

The Governance Procedures for the Centre for Feminist Research

A. MANDATE

- 1 The Centre for Feminist Research/ Le Centre de recherches féministes promotes feminist activities and collaborative research at York University and works to establish research linkages between York scholars and local, national, international and transnational communities. Since 1991, CFR has worked together with the School of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, and the Graduate Program in Gender, Feminism and Women's Studies to create research opportunities for the study of women, gender and feminism.
- 2 Feminist research is conceived of, in broad terms, as being concerned with issues of women, gender, class, 'race', sexuality, ability and feminism. Established in 1991, CFR has been inspired by the feminist movement, which led to the creation of feminist scholarship around the world; and the gay and lesbian rights movement, which led to the development of queer studies scholarship; and the anti-racist feminist movement, which has led to critical race theory. In particular, the mandate of CFR is to promote transnational, interdisciplinary and intersectional feminist research. Our scholarly study of gender is part of a larger feminist agenda aimed at promoting global justice and equality for all people. Our mandate is also to inform public discussion as well as policy development and practice innovation by international, governmental, advocacy and service organizations.
- 3 CFR carries out its mandate through a number of activities. The first is to support individual and collaborative research. However, equally important is to promote engagement in contemporary feminist issues by sponsoring conferences, seminars and workshops. The mandate of the Centre includes disseminating research, supporting faculty and graduate students, publishing and developing research materials, and providing opportunities and training for graduate students. Finally, the mandate of the Centre includes fostering relationships with community organizations, government personnel, as well as national and international feminist networks. An important aspect of fostering such networks is to host visiting scholars.

B. MEMBERSHIP

- 4 Membership in CFR is determined by the Executive Committee. The Executive approves applications for membership. Decisions are guided and constrained by criteria determined by the Executive, including the promotion of equity along lines of gender, class, race, status, ability and sexuality.
- 5 Membership in CFR consists of different categories. These categories and their appointment conditions are as follows:

6 **(a) CFR Research Associates** are part-time, full-time or emeritus faculty members at York University, or elsewhere, or senior (non-student) researchers not affiliated with a university. They are engaged in research in the field and are expected to participate in the research and intellectual life of the Centre. Research Associates submit and administer research grants through the Centre, or are active in a research cluster and in organizing workshops and conferences. Membership is by invitation or application for a five-year term, using criteria approved by the Executive, if any.

7 **(b) CFR Faculty Associates** are part-time, full-time or emeritus faculty members at York University, or elsewhere. They are engaged in research in the field and are expected to participate in the intellectual life of the Centre.

- For York faculty members (tenured, emeritus, tenure-track, or contractual), membership is by invitation or application for a five-year term, using criteria approved by the Executive, if any.
- For faculty members at other universities, membership is either through invitation, or by application, and requires substantive and continuing participation in the intellectual life of the Centre. Appointments of faculty external to York are made for up to three years, renewable, by the Executive Committee, according to criteria approved by the Executive, if any.

8 **(c) CFR Graduate Associates** are graduate students at York University, or elsewhere, including:

- York graduate students who have formally enrolled in the Graduate Program in Gender, Feminism and Women's Studies. This membership status is automatic, subject to verification by the Graduate Program Director.
- Other graduate students at York whose program of learning and research intersects with feminist research and who wish to participate in the activities of CFR. Following application, this membership status is subject to the approval of the Executive Committee, using criteria approved by the Council, if any. Upon receiving membership, this status is valid while the student is formally enrolled at York University.
- Graduate Assistants/Research Assistants employed either directly by CFR or working on CFR projects. This membership status is automatic, subject to verification by the Executive Committee.

9 **(d) CFR Undergraduate Associates** are undergraduate students who are employed in CFR projects under York University's or/and through CFR's international work-study programs. In each case, membership status is automatic, subject to verification by the Director.

