

Committee on Research & Publications (CRP)

Policies and Procedures

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Committee on Research & Publications (CRP) ~ **Policies and Procedures Overview**

Introduction

The Committee on Research and Publications (CPR) establishes the criteria to be applied in judging research applications, as well as policies and priorities with respect to grant expenditures. Committee members have adopted policies and priorities which, in their opinion, best serve the larger goal of fostering research among Mount faculty. Funding guidelines are outlined below, but given that research awards are always made with financial constraints in mind, applicants cannot assume that monies will be granted for expenses even if they fall within the guidelines. Further, though policies and priorities are applied as consistently as possible, financial considerations and the number of applications may mean that the extent to which research is funded varies from competition to competition. The information below should be considered as a guide. The Committee is composed of the Associate Vice-President Research (Chairperson) and five faculty members, who are typically appointed for 3 year terms. Ultimately, it is the Committee's responsibility to make whatever recommendations for funding to the President that they feel are justified, given their goal of promoting high quality research on campus.

Terms of Reference

(MSVU Senate By-law 14.8)

Authority

This is a Standing Committee of Senate.

Purpose

This committee shall encourage research and publications within the university, act as the peer review committee for all allocations of internal research funds, and advise Senate on research policy and priorities.

Membership

Ex officio member:

Associate Vice-President - Research

Elected members:

Five full-time members of faculty, representing the areas of humanities, social sciences, education, sciences and professional programs. At least one of these members shall be a member of Senate.

Functions

- To review and recommend on the university's research policy and to recommend annually on the internal funding of research;
- To establish criteria to be followed in the disbursement of monies received from granting councils and internal sources;
- To adjudicate, as peer reviewers, applications from the faculty for funding for research projects and to make recommendations regarding the allocation of research funds;
- To encourage publications and knowledge dissemination;
- To serve as the selection committee for the Award for Research Excellence;
- To serve as the Ethics Appeal Board for graduate and undergraduate projects, and for faculty proposals that have not been previously reviewed for funding by the Committee.

Faculty Eligibility

Full-time ongoing faculty and faculty with term appointments are eligible to apply for internal grants, although a grant may be held only during the period in which the successful applicant is employed by Mount Saint Vincent University. A team of faculty members may apply for a common grant. A part-time faculty member may be named as a collaborator on a grant whose principal investigator is a full-time faculty member. This ensures continuity of the research project. To age 65, faculty members under the Early Retirement Incentive may apply for internal grant funds, provided that they are seeking or are in receipt of external funding. New Scholar and Standard grants are awarded for a maximum of two (2) years.

Faculty members who are making external applications are also eligible to apply for internal funds to begin their research project without awaiting the decision from the external agency. Faculty who are successful in getting external awards that cover the costs of the proposed research are expected to return surplus internal funds.

Purpose of Funding

Internal grants may provide seed money for pilot projects with the potential for leading to applications to external agencies, such as the major federal granting councils. They may also be used to support free-standing projects not leading to large scale grants. Internal grants are usually capped at budgets of \$6,999 or less for two reasons. First, SSHRC policy specifies this amount for internal funds. Second, compared to external grants, projects may be of shorter term or smaller scale. Grants of greater amounts may be awarded under the new scholars initiative.

Envelopes of Funding

In the interest of promoting research, the Committee has created different envelopes of funding to which faculty can direct their application. They are described below in five (5) categories:

