

McMASTER UNIVERSITY

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Approved by:	Senate and Board of Governors
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Position Responsible for Developing and Maintaining the Policy:	University Secretariat
Contact Department:	University Secretariat

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The University's system of Research Leaves is designed to contribute to the professional resources and effectiveness of faculty members, and to the value of their subsequent service to the University community. Research Leave provides time for carrying out a more extensive program of research than can be achieved when research must be carried out in conjunction with teaching and University service. The system of Research Leaves is one of the most effective ways in which the University encourages and supports research and scholarship. Research Leave is intended for academic research, writing, and other forms of professional development. It provides for a period free of teaching duties and other obligations, except that faculty members on Research Leave are expected to make appropriate arrangements for their graduate students, and to comment on thesis chapters, in accordance with policies approved by Senate or by Graduate Council.

After the first six years of full-time service at McMaster University, a full-time tenured faculty member is entitled to apply for either a 6-month or a 12-month Research Leave. For Assistant Professors applying for their first leave, 100% of salary will be maintained during the leave, whether the leave is 6 or 12 months' duration. Those appointed at other ranks will also be eligible for 100% salary if they can demonstrate that their first research leave at McMaster would be the first in their academic career.

Upon completion of the first and any subsequent leave, there are three options from which the faculty member may choose, varying in length of leave and amount of salary received during the leave. After six additional years of full-time service at McMaster University, a full-time tenured faculty member is entitled to apply for:

1. a 12-month leave at 90% salary. Under this option, leave will usually begin on 1 July.
2. a 6-month leave at full salary. Such a leave may begin on either 1 July or 1 January.

as an alternative to waiting until the completion of a further six years of service, after three additional years of full-time service at McMaster University a full-time tenured faculty member may apply for

3. a 6-month leave at 90% of salary.

A faculty member choosing option (3) will be eligible for a six-month leave at 90% of salary twice in a seven-year period. The first such leave may be taken in either half of the fourth year (i.e. 1 July to 31 December, or 1 January to 30 June); the second leave may be taken in either half of the seventh academic year. No faculty member will normally be entitled to apply for more than twelve months of Research Leave in a seven-year period.

PRINCIPLES GOVERNING RESEARCH LEAVE

1. Research Leave is granted only when three conditions are met. First, the number of years of service as described above must be completed prior to the leave. Second, the applicant must have submitted a satisfactory plan describing the research objectives and the way they will be achieved during the leave. Third, the applicant must normally have a satisfactory record of scholarly achievement since the beginning of the previous research leave (or the beginning of employment at McMaster, in the case of a first leave). When these three conditions are met, leaves shall not be unreasonably denied. Evaluation of scholarly achievement shall take into consideration exceptional cases in which such achievement may have been compromised because the applicant has spent time since the last leave in extensive service to the University or the profession.
2. It is the first intention of the University to support in every way possible the leave policy in this document. To this end, faculty members, department chairs, and Faculty deans are expected to work together to ensure that the instructional needs of the department can be met. On the basis of this consultation, the chair and dean may endorse the timing of a proposed leave for a faculty member up to three years before the leave is to be taken. Final approval of the leave will still be based on the application as described below. The University reserves the right to limit the number of leaves granted in any one department in any one year in order to ensure that instructional needs can be met.
3. It is not normally the policy to allow banking of research leaves. Faculty members who are asked to take leave a year earlier or later than normal in order to assist the department will be eligible for subsequent leave as if this leave had been taken at the normal time. Faculty members who for any reason wish to postpone taking a leave when they become eligible for one are advised to apply for leave at the normal time and to discuss the consequences of the deferral with their chair and dean. If a faculty member does not apply for a leave, the additional years before a leave is taken are not counted in the eligibility period for the next leave.
4. Faculty members on Research Leave shall be entitled to salary increases (ATB and CP/M) and consideration for promotion on the same basis as all other faculty members.

Leave recipients will not be penalized in CP/M or promotion deliberations for the absence of teaching or University service activities during the leave period. ATB and CP/M awards will be based on the faculty member's full salary, not on a reduced salary received during the leave.