10 **(e) CFR Community Members** are activists, teachers, public officials, or senior (non-student) researchers not affiliated with a university whose activities (work or non-work) relate substantively to the research and teaching concerns of CFR. This membership category recognizes the important contributions community activists, artists and public intellectuals make to the on-going scholarly life of the Centre. Applications are posted on the Centre's website. Criteria for affiliation will be based on membership in a research project or a research cluster that is affiliated with the Centre. Appointments of Community Scholars are made for up to three years, renewable, by the Executive Committee, using criteria approved by the Council.

11 **(f) CFR Visiting Scholars** are full-time or emeritus faculty members at another University or senior (non-student) researchers not affiliated with a university who would like to be located at York University for a temporary and limited time period. These researchers are engaged in research in the field and are expected to participate in the intellectual life of the Centre while associated with the Centre. Applications are posted on the Centre's website. Appointments are made by the Executive Committee for specified periods, using criteria approved by the Council, if any.

12 **(g) Visiting Post-Doctoral Scholars** are those with recent Ph.D.s who would like to be associated with the Centre for a temporary and limited time period. These researchers are engaged in research in the field and are expected to participate in the intellectual life of the Centre while associated with the Centre. Applications are posted on the Centre's website. Appointments are made by the Executive Committee for specified periods, using criteria approved by the Council, if any.

13 **(h) Visiting Graduate Students** are those enrolled at another university who are visiting York University through an international exchange. Applications are posted on the Centre's website. Appointments are made by the Executive Committee for specified periods, using criteria approved by the Council, if any.

14 **(i) CFR Research Staff Members** are non-student research staff employed in research projects carried out directly by the Centre. This membership status is automatic, subject to verification by the Director.

15 **(j) CFR Staff Members** are non-student staff employed, including contractually, by CFR to perform functions other than to conduct research. Appointments are made by the Director.

C. GOVERNANCE

16 Decision-making in CFR is accountable to both the CFR Executive, the membership and to the larger university community. Formal accountability to the latter is achieved through the Senate and the Administration of York University. Accountability to the Centre membership is accomplished by the following structure:

- 1. Director (and any Associate Directors that may be appointed)**
- 2. Executive Committee**
- 3. Council of Associates**
- 4. Standing Committees**
- 5. Coordinator**
- 6. Student Caucus**
- 7. External Advisory Group**

1. Director (and any Associate Directors that may be appointed)

17 The Director is responsible for the overall functioning and viability of the Centre. These include such duties as:

- fostering an active research program by CFR, pursuing funding for such research, and ensuring that the Centre's obligations to funding agencies are fulfilled
- planning and administering the organizational and academic activities of CFR, including the assignment of office space and the allocation of CFR resources, in accordance with criteria determined by the Executive Committee
- administering the financial affairs of CFR and developing an annual budget for approval by the Executive
- hiring required staff or arranging the necessary processes to do so and supervising the work of the staff
- implementing decisions of the Executive Committee, keeping them informed of directorial actions, and making proposals to them
- ensuring that the responsibilities of CFR to the university are met and that the interests of CFR are represented in the relevant university bodies representing the Centre outside York University
- making an annual report of all activities to the Council.

18 The Director is appointed for a specified term by the President of York University, on the recommendation of a search committee, which is duly constituted under university rules and which includes two members of the Centre determined by the Executive Committee. During the search process, all members of the Centre's community are to be invited to meet with the candidates and to submit their insights to the search committee.

19 Some of these responsibilities may be assigned to one or more Associate Directors, but the final responsibility rests with the Director (unless otherwise directed by the Executive). If an Associate Director is to be appointed, the Director will consult with the

Executive Committee and the Associate Vice-President of Research about any pending appointments. A notice will be sent to CFR Council members about the pending appointment; those interested in being appointed will be asked to contact the Director. If there is more than one candidate, an appointments committee will be constituted. The committee will consist of the Director, two members of the Executive, two standing members who are Associates of the Centre, a graduate student representative and the Coordinator. The Executive will appoint all members to the search committee, with the exception of the Director. The appointments committee will appoint its chair. The Director is a voting member of the appointments committee. During the search process, all members of the Centre's community are to be invited to meet with the candidates and to submit their insights to the search committee. The successful candidate will require ratification by the Executive Committee. The Associate Director will be appointed for a term specified by the Executive.

