

Department of Theatre
Research Release Program

Nov. 28, 2016

Research in the Department of Theatre

The Department of Theatre places research at the center of our activities, as it informs our teaching in much the same way that our work as educators strengthens our professional research and achievement. Research within the Department of Theatre takes many forms, in both creative work and scholarship. This research remains integral to our standing as members of the academy and our array of work reaches across faculties, as well as outside of the institution itself. Scholarly and creative research are often interwoven, whether in publishing activities or practice-based research, or in areas that traverse the two such as curatorial practice, producing, performance studies, or publishing in new media environments.

In addition, our department encourages a robust culture of research that does not rely upon traditional expectations of output as the only metric for contribution. This research also resides within, intervenes, and interrogates the spaces between scholarship and creative work. Many of our research projects span years of field study that are not yet linked to a product (e.g. a presentation, paper, or production), or may exist in a new physical or vocal study that is in process. We nonetheless view this research as active in every sense. It is ongoing, vital and always present in our discourse, collaborations, classrooms and departmental planning.

Research Release Procedures

As per 18.15 of the YUFA Collective Agreement, a research based teaching load reduction will be granted to all faculty members in the department who are actively involved in research. The purpose of this program is to support research by providing a .5 FCE release from teaching to research-active faculty. Faculty who already have a research related teaching load, do not qualify for this release. Faculty who already have an offload and where a 0.5 FCE reduction would bring them below a 1.0 FCE do not qualify for this release.

As per 18.15 (e), research indicators include:

- (i) dissemination of research in the form of peer reviewed (or critically reviewed) publications and/or creative or scholarly activities;
- (ii) applications for external grants as well as external grants awarded (it is understood there are disciplinary differences and fluctuations in the role and availability of external grants); and
- (iii) evidence of on-going research activity that is reasonably expected to result in the dissemination of research outcomes/scholarly/creative activity as in (i) above.

Below we provide a more extensive list of the range of research activities that faculty in the Department of Theatre regularly undertake and which may be used to demonstrate their eligibility for the research release.

In determining whether a faculty member is “research active,” the department recognizes past, ongoing, and planned research activities. In this, we acknowledge that patterns of intensity for individual faculty may vary for numerous reasons, both personal and professional. For the purposes of fairness and clarity, our department will refer to the Senate-approved Criteria for Tenure and Promotion when assessing faculty research activity, adjusted to a three-year rather than a six-year period. Faculty must demonstrate a level consistent with or above that of “High Competence” to be eligible for research release. In keeping with these expectations, our understanding is that faculty may demonstrate research activity with indicators occurring in category (i), or a distribution pattern across (i), (ii), and (iii). However, the expectation is that faculty research activity will not be derived by indicators exclusively from category (iii) for the three-year period, nor will a research release be granted in any year based solely on activity indicators derived from graduate supervision.

Application Process and Criteria

Individual faculty members who wish to be considered for this reduction will send a one-page CV and a one-page statement to the Chair providing indications or evidence of such activity, recent, current or planned for the future. For some faculty members a research release may be granted on the basis of a recent record of research achievement, for others it may entail evidence of current and ongoing research activities, for others it may involve external funding and, finally, for others it may entail a combination of the above. In situations where faculty are requesting a research release for future research activities, they must provide information demonstrating that activities are underway (e.g. an invitation to direct a show or submit a chapter to an edited collection; a contract to curate an exhibition or design a production, etc.), as well as a clear timeline for completing said activities within the research release year. The Executive will take this information into account in assessing the application.

Every effort will be made to ensure that research activity will be recognized in a way that is appropriate to the norms and practices of the faculty member’s area of work and expertise. While criteria for research activity will fall within generally accepted disciplinary norms, criteria also include research activity that may be heterodox, interdisciplinary, or non-normative given the diverse critical perspectives of faculty within the unit. We further note that graduate supervision involves training the discipline’s future scholars to contribute to ongoing artistic and scholarly conversations and that this supervisory work (in both its primary and secondary forms) is critical to developing York’s lively research culture. For these reasons, we consider significant levels of graduate supervision (defined below) to be an appropriate form of research activity. Attention will be given to equity issues. Any factors mitigating research activity, e.g. parental leave, elder care leave, or extraordinary service contributions, will also be considered.

