



Information for Academic Candidates

The following information is provided by the McMaster University Faculty Association (MUFA). We thank the University Administration for agreeing to distribute it to candidates for academic positions at McMaster. If you are offered a position, we want you to have as much information as possible so that potential misunderstandings can be avoided.

The Faculty Association's home page is

www.mcmaster.ca/mufa

Click on **Salary & Financial Info** for salary statistics across the University, salary floors and information on the professional development allowance. Click on the **Faculty Handbook** for information on a variety of issues including benefits.

Negotiating Your Offer

If you have an offer, there may be some scope for negotiation on salary and other items. Naturally this scope may be influenced by market factors and budgetary constraints. Feel free to contact the Faculty Association for advice. In some cases and if you so desire, the Association may be able to put you in contact with someone in your prospective academic area who can give you some context in which to assess your offer.

■ CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT

Every academic appointment at McMaster is subject to the **Policy and Regulations with Respect to Academic Appointment, Tenure and Promotion (2007)** (called the "yellow document") and a number of **Supplementary Policy Statements** and related policies, the latest versions of which are linked to the **Faculty Handbook**.

If the position is a **tenure-track** appointment, make sure you understand when the reappointment and tenure decisions will be. If you have had a previous university appointment you may consider negotiating a shorter period to the tenure decision. This may also determine if you have any initial credit towards obtaining **research leave**. If you have been appointed as an Assistant Professor, the tenure decision and the promotion to Associate Professor decision are one and the same.

If the position is a **teaching-track** appointment, make sure you understand when the reappointment decision and the review regarding "permanence" will be. If you have had a previous university appointment you may consider negotiating a shorter period to the review on permanence. Consideration for promotion can occur at the same time as this review, but it is neither necessary nor expected.

For both **tenure-track** and **teaching-track** appointments, find out as much as possible regarding performance expectations for reappointment and for

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obtaining tenure/permanence. If the appointment is across more than one academic area, investigate this for all the areas involved. If you accept McMaster's offer, ask for regular updates from your Chair or Director as to how you are meeting expectations, ideally annually and in writing. You should not accept the assignment of a new, unexpected, substantial task without written assurance that its completion will be given significant weight in the tenure/permanence decision. There is more information on these matters in the **Faculty Handbook**, in the "**Advice regarding Tenure**" document on the MUFA website, and from your **MUFA Tenure/Permanence representative**.

If the position is a **contractually limited** appointment (CLA), you can consider trying to negotiate a longer term. Many such appointments are for one year, the minimum length except in very special circumstances. A CLA carries no implication of renewal or of being considered for any other appointment. However, there is one special provision: in the last year of your contract an academic assessment is conducted by December 15 (or by March 1 if it is your first year at McMaster). If that assessment is favourable and the same position is funded in the coming year, you will be offered a renewed contract for it with a salary increase determined by the same formula as any other faculty member, including a career progress/merit award. But regardless of this provision, unless you are in the Faculty of Health Sciences which has more complex rules, the maximum period you may hold a CLA at McMaster is six years. If you have already held a position at McMaster, the maximum period may be shorter.

In some fields, particularly in the health sciences, some appointments are **Special** or **CAWAR** (Continuing Appointments Without Annual Review). Salary support for these appointments are provided by outside funding agencies which may discontinue funding in the future. You should be aware that holders of such appointments are not guaranteed employment if the funds expire, nor are they guaranteed preference if any other position becomes available.

Regardless of your class of appointment, try to find a mentor who will give you direct, honest advice on what is in your best professional interests.

■ TEACHING

For some positions, **reductions in teaching or administrative load** may be negotiable, especially in the first two years. It may also be possible to negotiate the courses you will teach in order to match your interests and strengths and perhaps to achieve some stability in course load. Teaching the same course more than once can allow you to develop it more fully, as well as save you time.

■ Research Related Matters

There are a number of research items that you should consider and possibly bargain over, although the potential gains from negotiation may be different from year to year and across academic areas. In some fields **start-up research funds**, lab/studio space and perhaps agreement to sponsor research grant applications (funding from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation, for example) are extremely important. Even if you are not in such a field, your professional development allowance may be insufficient for travel to conferences and other expenses such as purchasing a computer. You may also want to investigate the situation in your prospective academic area with respect to office support.

■ Pensions

If you are appointed at McMaster for more than one year (including a one-year CLA followed by another CLA appointment), you will be a participant in the Pension Plan, described in the **Faculty**

Handbook. You may want to pay special attention to this issue if you are moving from another position (that had a pension plan) in order to determine your overall pension situation. Clinical faculty have their own pension plan; consult the Clinical Faculty Association for details.

■ Moving

While most benefits are set and revised from time to time through negotiations between MUFA and the Administration, in special circumstances it may be appropriate to try to negotiate the **moving expense allowance** (see the *Handbook*) and perhaps support for housing search. In any case we recommend that you investigate the housing market as part of your consideration of McMaster's offer.



It is best to have all important features of any agreement in writing. This avoids misunderstandings and will ensure you receive what you expect, particularly as administrators change from time to time.

MUFA Activities

If you do accept McMaster's offer, MUFA invites you to participate fully in its activities. MUFA is involved in non-remuneration matters through its Academic Affairs and Human Rights committees and typically nominates members to serve on University committees on issues from planning to parking to the local environment. MUFA members are automatically members of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (**OCUFA**) and the Canadian Association of University Teachers (**CAUT**), both of which lobby governments on behalf of university faculty and provide other services. In the unlikely event that you are involved in an enquiry, hearing or grievance, MUFA can provide advice and representation.

■ Remuneration and Merit

On remuneration matters, MUFA represents non-clinical faculty in negotiating overall salary settlements and benefits. Our most recent remuneration agreement can be found on our website (see ***Faculty Negotiations***).

In addition, faculty who have tenure-track, tenured, teaching-track or permanent teaching appointments, as well as faculty who either have a single contract or a succession of contracts that cover more than one year, are participants in a sizeable merit increase scheme. While described in the ***Faculty Handbook***, it is somewhat complex. What is most important is that it can benefit all faculty at all salary levels. The majority of faculty receive par awards while relatively few receive awards much below par and a significant number receive awards that are more than par. (The maximum increment under the scheme is 2.5 times par; you should consult within your prospective academic area as to how the merit decision is made). To see the par increments and breakpoints for the most recent remuneration agreement, go to our website and click on ***Salary & Financial Info***. The nature of the scheme is that it tends to help particularly those who are junior and who have below-average salaries. This tends over time to reduce some salary differences across individuals appointed at different salaries.

■ MUFA/University Relations

Remuneration agreements between MUFA and the Administration are typically achieved by negotiation. If negotiations fail, the settlement is by final offer selection, where a neutral party chooses either the MUFA or the Administration position. Hence there are no faculty strikes at McMaster. The President of MUFA meets regularly with the President and the Provost of the University; in addition many issues that arise are settled by a Joint Committee consisting of three representatives of the Administration and three members of the MUFA Executive. We believe these arrangements contribute to collegial and constructive relations between the Administration and faculty and to a better University.

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