

Complete Policy Title:
Research Leave Policy for Librarians

Policy Number (if applicable):

Approved by:
Board of Governors

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Responsible Executive:
[Provost and Vice-President \(Academic\)](#)

Enquiries:
[University Secretariat](#)

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1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

- a) The purpose of the Research Leave Policy for librarians is to support and encourage a librarian's continuing development as a member of the academic community. This actively contributes to the achievement of the mission and objectives of the University.
- b) It is the intention of the University to support the Research Leave Policy, and subject to the operational and budgetary feasibility of granting leaves, no application for a research leave will be unreasonably denied, once the specified eligibility requirements have been met.
- c) To encourage the engagement of librarians in research activities at all stages of their careers, research leave for librarians will consist of three categories: "Short-Term Leave", "Extended Leave", and "Special Leave".

2. AVAILABILITY AND DURATION OF LEAVE

- a) Normally, one full 52 week Extended Leave and a series of Short-Term Leaves will be available annually.
- b) Eligible librarians may request a maximum of four weeks per year under the "Short-Term Leave" category, and up to a maximum of 52 weeks under the "Extended Leave" category.
- c) "Special Leave" may be granted under the terms outlined in #7, below.
- d) Librarians, department/area managers and the University Librarian/Director of the Health Sciences Library are expected to work together to ensure that the service and staffing needs of the department can be met.
- e) An individual cannot request Short-Term and Extended Leave during the same fiscal year.

3. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

- a) Research leave is intended for the pursuit of research and other scholarly activities. This may include the conduct of research, scholarship, critical, professional or development work resulting in the possible publication, demonstration or presentation of the results.

4. ELIGIBILITY, SALARY AND BENEFITS

- a) Applicants must hold a continuing or contractually limited appointment as a professional librarian in the McMaster University Library System, and must have completed their probationary period.
- b) All research leaves will be granted at 100% of current salary.

- c) For the purposes of pension contributions, insurance and medical disability benefits, a librarian on research leave will be regarded as being on regular salary. The University and the librarian will continue to contribute their normal shares of the costs involved.
- d) If a librarian holds an appointment that is less than full-time, research leave would be granted only during the working period.

5. SHORT-TERM LEAVE

- a) This category of leave is intended to provide librarians with a regular opportunity to enhance their academic and professional competence.
- b) Subject to discussion and agreement between the librarian and the manager of their department, the leave may be taken in increments of not less than 5 consecutive working days.

6. EXTENDED LEAVE

- a) After their fifth anniversary date of service, librarians who meet the eligibility requirements in #4(a) are eligible for a maximum of 52 weeks' leave.
- b) Eligibility for subsequent extended leaves will be calculated as follows:
 - i) a further 3 years of continuous service following the completion of the most recent extended research leave are required before eligibility for a subsequent leave of less than 13 weeks is established
 - ii) a further 4 years of continuous service following the completion of the most recent extended research leave are required before eligibility for a subsequent leave of 13 to 26 weeks is established
 - iii) a further 5 years of continuous service following the completion of the most recent extended research leave are required before eligibility for a subsequent leave of more than 26 weeks is established.

7. SPECIAL LEAVE

- a) This category of leave is intended for use by a librarian to complete research that is underway when he or she joins McMaster. In exceptional cases, when a librarian may have served less than the required number of years of service, Special Leave may be approved in this category on the same financial conditions described in #4. Such a leave may be granted by the Research Leave Committee in consultation with the Manager of the appropriate department. It is understood that only one such leave will normally be approved in any one year. This leave, if granted, will be counted as an Extended Leave for the purpose of determining the time of eligibility for the next research leave.

8. APPLICATION PROCEDURE AND REVIEW MECHANISM

- a) Application for a research leave will be made in writing.
- b) The application shall include:
 - i) the starting and ending date of the proposed leave, and the phasing, if proposed;
 - ii) an outline of the research or other scholarly activity proposed;
 - iii) a statement of how the proposed activity will benefit the librarian, the profession, the Library and/or the University;
 - iv) a current curriculum vitae;
 - v) disclosure of any external funding received or applied for in support of the activity;
 - vi) any other information the applicant wishes to be considered.

- c) A librarian must submit a research leave application to the Research Leave Committee and his or her supervisor. The Research Leave Committee will review applications three times each year:

Application Submission Deadline	The Research Leave Committee will consider:
June 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short-term Leave proposals to begin during the fall semester (September 1 - December 31)
November 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short-term Leave proposals to being during the winter semester (January 1 - April 30)• Extended Leave proposals to be taken during the following fiscal year (May 1 - April 30)
March 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short-term Leave proposals to begin during the summer semester (May 1 - August 31)

- d) Applications will be considered by the Research Leave Committee consisting of the University Librarian and either the Director of the Health Sciences Library or an Associate University Librarian, and the current Librarian Representative on the MUFA Executive. The Library Human Resources Consultant will be an ex- officio, non-voting member of the Committee.
- e) The Research Leave Committee will consider each application against the following criteria:
 - i) the value of the project to the librarian, Library, the University, and the broader library and research community; and
 - ii) the merit of the project.

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- f) The Research Leave Committee will respond to applicants and notify their supervisors of a decision:
 - i) by August 1 (for June 1 submissions)
 - ii) by December 1 (for November 1 submissions)
 - iii) by April 1 (for March 1 submissions)

9. REPORT OF THE RESEARCH LEAVE

- a) A written report on the project or investigation undertaken will be submitted to the Research Leave Committee within two months of the end of the leave. On completion of the leave period, the librarian will return to his or her original position. The report allows for proper evaluation of the librarian's accomplishments while on leave, and becomes part of the material considered in the Annual Performance Review the following year. Librarians will be encouraged to present their projects and results to colleagues and staff in the interests of professional contributions to Library and Information Science.