

Complete Policy Title:

**McMaster University Policy Guidelines
for Establishing Named Chairs and
Professorships**

Policy Number (if applicable):

Approved by:

**Senate
Board of Governors**

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**May 13, 2009
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Responsible Executive:

Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Enquiries:

[University Secretariat](#)

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PREAMBLE:

This policy guides the process for the approval of, and appointment to, named Chairs and Professorships.

Named Chairs and Professorships are one of the ways that McMaster achieves and furthers its academic mission. These named Chairs and Professorships help the University achieve academic excellence by recruiting and retaining scholars working in areas that are important to the University.

This policy distinguishes between

- Endowed Chairs, where the capital is preserved
- Endowed Professorships, where the capital is preserved
- Term Chairs, where the capital is expended over an agreed amount of time and
- Term Professorships where the capital is expended over an agreed amount of time.

Endowed Chairs and Professorships are established in perpetuity because they result from the creation of an endowment sufficient to support the Chair or Professorship over time. Endowed Chairs will require a greater investment than an Endowed Professorship.

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Minimum amounts are set by the University. The annual return on the endowment is used to support the activities of the chair-holder or professorship-holder. The funds to create the endowment may come from several sources, including an external gift or donation or McMaster internal funds, with required approval.

In contrast, Term Chairs and Professorships reflect naming opportunities that have a defined term. The duration of the Term Chairs and Professorships are governed by the amount of funds supporting, and the activities included. Professorships are established from a smaller investment and would be for a shorter length of time than a Term Chair. Minimum amounts are set by the University.

Creation of a Named Chair or Professorship:

The proposal to create a named Chair or Professorship shall be submitted by the Faculty Dean(s) to the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and shall include the following information:

1. A description of the nature and purpose of the position
2. The proposed full title of the position (e.g. the Provostial Chair of Garbage Reclamation)
3. The amount of the gift supporting the position and the method of payment
4. In the case of Term Chairs and Professorships, the proposed length of the term

The Faculty Dean(s) and Provost shall review the terms and conditions of the proposed Chair or Professorship to ensure that it is consistent with the academic interests of McMaster. Upon a successful review, the Provost shall forward the recommendation to create the position to the Senate and Board of Governors for their approval.

Appointment to the Chair or Professorship:

Appointment of individuals to named Chairs or Professorships shall proceed according to the same University regulations that govern all academic appointments at McMaster. Specifically:

1. The Faculty Dean(s) shall ensure that an appropriate Selection Committee is formed. In cases where the named position crosses the boundaries of academic units, the Selection Committee shall be formed in consultation with the relevant Faculty Deans and the Provost. The Selection Committee shall recommend the nominee to the Faculty Appointments Committee [Department Chair(s), Faculty Dean(s), Associate Vice-President and Dean of Graduate Studies, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)]. The decision of the Selection Committee should respect the terms of the named position.

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2. If it approves the nominee, the Faculty Appointments Committee shall forward the recommendation to the Senate Committee on Appointments and to the Senate and Board of Governors for approval.
3. Individuals who have made a significant donation toward the creation of the position should be kept informed about the selection process but, if they choose to participate, they shall not have the right to select or veto the appointment or to vote on the Selection Committee proper.
4. The appointment recommendation can be forwarded to the Senate Committee on Appointments following, or coincident with, the recommendation to create the named Chair or Professorship going to Senate for approval
5. In the case of an endowed Chair or Professorship, the appointee shall relinquish the Chair or Professorship upon the completion of the term stated in the appointment letter, upon resignation of his/her faculty appointment at McMaster or, normally, upon retirement. Letters of appointment of Term Chairs and Term Professorships shall indicate the length of term that the Chair or Professorship is funded.
6. Holders of Chair or Professorship positions shall provide an annual report to the Faculty Dean relating their academic achievements. This report shall be shared with the primary donor(s).