1. **New Scholars Initiative** - A new scholars initiative will be available to newly hired, junior, tenure-track faculty during the initial two years of appointment unless otherwise specified. In this category, faculty members may request amounts that exceed the established cap for internal funds. The Associate Vice-President - Research should be consulted to provide up-to-date information. After two years, "new scholars" are still eligible to apply for standard internal grants. At the start of each academic year, the Committee on Research & Publications will announce the details of the competition (e.g., maximum budget, deadline dates). A streamlined standard grant application form will be used for this envelope of funding. The grant period will be for a maximum of two (2) years.
2. **Standard** - The standard grant is designed to mimic SSHRC/NSERC procedures. For accounting purposes, the grant period is two years unless otherwise specified. Standard grant applications made before a previously awarded grant period has elapsed must demonstrate that funds in the previous account will be expended by the time the new grant is awarded.
3. **Aid to Scholarly Publications** - An application for a maximum amount of \$500 can be made for aid to scholarly publications. Researchers can request funds to defray the final costs of publishing a paper or to hire technical assistance to aid in the completion of a paper, monograph, or report. The grant period is one year.
4. **Assistance to Prepare a Large Scale Grant Proposal** - Applications for a maximum of \$2500 can be made to obtain technical assistance to prepare a large scale grant proposal (e.g., secretarial support, coordination). This category of activity implies that Mount faculty are working as a lead partner or in a major role in a large national or international collaborative effort. Examples of this type of activity include: Canada Foundation for Innovation, Centres of Excellence, SSHRCC-Major Collaborative Research Initiatives (MCRI) and Community-University Research Alliances (CURA), CIDA, and some special one-time competitions announced by federal agencies. This category of activity does not include the annual standard and more modest scale research grant competitions of SSHRC, NSERC, etc. The grant period is for one year.
5. **Salary-Based Grant**: An applicant whose proposal for a salary-based grant is approved will have their gross salary reduced by an amount corresponding to the total of the grant. For research leave awardees, the grant will be paid in quarterly lump-sum installments. For non-leave awardees, grant payment will be included with the regular monthly salary payment; the gross monthly amount of grant and salary (before deductions) may not exceed the normal gross monthly salary. Note: It is incumbent on the grant recipient to contact MSVU Payroll Office to establish the grant as soon as notification of the award is received. For more information and general guidelines, please refer to the Canada Revenue Agency Bulletin #

IT-75R4 (June 18, 2003) ~ *Scholarships, Fellowships, Bursaries, Prizes, Research Grants and Financial Assistance.*

In every case, the application forms are available on the MSVU Website (www.msvu.ca/research) and vary according to the envelope of funding.

Internal Application Deadlines

The Committee on Research & Publications has three internal grant competitions each year. They are held in October, January and March. The goal of the Committee is to foster and support research and scholarship among Mount faculty. Deadlines are posted on the Research Office Website in July of every year.

To find information regarding the ethical review of research involving humans and the UREB schedule for reviewing ethics proposals, please refer to the University Research Ethics Board section of the website (www.msvu.ca/research).

Important Budget Issues

Budget Management

The Committee on Research and Publications recognizes that research is a creative and fluid process, often providing shifts, needs, and opportunities to which researchers must have the ability to respond. Once awarded, research funds are to be managed and allocated in support of the proposed research at the researcher's discretion. There are *two firm exceptions* to this. Funds awarded in support of student salaries and benefits are non-transferable and are to be used only for the purposes proposed in the original application and specified in its budget. Also, research funds are *not* to be deployed in the purchase of non-disposable capital equipment (e.g., computers, sound equipment, cameras and so on), except in circumstances where the Committee on Research and Publications has approved such expenditures in its adjudication of the original research application and associated budget proposal. Expense claims must be supported by the required and appropriate documentation and receipts.

Personnel Costs

- Undergraduate level (\$8-\$10/hr + 11.5% benefits)
- Graduate level (\$10-\$12/hr + 11.5% benefits)
- Trained transcribers (\$15/hr + 11.5% benefits)

Since all anticipated budget costs need to be justified, applicants should carefully detail the level of training necessary for high quality completion of their projects. Personnel costs can vary from the above guidelines, depending on justification of needs. The amount charged to the grant is the hourly rate plus fringe benefits. The fringe benefits are composed of 4% vacation pay and the employer portions of CPP and EI. In the case of the Personnel Costs above, the fringe benefits are currently calculated to be 11.5% (subject to change). If you hire a research assistant at \$12/hr,

this means that approximately \$13.38/hr is charged to your grant. This calculation (\$12.00 + 11.5%) must appear on your budget request in your internal grant application. In the case of the example above, the amount paid to your research assistant (in terms of take home pay) is NOT \$13.38/hr. The actual amount paid to your research assistant is \$12/hr plus 4%. The employer portions of CPP and EI are a cost to the grant. If, when you apply for a grant, you budget for personnel costs at \$12/hr +benefits, you should advise your assistants that \$12/hr is the hourly rate of pay that they should expect.