Indicators of such activities may include, but are not limited to, three or more of the items listed below over a three-year period. In specifying this period, we recognize that in some year’s faculty research output may be higher than in others; in general, we would expect that faculty would be undertaking at least two of the activities listed below on an annual basis, though acknowledge that some years may be more fallow than others or may involve extensive labour setting research infrastructure in place without

any discernible output. In this, we recognize that many projects involve multiple stages and that in some cases presenting iterations of a project is critical to its development. We further recognize that some faculty may wish to use the research release to enhance their research productivity. In situations where applicants are unable to demonstrate High Competence in their previous research output due to mitigating factors, they must demonstrate through documentation (see previous page) that they will have achieved High Competence in their research activities by the end of the research release period. The Executive will take this information into account in assessing the individual's subsequent application.

Eligible research activities include:

- a. Publications such as books, book chapters, journal articles, reports, book reviews, opinion pieces, or material submitted, under review, or forthcoming
- b. Other contributions, including but not limited to: writing, directing, designing, dramaturging, producing, acting, or coaching in a play or other performance; curating a performance series; convening a workshop or conference
- c. Activities that are reasonably expected to result in publications or contributions, including but not limited to: undertaking fieldwork or archival research; attending skill-based workshops to expand creative practice; serving as artist/scholar-in-residence with a company, arts institution, or other organization; presenting conference papers or workshop presentations, or works in progress
- d. Grants or other funding applied for or received from funding bodies including but not limited to: the Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, Toronto Arts Council, SSHRC, and other local, national, and international grant agencies
- e. Edited publications such as collections of articles or plays; invitations to edit journal issues; curating exhibits and performances, or writing plays and performance reviews
- f. Papers or presentations at non-academic conferences, festivals, and other significant community interventions that reflect York's mandate as an engaged university
- g. Significant levels of graduate supervision. By this, we mean an annual supervisory load of four or more primary graduate supervisions at the MA, MFA, or PhD level or seven or more secondary graduate roles, including but not limited to serving on doctoral and examination committees in each of the three years. In general, faculty should list students who are in "good standing" in their respective degree programs and who have completed their degree within normative time. As always, the Executive will consider extenuating circumstances. The status and number of faculty graduate supervisions will be affirmed through consultation with the respective graduate programs. (Graduate supervision is generally understood as category (iii) activity.)
- h. Other creative and scholarly activities

Adjudication Process

Applications will be reviewed following the procedure and criteria collegially agreed upon by the department. Just as our tenure-process is founded upon assessment through peer review, we believe our own internal committee structure, in particular the Department Executive consisting of three

elected Area Coordinators, as well elected GPD's and the Chair, would serve as an ideal body for this process. The executive will review faculty application for research leave and submit recommendations to the Dean for final approval. The Committee will review applications and make recommendations in a summary statement that will be presented to the Dean. As per the YUFA CA, Article 18.15 (c):

Where a recommendation for a 0.5 FCE research-based teaching load reduction is not accepted by the Dean/Principal, the Dean/Principal shall set out in a written reply to the Chair with a copy to the applicant the reason why the recommendation was not accepted. Such decisions shall be subject to the grievance and arbitration provisions of Article 9.

Individuals may apply for this release on a yearly basis, with a call for applications being forwarded to all faculty members no later than **August 15th**. The deadline for receipt of the application (one-page statement + one-page CV) by the Department Executive will be **September 1st** each year. The committee will notify faculty by **September 30th** of the decision. If the recommendation is not to award a release, the faculty member will be informed in writing with reasons. The member may request reconsideration. The committee' recommendations will be forwarded to the Dean no later than October 15th. The Dean will respond by **November 1st**, in order to allow for workload assignments to be integrated into the following year's planning exercise.