

To: The University Senate
From: Faculty Affairs Committee
Subject: Proposal for Non-Tenure Track Research Faculty within Purdue University
Disposition: University Senate for Discussion

INTRODUCTION

The research enterprise at Purdue University is facing significant challenges arising from changes in its environment, including increased competitiveness for external research funding, the need for strategic partnering with industry, and a greater focus and reliance on interdisciplinary efforts and multi-disciplinary proposals. Large multi-year multi-investigator research programs in particular require full-time senior-level personnel to provide continuity and a high level of uninterrupted research time. The same need for full-time attention also frequently occurs during preparation of proposals for large projects. Additionally, units which have major research projects requiring highly qualified full-time research specialists find it increasingly difficult to recruit and retain personnel in these positions due to the lack of a well-defined career ladder and corresponding reward system.

Many of our successful peer institutions have met these needs through the use of Research Professors. In most cases, these are senior researchers with outstanding research credentials who are not tenured or tenure track, are paid on soft (non-general) funds, and carry no teaching duties other than the supervision of graduate students. They are expected to be productive, independent investigators and are evaluated primarily on the basis of their scholarly achievements.

This document proposes the creation of a non-tenure track faculty appointment designated as "research professor". This track will enable the university to recruit and retain top research scholars whose primary responsibilities will be to support and enhance the discovery mission of the university. These positions would (1) not be eligible for tenure, (2) be employed entirely on non-general (soft) funds, and (3) be continued depending upon the availability of soft funding and on performance.

PRINCIPLES

Non-tenured research faculty shall:

1. engage in activities which support the academic and scholarly life of the university, and particularly those which enhance the discovery mission of the university
2. possess the appropriate educational background and professional expertise to engage in research and research-related activities
3. participate in activities which enhance professional growth

4. have an opportunity to be considered for promotion in rank from assistant to associate to (full) research professor
5. possess scholarly research credentials comparable to those of tenured and tenure-track faculty at the same academic rank
6. be considered members of the university faculty
7. be compensated at salary levels roughly equivalent to those for tenure-track faculty at the same rank and in the same professional area.

RESEARCH FACULTY APPOINTMENTS

- A. Research faculty will be supported only from extramural or non-general funds. Fringe benefits are charged to the sponsored account.
- B. Appointments may be calendar year, academic year, or part-time. Part-time appointments in general should have at least a 0.5 FTE minimum. Appointments less than 0.5 FTE and short-term appointments will not be eligible for benefits.

Research faculty are appointed by a department or research unit for renewable terms not to exceed three years each, and continued appointments are contingent upon availability of funds and satisfactory performance evaluations. The appointment cannot extend beyond the period of availability of supporting funds. If the position cannot be supported at the approved level because of insufficient funds, the appointment will be terminated when funds are exhausted or the effort will be reduced to a level consistent with the salary that can be paid. Any commitment of salary support in the case of unanticipated loss of project funds will be the responsibility of the hiring unit. Bridge funding from general funds may be used for a period up to six months.

- C. Research faculty are hired at a rank commensurate with their professional experience and qualifications. These qualifications should be comparable to the research credentials of tenure/tenure track faculty at the same rank.
- D. The hiring unit will conduct an annual merit review of research faculty. The timing of this review will coincide with the regular annual review of tenure track faculty and other university employees. Research faculty will be subject to annual merit increases in accordance with the university's annual salary policy. The hiring unit must establish guidelines for annual review, reappointment, and promotion prior to hiring research faculty.
- E. Research faculty may be considered for promotion in rank. Criteria for promotion shall be similar to that for tenure-track faculty, but with much greater or singular focus on research accomplishment. Salary supplements for promotion should be consistent with those associated with promotion for tenure-

track faculty. The promotion increment must be funded from the same funding source as the base salary. Appointments less than 0.5 FTE and short-term appointments will not be eligible for promotion in rank.