2. Executive Committee

- 20 The members of the Executive Committee, other than the Director and any Associate Directors, will be appointed by the Executive Committee. At least once a year the Director will issue a call to all faculty at York seeking nominations for appointments to the Executive. If there are not sufficient nominations, the Executive will seek appointments.
- 21 Appointments will be by guided by considerations of equity, particularly to promote representation along lines of gender, class, race, status, ability, gender and sexual orientation. Attempts will be made to appoint scholars from diverse faculties. Appointments will start at the beginning of the teaching year.
- 22 The Executive Committee consists of the Director, any Associate Directors, The Chair of The School of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, the Graduate Director of the Gender, Feminism and Women's Studies Graduate Program, a minimum of four CFR Research or Faculty Associates, the CFR Coordinator, and two Graduate Students. At the discretion of Executive, the size of the Executive Committee may be enlarged for a specified period. Appointments will be staggered so that normally no more than half of the Executive Committee shall change in a given year. The Chair of The School of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, as well as the Director of the Gender, Feminism and Women's Studies Graduate Program are standing members, appointed by their terms of office.
- 23 The Executive Committee is responsible for matters of regular management and serves in a consultative and monitoring capacity in relation to the Director (and any Associate Directors).
- 24 More specifically, the Executive Committee is responsible for:
- advising the Director regarding the management of CFR

- reviewing the financial situation of CFR
- reviewing decisions and actions of the Director
- making membership decisions according to Section B
- developing criteria for the assignment of office space and the allocation of CFR resources
- approving the annual report
- setting the agenda for the annual meeting of the CFR Council
- making a report to the CFR Council of executive and directorial decisions and actions
- electing two members to the search committee, when there is a search for a new Director

25 The Executive meets at least once a month in the fall and winter terms and when necessary in the summer term. Its meetings are called by the Director, but it may also be convened by a majority of the Executive Committee and it may be required to meet by the Council.

26 The Executive Committee may form sub-committees and task forces at its discretion, subject to review by the Director. Sub-committees may include CFR members other than members of the Executive Committee, as determined by the latter.

27 The staff and student representatives are elected from the respective constituencies. If there is not a student constituency in operation, the Director, in consultation with the Executive, can appoint student members. The Director may appoint an additional staff member to participate in the Executive Committee meetings in a non-voting capacity.

28 The term of office is 24 months. If a member of the Executive Committee misses three consecutive meetings, the Director may ask the person to voluntarily step down. The Executive Committee may invite any persons to participate in a non-voting capacity.

29 The term of office extends to the second election following the one in which the position is filled, i.e. it is normally two years. However, candidates may stand even if they intend to fill the position for only one year.

30 Vacancies due to resignations, departures or other contingencies are filled by the Director in consultation with the Executive. The term of office will count from the time of the appointment.

31 All meetings will be conducted according to Bourinot's Rules of Order. A quorum is a majority of the members on the Executive Committee (50% plus 1).

3. Council of Associates

32 In conformity with York University rules for the governance of Organized Research Units, only York faculty, Staff, and students have voting privileges at Council meetings.

The Council of Associates is composed of Research Associates, Faculty Associates, student members and staff representatives in the Centre.

33 The Council is responsible for

- discussing the annual report of the Centre
- discussing and ratifying proposed amendments to the Governance Procedures (see Section F)

34 The Council meets at least once a year. Its meetings are normally called by the Director and are convened by a majority of the Executive Committee. The quorum for Council meetings will consist of 10 Research or Faculty Associates. Meetings will be conducted according to Bourinot's Rules of Order.