Hiring assistants requires paperwork with Payroll in Human Resources (not the Research Office). Please speak directly to Payroll to get the proper forms to ensure that research assistants will be paid accurately, and to clear up any additional questions about the hourly rate of pay as it is listed on the forms. All casual worksheets should include information about the hourly rate of pay.

Finally, Financial Services will produce a monthly account update. However, since there may be a lag time between expenditure and actual posting in the account, researchers should monitor their expenditures closely. The monthly account may not reflect all current charges to date.

Travel and Subsistence

When the Committee is considering requests for funds to do research elsewhere, the purpose of a research trip is the paramount factor. The Committee's priority is to fund travel for which the explicit purpose is a) to allow the researcher access to resources which are not or cannot practically be made available locally; b) to allow the researcher the opportunity for consultation or collaboration with colleagues. A consultation has to be specific concerning an ongoing collaborative piece of work which is being conducted separately by all parties while working at their individual home universities. If a Mount Saint Vincent University faculty member wishes to collaborate with a colleague at another university, the Committee must be satisfied that the consultation cannot be reasonably achieved by making use of technology currently available at the university (e.g., email, teleconferencing). Costs are always a consideration in decisions about research travel. Applicants should note that the Committee will be rigorous in considering travel requests. The onus is on the researcher to justify requests in support of travel. Applicants are also reminded that faculty conference expenses are not eligible costs on an internal research grant. Please refer these applications to the Dean's Travel Committee in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Collective Agreement. The Committee supports initiatives to include student research assistant participation in the development of research outcomes for presentation at scholarly conferences and within other public venues. The Committee considers student research assistant participation in these activities as contributory to their formation as researchers and scholars. To this end, the Committee encourages applicants to budget travel and subsistence support for student research assistants. Prevailing university guidelines for subsistence rates (e.g. hotel; per diem; and mileage) will apply.

Computer Hardware and Software

The Committee funds requests for computer hardware and software purchases only in extremely exceptional circumstances. Such purchases have been allowed only when the Committee has

been convinced that the requested computer equipment was essential for the conduct of the proposed research. The fact that an expense is an eligible and justifiable one does not mean the Committee will see fit to cover it, even if a grant is given to conduct the research.

Cost for Purchase or Rental of Other Non-Disposable Equipment

Equipment purchases must be essential to the conduct of the research and not just a matter of convenience. Committee members have understood, however, that there are extraordinary circumstances in which it is better to buy equipment than suffer great inconvenience. **Note:** The Purchasing Department must be consulted to obtain accurate quotes for non-disposable equipment and other appropriate items for any non-disposable capital items costing over \$100.00. Also note that items purchased on internal grant funds are the property of the university. Consequently, anticipated purchases of non-disposable equipment such as desktop PCs and laptops must be reviewed by IT&S for compatibility and for adherence to the MSVU Procurement Policy. All non-disposable capital equipment purchased must be registered with IT&S and receive an asset number.

Costs of Materials, Supplies, and Incidentals

This category includes paper, Xeroxing, postage, long distance costs and the like. Individual types of expenses should be itemized when they are significant. Book or journal purchases are not allowed.

Adjudication Process

Applications for Standard Grants, New Scholars Initiatives, Salary-based Grants and for Aid to Scholarly Publications are accepted at the time of internal grant deadlines. Proposals for funding to prepare large scale grants may be accepted at any time, since the roll-over time for letters of intent is usually time-limited and researchers need to make quick decisions about whether they can proceed. **Seven copies** of a complete application are needed. A completion checklist accompanies Internal Application forms. Forms are available on the MSVU website (www.msvu.ca/research).

The Committee approaches applications in any given competition with its commitment to fostering productive research uppermost in mind. Typically, rather than reject an application, the Committee has had the Associate Vice-President Research work with an applicant in an effort to prepare a proposal that could withstand rigorous examination. However, revision is not a guarantee that the proposal will be funded.