- F. The primary responsibilities of research faculty would be research and research – related activities such as proposal writing, project management, and service specifically linked to their research programs (e.g. supervision of graduate students and service to professional organizations). Research faculty may serve as principal investigators on research proposals.
- G. Research faculty may be members of the graduate faculty, subject to the policies and procedures of the Graduate School.
- H. Research faculty are not eligible for sabbatical leave.
- I. An individual holding a faculty or staff appointment at the university may apply for a research faculty position and will be subject to university search and screen policies in effect at the time of application. The same policies apply to research faculty seeking tenure-track positions. Time in non-tenured rank will not count toward sabbatical or the probationary tenure period if subsequently hired into a tenure-track position. Individuals may not hold tenure-track and research faculty positions simultaneously.
- J. Research faculty may not be elected to the University Senate and are not eligible to serve on promotion and tenure committees. Other voting privileges of research faculty will be decided by the unit in which they have their primary appointment.
- K. Research faculty may not have regular teaching duties except on an ad-hoc basis. In rare cases where a research faculty member is considered for a teaching assignment, a separate part-time teaching appointment is required.
- L. Research faculty are eligible for emeritus status, subject to the same eligibility criteria as outlined for tenure-track faculty.
- M. Except as noted previously, research faculty are subject to the policies, procedures, guidelines and regulations governing tenure track faculty.
- N. Research faculty will be eligible for all leaves of absence provided to faculty by university policy, with the exception of sabbatical leave and paid leave for outside activities.
- O. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Office of the Provost.

AUTHORIZATION TO ESTABLISH RESEARCH FACULTY POSITIONS

Requests for the establishment of research faculty positions must originate within an academic unit or center. Requests from a department must have approval by the Department Head, School Dean and Vice Provost for Research. Requests from School-based centers must have approval by the center director, Dean, and Vice Provost for Research. Requests originating from a multidisciplinary center must have center director and Vice-Provost for Research approval. The request must be consistent with the guidelines established for research faculty, define the position responsibilities, and describe the source(s) of funding used to support the position. The request shall also include guidelines for performance evaluation and promotion. All approvals must be obtained before an offer is made.

GUIDELINES FOR APPOINTMENT AND PROMOTION

Review of candidates for hiring and promoting research faculty shall be conducted with the same rigor accorded hiring and promoting within the tenure track ranks. Qualifications for the three research faculty ranks are roughly equivalent to those of tenure track ranks, with primary or singular focus on research credentials. The ability to secure external funding does not automatically qualify individuals for research faculty appointments.

Assistant Research Professor

Candidates for appointment to the rank of assistant research professor must exhibit significant promise for the establishment of an independent research program and related scholarly endeavors which contribute to the discovery mission of the university.

Associate Research Professor

Candidates for appointment to the rank of associate research professor must have a significant and sustained record of scholarly accomplishment and externally funded research. The candidate must show promise of continued professional growth, recognition, and contribution to the discovery mission of the university.

Research Professor

Candidates for appointment to the rank of research professor should be recognized nationally or internationally as authorities in their fields of specialization, have established significant and sustained extramural research funding, and have significantly contributed to the discovery mission of the university.

PROMOTION PROCESS

Research faculty are eligible for promotion in rank from assistant research professor to associate research professor to research professor. Recommendations for changes in rank will be considered during the normal fall and spring semester faculty promotion cycle in accordance with guidelines issued annually by the Provost.

Research professors hired by departments will be reviewed for promotion by the departmental primary committee and the school area committee, with the addition of one or more research faculty, as appropriate. Professors hired by a unit other than a department will be assigned to a departmental primary committee for review or to an ad hoc committee appointed by the Vice Provost for Research. The area committee will consist of five members appointed by the Vice Provost for Research.

At the university level, Panel C will review all research faculty promotion candidates. Panel C shall consist of the Provost as chair, the Vice Provost for Research, two academic school deans or associate deans for research from schools employing research faculty, and six faculty members. The Provost shall nominate three of these faculty from Panel A of the University Promotions Committee; the remaining three faculty shall be research professors appointed by the Provost.

Assistant research professor appointments are not subject to the seven-year probationary period applicable to tenure track faculty. Assistant and associate research professors must be reviewed at least every five years for retention in rank or for promotion. During the fifth year, the research faculty member must be informed by the unit administrator that he/she has the right to be reviewed for promotion; it will then be up to the faculty member to request a review.

Approving:

A.M. Beck
E. Blackwood
S. Broussard
J. Duzinkiewicz
V.J. Killion
G. Lee
D.R. McMillin
M.T. Morgan
A.C. Rollock
W.J. Zinsmeister

Absent:

L.D. Bentley
J.J. Contreni
S.F. Mason
A.C. Sullivan
J.A. Walcott-McQuigg
Y. Yih