

Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

Complete Policy Title:
University Scholar

Policy Number (if applicable):

Approved by:
Senate

Date of Most Recent Approval:
November 12, 2014

Date of Original Approval(s):
November 12, 2014

Supersedes/Amends Policy dated:

Responsible Executive:
Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Enquiries:
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Effective November 12, 2014 to December 8, 2020

Revised [University Scholar](#) policy effective December 9, 2020

1.0 POLICY

1.1 Rationale

Academic life involves achievements in many domains, including the discovery, communication and preservation of knowledge, excellence in education and pedagogy, as well as a commitment to the communities that we serve, from local to global. The ranks that are held by members of faculty represent an acknowledgement of the levels of achievement that each member of the community has attained in their academic life. High accomplishment is prized here; thus it is not surprising that our professoriate includes individuals whose achievements are extraordinary. In establishing this award, McMaster University seeks to recognize faculty members in mid-career who have already distinguished themselves as international scholars. To that end, McMaster University has established the title **University Scholar**, with the following terms, criteria, and nomination and selection procedures.

1.2 Title

The title of the category shall be University Scholar.

1.3 Terms

The title is awarded by the Senate only to full-time members of the faculty, subject to Article XIV, clause 180 of the Senate By-laws. The title is awarded for a period of four years. It is not renewable and may be held by a faculty member only once during their career at McMaster.

This award is intended to help to elevate the stature of faculty members in mid-career, defined as colleagues within 5 years of promotion to Associate Professor or 15 years of the completion of their PhD. The selection committee however will be allowed to exercise some discretion in the application of this condition.

Each University Scholar will be supported with a modest research award provided jointly by the Provost and the Faculty Dean.

1.4 Criteria

This title will be conferred only on faculty members who have demonstrated distinction and impact in one or more fields of endeavour, while on faculty at the university. In keeping with McMaster's position as a research-intensive university of global repute those holding the title of University Scholar must have demonstrated an exceptional research record that demonstrates international impact and recognition and the potential for even greater further contributions to come. However, this award is also meant to recognize the complete scholar. Thus, the ideal candidate will have additionally demonstrated excellence and/or innovation in teaching and learning, including the supervision of emerging scholars along with a demonstrated history of service that has had an impact on the community, whether within or without the university.

It should be noted that the criteria just described are similar in many ways to those applied in the selection of Distinguished University Professors. However, they are to be differentiated by the level of achievement anticipated and its impact as well as the period over which it has been sustained.

In assessing candidates the selection committee will strive to understand and incorporate how impact is determined and communicated in different domains and fields of scholarship.

1.5 Number of University Scholars

The number of University Scholar shall be restricted to no more that 2% of all full-time members of faculty, including tenure-stream, teaching-stream, CAWAR and Special (with the latter stream counted using a weighting factor of 0.2). The maximum number of positions will be re-evaluated every three years. They will be allocated amongst the Faculties of the university; i.e. the number of University Scholars will be restricted to 2% of the complement of each Faculty as determined above.

No more than one-third of the allocated number of University Scholars will be awarded per Faculty per year during the initial phase-in until steady state is reached.

2.0 PROCEDURES

2.1 Nominations

The nomination procedures for University Scholars will take place on an annual cycle as follows:

2.1. a Each Faculty will establish a selection committee, composed of outstanding scholars within the Faculty. Where a Faculty already has a Faculty awards committee it may be assigned to undertake this task. The Faculty Tenure and Promotion Committee shall not constitute the Faculty awards committee. The Faculty committee should be chaired by the Faculty Dean or designate. The Dean will appoint members of the selection committee based on recommendation from the Faculty's executive committee or Chairs and Directors group as appropriate ensuring as broad a membership as possible, taking into account the need for balance and inclusion.

2.1. b The Provost will issue a call for nominations to the rank of University Scholar to the McMaster Community by October 1, as part of the call for nominations to the rank of Distinguished University Professor.

2.1. c The selection process shall occur in two phases. In the first phase nominations shall consist of the following:

A letter of nomination (maximum 3 pages), addressed to the Faculty Dean, signed by four individuals, at least two of whom must be McMaster professors. (Self-nomination is not acceptable). The letter should outline why the nominee is deemed to fit the criteria for this title.

The nominee's CV.

Nominations will be due on November 1.

2.1. d The selection committee will meet to select the most suitable nominees to move forward to the final selection process. The nominators of those candidates will then be asked to obtain at least 2 but up to 5 letters of reference attesting to the individual's global impact and standing to support the nomination. They will be due by February 1.

2.1. e The full selection committee will then meet to develop a slate of candidates to be recommended to the Senate Committee on Appointments, due no later than March 1. Upon ratification by this body the slate of candidates will be forwarded to the Senate for final approval.