

Appointment, Reappointment, and Promotion of Research Scientist Faculty Members

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About This Policy

Effective Dates:

02-01-1994

Last Updated:

01-17-2024

Responsible University Administrator:

Executive Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Professional Development

Policy Contact:

Director of Operations and Systems

Scope

IU School of Medicine research scientist, non-tenure track faculty members.

Policy Statement

I. Ranks

- a. Through the use of 'Special Titles' provision of [ACA-12](#), IUSM was approved in 2005 to confer 'Research Professor' titles to those individuals in the scientist/scholar track who possess unique characteristics and professional responsibilities that contribute to the IUSM research. Therefore, the following rank codes and titles are used in IUSM:
 - i. Assistant Scientist or Assistant Research Professor
 - ii. Associate Scientist or Associate Research Professor
 - iii. Senior Scientist or Senior Research Professor
- b. An assistant research professor is equivalent to an assistant scientist; an associate research professor is equivalent to an associate scientist, and a senior research professor is equivalent to a senior scientist.
- c. Those scientists holding research professor titles at any rank will be required to show excellence in research (which includes service to the research mission) when applying for promotion as indicated below.
- d. The three-rank system is regarded as a career ladder framework, with appropriate procedures for appointment, annual review, and promotion.
- e. The creation of positions, advertising for qualified candidates, selection and appointment procedures, annual review, promotion and dismissal should be under well-defined procedures administered through academic units by the chief academic official for each campus.
- f. Other Academic Research Appointees
 - i. The title of Research Associate is limited to those research personnel who are not qualified for a research scientist rank, but whose positions call for full-time research under the supervision of a faculty member. Qualified research associates are eligible to apply for openings in the three-rank system but are not considered automatically for promotion to a beginning research rank.
 - ii. Persons working at Indiana University as postdoctoral fellows are designated as Postdoctoral Fellows and should refer to [IUSM Postdoctoral policies](#). Qualified postdoctoral fellows are eligible to apply for openings in the three-rank system upon satisfactory completion of the terms of the post-doctoral fellowship.

II. Qualifications for Rank

The qualifications for each of the three research ranks are roughly equivalent to those set forth in the IU School of Medicine Standards of Excellence in Research.

- I. a. Assistant Scientist or Assistant Research Professor
 - i. Typically, a candidate for this rank will hold the terminal degree in his or her discipline and, in some fields, have at least one year of successful postdoctoral research experience.
 - ii. A person at this rank will be fully capable of original, independent research work, independent contributions to a collaborative research team, and/or facilitating the research of others through service efforts, and often works under the direction of another faculty member.
- b. Associate Scientist or Associate Research Professor
 - i. A candidate for this rank will have begun to establish a national reputation through sustained productivity, high quality published work, and documented impact on the success of a research program.
 - ii. The candidate will demonstrate the ability to carry out independent projects of their own devising, will be an independent contributor to a collaborative research team, and/or will provide service to the research mission that yields significant impact on the growth, sustainability, and/or national reputation of a research program.
 - iii. Normally a person will have achieved a minimum of three years of successful research as reflected in published work in refereed sources before attaining or being appointed to the rank of Associate Scientist.
- c. Senior Scientist or Senior Research Professor
 - i. A Senior Scientist will have shown a career of continued growth in scholarship which has brought a national or international reputation as a first-class researcher who has made substantial contributions to his or her discipline, to a research team, and/or provided service to the research mission which has resulted in documented, significant, and sustained impact on the overall success of a research program.

III. Assessing Independence

- a. In assessing independence in the context of research scientist faculty, the degree to which a faculty member independently directs the research and its processes should be assessed (e.g., design/methodology, data collection, data analyses, writing and dissemination).
- b. Although this can take the form of serving as a principal or co-principal investigator or project director on funded research projects, independence and research autonomy may also be demonstrated for specific components of the research project or process without an official leadership designation.
- c. This does not preclude collaborations and/or consultations with colleagues and peers but does entail the research scientist having the authority to make critical decisions related to the research design and implementation.
- d. At its highest levels, independence may also include providing intellectual leadership of a core, center, or unit.

IV. Service

- a. A research scientist's service to the research mission can take a variety of forms, such as
 - i. leadership of an essential research core
 - ii. substantive program management roles (e.g., project design, project recruitment, report production)
 - iii. performing integral administrative functions (e.g., budget management; recruitment and supervision of personnel; and grant and contract oversight)
 - iv. and may also include external activities that directly support the mission of the research program such as representing the program at meetings, committees, conferences, or outreach efforts to relevant organizations and agencies.

- b. These research-focused service activities are considered in promotion decisions to the extent that they have a documented, significant impact on the outcome of a program (or programs) of research.

V. Promotion

- a. Promotion in rank will be considered by following procedures comparable to those for librarians and tenure track faculty.
- b. Research is generally the only applicable area of responsibility; however, service to the research mission is also taken into consideration as part of this overall assessment of research activity.
- c. Some research scientist faculty members also hold a part-time professorial title, in which case teaching would also be applicable.
- d. Criteria for promotion are detailed in the [IUSM Standards of Excellence](#)

a.

