



### Senate

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# Committee on Research and Publications

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Title	<b>Faculty Release Time Awards</b>
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The Committee on Research and Publications receives applications for Release Time Awards to be granted by the University in early April. Up to ten (10) awards will be given, each granting the recipient a half credit course release from teaching. The competition is open to full-time faculty members who are holders of external grants awarded through a peer review process during the period for which release time is granted. Please note that if a Release Time Stipend is funded by a granting agency, a researcher is not eligible for this award.

## 1. Policy

- Subject to the availability of funds, MSVU will grant release time to eligible faculty. The objectives of making such awards are
  - to support the continuation of high quality research on campus
  - to maximize the funds available to faculty for research endeavours
  - to reward faculty for research initiative
- Release time will be granted through a competition adjudicated by the Committee on Research and Publications, to which full time faculty members holding external grants awarded through a peer review process are eligible to apply. Competitions will be held in April of each year, to be taken up the following academic year. Successful applicants will be granted release time equivalent to a half credit course. The merits of the applications (as defined earlier in this policy) will be paramount in the decision, although efforts will be made to ensure a balance of awards across disciplines.

## 2. Rationale for the Program

MSVU recognizes the difficulty faculty members holding external grants face in maintaining their funding. The funding model currently used by granting agencies focuses on funding productive researchers with a good record of publications to engage in an on-going program of research. Expectations are that researchers will be continuously supported and continuously productive, without major intervals away from either research activity or publishing. Given that we are a small

teaching-oriented university with a relatively high teaching load, demands on faculty members' time make it especially difficult for them to stay competitive in external competitions. MSVU, through this modest program of release time for grant holders, recognizes the value of research activity and the difficulties faced by researchers.

While any researcher, whether funded or not, would profit from having more time to devote to the enterprise, MSVU sees it as particularly important to support grant holders because a) it is important to the university's research reputation to have faculty holding external grants, and b) those holding external grants contribute to the resources available for research by supporting themselves and by directly contributing to the funds available for internal competitions (SSHRC contributes a dollar percentage of grants awarded to university faculty to its general research grant to universities).

### 3. Eligibility

The competition is open to full-time faculty members who can confirm that they will be grant holders during the period for which release time would be granted. Further, applicants must have consulted with their deans and department chairs, who must have agreed to grant release time should an award be made. The applicant must be the principal investigator of a grant awarded following a peer review process or a co-investigator of such a grant where the principal investigator is not making application to Mount Saint Vincent University for release time. The award held must be a research grant and not a contract or other type of funding. A grant is "non-proprietary financial support for research and research related activities." Contracts are "binding agreements in which the sponsor may acquire ownership or proprietary rights to the results" (definitions are from Research Services of the University of Calgary). Applicants may hold a grant from any source.

The purpose of a Release Time Award is to provide faculty with time for research above and beyond that available given a normal teaching load. Consequently, successful applicants are expected not to do overload teaching while holding a research time award or in the summer preceding or following such an award.

Applicants may already be on reduced teaching loads because of administrative or other responsibilities.

### 4. Application Procedure

A complete application consists of 1 hard copy and one electronic copy of the following:

- a cover letter,
- an updated CV,
- copy of the successful grant application (which should already be on file in the Research Office)
- a progress report on on-going grant activities if work on the grant has already begun (in the case of an award from the previous year), and
- a letter/memo from the department Chair and appropriate Dean confirming that the Release Time application is supported.

Applicants should make a case for release time bearing in mind the factors considered by the committee, given below. Applicants with a recent record of professional commitments other than research and a normal teaching load should address the reasons why their priorities led them to activities which have taken time away from research activities.

**\*Applications that are incomplete will not be entered into the competition.**

## **5. Valuation and Adjudication**

Evaluation will **not** be based on the scholarly merit of a proposal; in successfully obtaining a grant, all applications will have been judged favourably by a qualified group of peers. Committee members will assess the relative benefits that release time would have for an applicant and MSVU. Considerations will include:

- what the applicant could achieve with release time,
- how those achievements differ from what could be achieved without extra time,
- the likelihood of release time playing a significant role in the applicant's future grant getting prospects,
- the applicant's track record at grant getting and publishing,
- the applicant's record of managing time to achieve research productivity,
- the amount of grant money involved,
- as well as other relevant factors.

All other factors being equal, candidates who have not previously held a Release Time Award will be given priority.

***COMPLETE APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE RESEARCH OFFICE BY 4pm, APRIL 8<sup>th</sup> (If this date falls on a weekend or holiday, the deadline will be 4pm the next business day)***