

MEMORANDUM

Date: November 28, 2000

To: SRSF Steering Committee  
From: A. Davis, Director, SRSF

**Re: The Document Circulated by J. Kearney titled:  
'Report on the Responsibilities and Work Plan of the SRSF Research  
Coordinator'**

I have carefully reviewed the document circulated by J. Kearney. My understanding as a consequence of the SRSF Steering Committee's October 24th decisions respecting this matter was that C. Milley was struck with the responsibility of developing, in consultation with J. Kearney, a proposal that would contain both a revised description of the SRSF's Research Coordinator position responsibilities and duties, and a draft work plan for the SRSF Research Coordinator. The document circulated by J. Kearney, rather than C. Milley, is framed as a 'report'. This document describes various activities since the October 24th meeting. It also lists activities that, I presume, J. Kearney is proposing to engage should he continue as SRSF Research Coordinator. A 'list' of activities does not a work plan make. For example, no effort is made within this 'report' to detail the time and sequencing connections between proposed Research Coordinator activities and the achievement of SRSF's goals.

*More importantly, at no point in the report is an effort made to demonstrate the way that the 'list' of activities provided will satisfy, even remotely, the core 'on the ground' social research facilitation and coordination SRSF Research Coordinator position responsibilities as these were defined originally within the CURA project proposal.*

As defined in the CURA proposal, the CURA Research Coordinator... "Working in close collaboration with the Director, the ...CURA Research Coordinator will be responsible for facilitating and delivering the CURA's 'on the ground' activities. In particular, The ... Research Coordinator will assist the CURA Partner Community Organizations to define the specifics of research education, capacitation and project needs, will take the lead in organizing and delivering workshops and seminars, will take the lead in actualizing and overseeing the conduct of specific research projects, participate, where appropriate, in the CURA's research education and applied research activities, and will coordinate the delivery of draft CURA documents and materials" (p.10).

A review of the specific activities noted clearly demonstrates that J. Kearney is proposing a remodeling of the Research Coordinator position and duties in a manner that fundamentally alters the original conception of and intentions for the Research Coordinator position. In the Kearney proposal, for instance, the Research Coordinator will no longer be primarily capable of or responsible for duties such as taking the lead in organizing and delivering workshops and seminars and in 'actualizing and overseeing the conduct of specific research projects, participate, where appropriate, in the CURA's research education and applied research activities, and will coordinate the delivery of draft CURA documents and materials'. The minimalist activity Kearney proposes is certainly *neither in the spirit of nor embodies the essentials of 'on the ground' and sustained engagements originally intended for the Research Coordinator position. Further, the Research Coordinator position and the resources dedicated in support of it, as redefined by Kearney, will not be capable of fulfilling the critical research-related activities, duties and needs that were initially intended for this position and its associated project resources.*

Support for such a fundamental alteration in the roles and duties of the Research Coordinator position indicates that the SRSF CURA partnership *does not now consider the Research Coordinator position to be core to achieving SRSF's purposes and goals, as this was originally conceptualized, proposed and funded.* If in support of this, the SRSF CURA partnership now will have the duty to *provide substantive justifications for any decision that proposes to continue to dedicate still considerable SRSF resources in support of a radically diminished and delimited Research Coordinator appointment.*

Additionally, the minimalist Research Coordinator position proposal does not address at all the critical issue of how the duties and responsibilities originally affiliated with this position are to be satisfied, especially those core to SRSF's purposes and goals of fostering social research capacitation and research projects. *Failure by the SRSF Steering Committee to address this issue indicates a troubling lack of understanding of and commitment to SRSF's purposes and goals respecting university-community social research capacitation and relations. This state of affairs also violates the SRSF's CURA commitment to accountability and the principle that undertakings engaged meet the expectations and understandings agreed to as expressed both in the CURA proposal as well as the CURA MOU. These attributes might suggest to external evaluators and auditors that the SRSF CURA has come into existence and functions, in part, with respect to questionable motivations, false pretexts, and insincere intentions with respect to the SRSF's stated intentions and goals. Certainly, SRSF could and should not continue if such is the case.*

Given these qualities and the fact that they fundamentally compromise the capacity of SRSF to achieve its stated core purposes and goals, **I cannot and will not support the proposed redefinition of the Research Coordinator position as an over-funded, minimalist position that will be incapable of competently addressing and satisfying SRSF's core need for sustained, 'on the ground', social research leadership and engagement.**

Furthermore, I consider support for this proposal and its funding/resource use implications to represent, minimally, a misuse of SSHRCC funds. **As SRSF Director and the SRSF CURA project Principal Investigator, I neither endorse nor will facilitate the dedication of SRSF, SSHRCC-sourced, funds (public monies) for the ends and purposes proposed.**

A. Davis  
SRSF Director and Principal Investigator