Reason For Policy

Per [IU ACA-20, Regulation of Research Appointments](#), research scientist appointments are appropriate for individuals who typically hold the terminal degree and where applicable, post-doctorate experience (or its equivalent); and who are appointed by Indiana University for research responsibilities. These appointees may do some teaching, but research responsibilities must be their primary responsibility, and they will be evaluated only on their research.

Procedure

I. Compensation

- a. The minimum total salary for faculty appointed to the research scientist **ranks** will be \$65,000 plus fringe. Total salary can exceed this amount based on the scope of work, rank, faculty credentials and expertise, and in consideration of internal and external benchmarks, but it cannot be set below this amount.
- b. The minimum total salary will be reevaluated every three years to monitor for salary compression with NIH postdoctoral fellow compensation rates.

II. Fringe Benefits

- a. Retirement Plan
 - i. Persons holding any of these full-time research scientist ranks on a 12-month basis are eligible for enrollment in the University retirement plans, as with other faculty and librarians.
- b. Insurance
 - i. Persons holding any of these full-time research scientist ranks on a 12-month basis are eligible to participate in the University life insurance plans, as with other faculty and librarians.
 - ii. Persons holding any these full-time research scientist ranks on a 12-month basis are eligible for enrollment in the University health & dental plans, as with other faculty and librarians.
- c. Leave of Absence
 - i. Persons holding any of these full-time research scientist ranks on a 12-month basis are eligible for leaves of absence as detailed in school and university policies [ACA-47 Leaves for Academic Appointees](#)
- d. Vacation
 - i. Persons appointed to any of these full-time research scientist ranks on a 12-month basis are entitled to paid vacation as detailed in [ACA-47 Leaves for Academic Appointees](#) policy.
 - ii. Vacations are approved by the chair of the department or director of the unit or his/her designee as applicable for all 12-month appointees.

III. Personnel Policies

- a. Appointment

- i. The chair of the department or director of the unit in which a research scientist's project is located will initiate recommendations for the establishment of new positions pursuant to School and campus policies and procedures for creating new faculty or librarian positions.
 - ii. These recommendations will be reviewed and acted upon by the Dean of the School of Medicine, the IUPUI Office of Equal Opportunity, the IUPUI Dean of the Faculties Office, and any other office or individual as may be required by policy or procedure.
 - iii. Assistant Scientists normally will be on one-year, renewable appointments subject to annual reviews by the chair, director, or designee. Appointments are dependent on the existence of sufficient funding.
 - iv. Associate Scientists and Senior Scientists may be appointed for periods of more than one year, depending on the nature of the research missions to which they are assigned, their responsibilities, and funding prospects.
 - v. Persons holding research ranks do not teach, except on a released-time basis and an appointment to a part-time rank approved by the chief academic official of the campus.
 - vi. Should a faculty member holding a research scientist appointment seek transfer to a tenured or tenure track appointment, the transfer will be considered as a new appointment requiring the same review expected of other new tenure track appointees.
 1. A new search will not be required if the applicant for a transfer was initially appointed through an approved affirmative action search for a tenure track position.
 - vii. Persons holding tenure track rank are eligible for consideration for change in appointment to a research scientist rank provided such change is in the best interest of the missions of the department, the school, and the university.
- b. Annual Reviews
- i. Faculty holding these research scientist ranks at all levels will be reviewed annually by the respective department chair, division director, regional campus dean or their designee.
 - ii. The annual review will be conducted per the IUSM [Faculty Annual Review Guidelines](#)
- c. Voting Rights
- i. Per the [School of Medicine Faculty Constitution](#), research scientist rank faculty are voting members of the School of Medicine faculty. Participation in university and campus faculty governance is governed by the Constitution of the Faculty of Indiana University and the IUPUI Faculty Constitution.
- d. Non-Reappointment, Non-Renewal, or Dismissal
- i. Per [ACA-20](#), dismissal of an individual with a research appointment holding a long-term appointment which has not expired may occur because of loss of research funding, closure or permanent downsizing of the program in which the faculty member serves, or loss of other outside funding on which the appointment was based; otherwise, dismissal of such faculty shall occur only for reasons of professional incompetence, serious personal or professional misconduct, or university financial exigency. Non-reappointment of research faculty to a new appointment term may occur for the foregoing reasons or may occur as well for reason of changing staffing needs of the program.
 - ii. The minimum notice of dismissal or non-reappointment for any research or scientist-track appointee is one pay period, consistent with policy for all non-tenure track/non-clinical track academic appointees.

The University defines full-time as 0.75 FTE or greater for purposes of benefit eligibility.

History

1. Effective February 7, 1981, the President and Board of Trustees of Indiana University approved the establishment of faculty level non-tenure track appointments for full-time research specialists (see [ACA-20](#)).
2. Revised 12/22/94; 7/16/98; 1/16/99; 3/27/99; 6/15/05; 9/2/08; 12/3/2018; 8/19/21 (Faculty Steering Committee); 11/1/21 (School Executive Committee).

3. Policy updated on 20 April 2023 to reflect change in University Office title and to update IUSM Faculty Constitution link.
4. Policy updated on 17 January 2024 to reflect Policy Contact change and new minimum salary for a faculty-appointed research scientist.