allocation of Internal Research Chairs

3. Establishment of an Internal 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 Internal Research Chair is established when funding for the Internal Research Chair is made available. The establishment of CURC, Endowed Research Chairs or Special Professorships is dependent upon available opportunities.

5. When an Internal Research Chair is available, Academic and Research Units are invited to submit letters of intent (LOIs) demonstrating the strategic impact of allocating an Internal 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 funding partner targets a specific research area, discipline, profile, or candidate for an Internal Research Chair, the allocation process outlined above might not be relevant or appropriate, in which cases the relevant Faculty framework shall apply.

7. To ensure alignment with institutional strategic priorities, feasibility and long-term sustainability, all initiatives to establish an Internal Research Chair must be communicated to the VPRII and the Provost and Vice-President, Academic (PRVPA) at an early stage. The VPRII and the PRVPA jointly specify the area of the Internal Research Chair, the source of funding, expected category of the position and any special conditions associated with the selection and appointment of a candidate, with a notice to CUFA.

8. An Internal 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 funding partner at the time of the establishment of an Endowed Research Chair or Special Professorship.

9. If an existing Internal Research Chair becomes vacant due to resignation, retirement, non-renewal, or any other reason, the Internal Research Chair position reverts to the University pool and the allocation process described in the *Procedures and Guidelines* is to be followed. Similarly, an Internal Research Chair position shall revert to the University pool should no candidate accept a given nomination.

Nomination to Internal Research Chairs

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

11. CURCs is used to recognize researchers who currently hold an appointment as faculty members at the University. Other types of Internal Research Chairs may be designated for external or internal candidates depending upon the terms and conditions of each Internal Research Chair.

12. The authorization to fill an allocated Internal Research Chair may be revoked and the Internal 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 funding partner.

Formal Designation of Internal Research Chairholders

13. The URC communicates its approval to the VPRII. A letter of appointment for the Internal Research Chair is issued by the PRVPA upon recommendation from the VPRII, with a copy sent to CUFA.

Terms, Conditions and Support of Internal Research Chairs

14. The terms and conditions of University support are outlined in the *Procedures and Guidelines*.

Reporting, Evaluation and Renewal of Internal Research Chairs

15. Annual reporting is required of all Internal Research Chairs as outlined in the *Procedures and Guidelines*.

16. Additional requirements for annual reporting of Endowed Research Chairs and Special Professorship are governed by the rules of the external funding partner.

17. For Internal Research Chairs that are renewable after a completed term, the chairholder must undergo an internal performance evaluation. The FRC coordinates the evaluation of renewable Internal Research Chairs. Each Faculty Council establishes a committee to review a mid-term and renewal evaluation and submit a recommendation to the URC for final decision. Following a positive decision by the URC, the Internal Research Chair is considered renewed, and the chairholder receive a letter of appointment stating the terms and conditions of the upcoming term.

Discontinuation and Termination of Internal Research Chairs

18. The Internal Research Chair designation may be terminated when:

- the status of the faculty appointment is changed to a non-eligible status as defined by each Internal 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, when applicable, of the external funding partner.

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

Policy Procedures and Guidelines

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

21. Centralized procedures for allocation, nomination and designation might not apply in cases of Endowed Research Chairs or certain Special Professorships 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 Internal Research Chairs, a copy of which should be on file with the OVPRII.

Policy Responsibility and Review

22. 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.