5. For purposes of pension contributions, insurance, and medical and disability benefits, a faculty member on Research Leave will be regarded as a full-time member of the academic staff on regular salary. The University and the faculty member will continue to contribute their normal shares of the costs involved.

PROCEDURES

1. Written application for Research Leave is to be made by the faculty member to the Faculty dean not later than 31 October of the academic year preceding the leave. The application is to include a description of the planned program of research activity and the way in which it will enhance the applicant's subsequent scholarly contribution to the University, and of the arrangements that have been made for continued supervision of any graduate students while the faculty member is absent from campus. Should the resources of another institution be essential to the planned activity, documentation indicating the support of that institution is needed before final approval can be given.
2. The dean will ask for comment on the proposal from the chair of the faculty member's department. All applications for Research Leave, whether supported by the department chair or not, shall be submitted by the dean to the Research Leave Committee. Research Leave is granted by the Research Leaves Committee, which consists of the Provost, the Faculty dean and the Dean of Graduate Studies. If all supporting documents are included with the application, a decision on the request will be given by 31 January. If supporting documents are still needed, a response in principle will be given by that date, to be confirmed after the necessary documents have been received by the Provost through the Faculty dean. Approved leaves will be reported to the Senate for information.
3. The salary to which a faculty member is entitled while on leave may be paid in part as a research grant, in accordance with the requirements of Revenue Canada and the University's policy for awarding such research grants.
4. A faculty member on Research Leave may accept fellowships, honorary visiting professorships, or the like, provided that the duties associated with these do not detract from the research plan described in the application for leave.
5. The University's Consulting Policy applies during leaves: ² hence the faculty member must report to the dean of the Faculty any consulting or teaching carried out during the leave. In addition to the requirements of the Consulting Policy, which calls only for reporting the time spent, in consideration of the salary being paid by the University during the leave, a faculty member on leave is required to report to the Faculty dean any additional employment income received during the leave. The report should provide sufficient detail about the work to show that it is consistent with the application for leave. If total employment income does not exceed 115% of regular salary, the report may be submitted on completion of the leave. Anticipated employment income in excess of 115% of regular salary must be approved by the dean before taking up the employment.
6. Within four months of completion of the leave, the faculty member is required to submit a written report to the Dean of the Faculty on the accomplishments during the research

leave. The report allows for proper evaluation of the faculty member's accomplishments while on leave, and becomes part of the material considered for CP/M assessments for the following year. The dean will ask the department chair to assess the report, and to take it into account in making a merit pay recommendation; both the assessment and the report will be made available to the members of the Research Leaves Committee.

SPECIAL LEAVES & LEAVES OF ABSENCE

1. In exceptional cases Special Leave may be approved on the normal financial terms for a Research Leave although the faculty member may have served fewer than the required number of years of full-time service. Such leave may be granted by the Research Leaves Committee in consultation with the department chair. It is understood that only a small number of such leaves, if any, will be approved in any one year. Normally, a Special Leave shall be counted as a Research Leave for purposes of determining the time of eligibility for the next Research Leave.
2. Leave of absence without salary may be granted in special circumstances by the University to any member of the faculty. Any such leave taken primarily for the purpose of research shall conform to the principles and procedures of this document. A faculty member on a Leave of Absence without salary is normally required to continue paying for fringe benefits. It would be expected, however, that the University's share would be absorbed by any outside employer. This matter should be discussed with the Faculty dean and the Provost.

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This policy is applicable only to full-time faculty members whose positions are funded primarily (at least two-thirds) from within the University's Operating Budget

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In response to concerns expressed by the Faculty Association about point 5 in the PROCEDURES section of the revised Research Leave Policy, the Joint Committee agrees that this policy permits members of faculty on research leave to engage in consulting activities comparable in extent to those permitted during non-leave periods. The University insists only that the time expended on consulting activities should not interfere with the time that research leave makes available for research.