35 Any motions of the Council will be conducted at its meetings. Furthermore, where their numbers dictate, York student and staff votes will be weighted proportionately represented as follows:

- 3 representative student votes
- 1 representative staff vote

4. Standing Committees

36 There are two standing committees within the Centre.

37 McEwan Committee: The committee meets annually. The mandate of this committee is to select the best Ph. D. dissertation completed at York University in the area of feminist research. This committee is made up of three York faculty members, which are appointed by the Director.

38 The Equity Committee: The mandate of this committee is to facilitate equity along lines of gender, class, race, status, ability, and sexuality. The committee is responsible for formulating an equity plan. In addition, the Committee will work with the Director, and the Executive, in implementing the annual equity plan. This committee is made up of three members, which are appointed by the Executive. Committee members are appointed for a two year term.

5. Coordinator

39 In addition to her/his job description, the Coordinator will act as the Secretary, Treasurer, and provide administrative support for the Executive under the Director's directions.

40 More specifically, the coordinator's responsibilities on the Executive Committee shall

include:

- recording the minutes of all meetings of the Executive Committee
- ensuring copies of minutes of all meetings are distributed to Executive members
- keeping copies of email decisions made by the Executive
- receiving and preparing correspondence on behalf of the Executive Committee
- overseeing the maintenance of the Archives of CFR on behalf of the Executive Committee
- maintaining a current list of officers and members for all committees
- overseeing all fiscal matters of CFR on behalf of the Executive Committee, as Treasurer
- preparing a financial statement for audit and an annual budget for approval to the Vice President of Research on behalf of the Executive Committee
- completing any tasks required for the work of the Executive Committee as assigned by the Director

6. Student Caucus

41 The purpose of the Student Caucus is to provide a venue for supporting feminist research among graduate students. The Student Caucus consists of all CFR Graduate and Undergraduate Associates. The Student Caucus determines its own governance and mode of operation. It also elects two representatives to the Executive Committee. If there is not a Student Caucus in operation, a notice, with a description of the position, will be sent to graduate directors seeking students to submit nominations. The nomination form will require a statement of interest, past involvement in the Centre, and a resume. Based on that information, The Director will appoint two representatives, subject to approval by the Executive Committee.

7. External Advisory Group

42 The External Advisory Group (EAG) consists of five to seven individuals who share a commitment to CFR's mandate to foster feminist research collaborations in relation to gender, race, class, indigeneity, disability, sexuality, and women's issues. The EAG provides input and advice to the Director on strategic planning, outreach and partnerships. Membership is for a period of three years and is renewable. The EAG meets virtually once a year via Skype or teleconferencing. The Director also consults with individual members on an ad-hoc basis.

The EAG's Role is to:

- (1) To contribute their wisdom and experience to CFR's current and future research directions and strategies;
- (2) To advise on ways in which CFR can mobilize knowledge to reach wider audiences;
- (3) To project CFR research and activities into the spheres in which they work;
- (4) To advise on funding opportunities that will further advance feminist research at York.

D. ASSIGNMENT OF OFFICE SPACE AND CENTRE RESOURCES

43 Office space and CFR resources are assigned by the Director, subject to policies directed by the Executive Committee.

E. INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATIONS

44 CFR may enter into institutional affiliations with other organizations. These may take the form of:

1. Membership in umbrella organizations.
2. Partnerships with other organizations for the purpose of conducting research projects or for other forms of collaboration.

45 Any affiliation must be approved by the Executive Committee.

F. AMENDMENTS TO THE GOVERNANCE PROCEDURES

46 Major changes to the Governance Procedures can be amended or replaced by the Council. This requires a majority vote of the Council. Changes required by the Senate policy for ORUs, policies of the Office of the Vice President of Research and Innovation, or minor changes can be approved by the Executive.

47 Notification of a proposed amendment will be given at least one week in advance of a council meeting.