Among the applications that the Committee has found acceptable, several factors have influenced the degree to which any one proposal has been funded. These include strength of the proposal, track record of the applicant, and the amount of money available. Committee members have been willing to commit more funds to proposals that they feel are well designed and well planned. Funds available have affected the decision making process. The Committee will allocate resources as widely and as equitably as possible, in the spirit of encouraging quality research and scholarship while providing what support it can.

While the Committee strongly believes that all research regardless of its subject matter is to be encouraged, research embodying the strategic research areas specified by MSVU in its Strategic Research Plan, specifically Women and Gender, Human Development, and Technology Enhanced Learning is especially welcomed. Specific research themes consistent with these strategic areas are supported through funds won from application to SSHRC's Aid to Small Universities program and other such opportunities. To this end, research proposals such as those addressing issues of concern to women and in keeping with the MSVU Mission Statement have been particularly well received and supported

All applications should be clear and concise. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Committee if they have any questions or concerns prior to submitting their application. Grant applications that are received by the Committee on Research and Publications that are incomplete will be returned to the applicant for revisions. If the revised application is not received in full by the committee by the internal deadline for competition, the application will not be considered at that time and the applicant will be encouraged to apply in the next competition.

Assuming the submission of cogent proposals, the Committee's priority is to support to the extent possible applications submitted within the **new scholars' initiative** category. The Committee, within the means available to it, is committed to assisting new scholars at MSVU to launch successful and sustainable research and publication careers.

Adjudication of standard grant applications will be informed substantially, but not exclusively, by the applicants' presentation of evidence respecting the range of outcomes achieved from previously funded research. Examples of outcomes may include, but are not limited to: evidence of peer-reviewed publication (specification of 'forthcoming publication' must be supported by a copy of the letter, contract, or copyright waiver from the editor/publisher indicating acceptance for publication), book-length publication (a 'forthcoming' specification must provide evidence as specified above), submission of a proposal to an external research funding agency, oral and/or poster presentations within juried panels or conferences (evidence must be provided that oral and/or poster presentations were juried), invited public lectures and/or invited participation in symposia (provide information on the place, date, title, and target audience of the lecture/symposia), research-informed commentaries and/or reports of research results published in print media such as newspapers and industry journals/magazines, and/or dissemination of research results through other broadcast media (please provide information on programme, topic and date). The Committee considers evidence of outcomes from previously funded research as a primary reference in adjudicating standard grant applications. This is necessary in order to foster confidence within the MSVU research community that the Committee's decisions will be equitable, positive and encouraging with respect to the principle of allocating MSVU research funds for the purposes for which they are intended, i.e., support of productive research and scholarship.

Award monies will not be activated until all outstanding ethical concerns have been resolved and a *Certificate of Ethics Approval* has been issued. Ethics review is completed under the guidelines of the University Research Ethics Board (UREB) and requires a separate application. A

successful applicant will therefore receive two independent letters: one from the President making the formal award, and another from the UREB, stating that the research is ethically approved and may proceed.

Continuation of Funds

Grantees are obligated to submit a Final Internal Grant Research Report to the Research and International Office. At the latest, the final report is due at the conclusion of the grant period, a maximum of two years. The report form is available from the Research and International Office website (www.msvu.ca/research). Applications for new or additional funding will not be considered by the Committee until the *Final Internal Grant Research Report* from the previous grant has been received.

Funds remaining in research accounts after the two year grant period will be repatriated by the Research and International Office and returned to the appropriate MSVU internal university research envelope of funds. Grantees may request in writing an extension of the grant period to a maximum of one year beyond the date of the original award. This request must be received by the Research and International Office at least **one** month before the termination date of the grant.

Researchers who are awarded internal grants that involve research with humans must obtain ethics approval from the University Research Ethics Board (UREB) prior to conducting their research. Ethics approval is valid for a period of **one** year from the date of issue. A written request for ethics renewal accompanied by an interim ethics report must be submitted to the UREB prior to the Certificate of Ethics Approval expiry, as outlined in *MSVU Policies and Procedures: Ethical Review of Research Involving Humans*.