

**College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Proposal for
Academic Title of Research Professor**

I. Justification

With the exception of Cornell, virtually all top U.S. research universities now use the Research Professor titles for non-tenure track faculty engaged primarily or exclusively in research related activity. Efforts to attract highly qualified people into such roles have failed due to the lack of a professorial title that is equivalent to what our peer institutions offer. Funding agencies are understandably unfamiliar with the Research Scientist titles and are therefore potentially less favorable towards grant applications than they would be if such proposals came from academics holding a generally recognized professorial title. And very strong concerns about the lack of these nationally recognized professorial titles have repeatedly surfaced in the context of Cornell's greatest hiring challenge – dual career recruitment.

- Whereas the adoption of the Clinical Professor and Professor of Practice titles were major steps in modernizing Cornell's titles, and
- Whereas Cornell could further benefit from the final step of adopting the Research Professor titles now in use at essentially all major research universities,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THIS ENABLING LEGISLATION BE ADOPTED BY THE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES.

II. Description of the Position.

The title of Research Professor is to be used for a limited and defined group of long-term, non-tenure-track appointments. This title will be available for use at the Assistant, Associate and Full Professor rank, modifiable when appropriate by the term "visiting." Individuals are meant to be appointed at the rank commensurate with their career stage. Appointees must hold the terminal degree in their discipline.

The title of Research Professor is available only for long term, non-tenure-track faculty who are distinguished and highly experienced individuals in a relevant field of research. To qualify for the title, such individuals are expected to have achieved significant stature in the scholarly discipline, to have demonstrated the quality of research accomplishment appropriate to initiating independent research programs, and to have demonstrated a trajectory that promises a continued high level of achievement. Their primary responsibilities include initiating new research activities; creating and managing research laboratories; seeking funding opportunities, submitting proposals, and fulfilling the terms of research grants and contracts; planning, conducting and reporting on original research; and representing their research groups externally. Persons appointed to these titles may serve routinely as principal investigators on grants and contracts.

The title of Research Professor may not be used for positions whose responsibilities substantially replicate those of tenure-track faculty. Accordingly, such individuals normally are not permitted to teach courses for credit. In the event that some teaching of courses for credit is requested by the appointing department, this teaching must be consistent with the terms of the individual's funding and must be approved by the dean. When such teaching is assigned, care must be taken not to shift teaching expense inappropriately to research grants or contracts. In no case should such an individual teach for an extended consecutive period.

III. Terms of Appointment.

- i. Appointment, Reappointment and Promotion Processes. Search procedures should generally follow those used by a department to fill other professorial positions. A dossier-based review must be conducted for initial appointment. Through an exception approved by the department chair and the dean, the dossier-based review may be conducted during the first year, with continued appointment contingent on successful review. This dossier shall typically include letters from confidential external referees, letters from participants in current or recent research programs, a report of the faculty vote, and a recommendation by the department chair to the dean, who makes the ultimate decision about appointment. Promotions to the associate and full professor ranks, as well as reappointment at any rank at the end of a fixed term, should generally follow procedures used for other professorial-level appointments.
- ii. Duration of Appointment. Terms of positions bearing these titles shall normally be up to five years. Unless otherwise specified, they shall be renewable indefinitely. While there may be a transition period before research funding supports the position, appointments normally are expected to be supported largely by such funds; other funding sources are permitted. The offer and appointment letters should include notification that the appointment may be terminated early or modified if funding is withdrawn or reduced. Nonrenewal or early termination of appointment also may occur on the basis of other significant resource constraints, unreliable funding prospects, seriously diminished interest in the research area or relevance to the appointing unit's research mission, or performance.
- iii. Relationship to Existing Titles. Because the Research Professor titles are intended to replace the current Research Scientist, Principal Research Scientist, and Senior Scientist titles, individuals holding such titles may convert, with the approval of the department and the dean, to the appropriate level of Research Professor. An individual currently holding a Research Scientist, Principal Research Scientist, or Senior Scientist title who is not approved to move to the Research Professor title or does not wish to do so may remain in the current title subject to all applicable conditions. There shall be no new appointments to the Research Scientist, Principal Research Scientist, and Senior Scientist titles.

Individuals holding other academic titles, including Research Associate and Senior Research Associate cannot convert to Research Professor titles, but may seek appointment to such titles through the normal appointment processes.

- iv. Appointment and reappointment procedures will be based on those currently in place for the Senior Scientist position appended at the end of this document.

IV. Percentage Limitation

The percentage of positions bearing the (Assistant, Associate, or Full) Research Professor titles may not exceed 10% of the tenure-track faculty positions in the college existing at the time of appointment or 10% of the tenure-track positions in those departments or programs where those positions are located, except as herein provided. The sum of current and future non-tenure track professor titles shall not exceed 10 percent of the tenure track faculty. The Professor of Practice legislation shall be amended to reflect this limit. A higher percentage may be afforded if, but only if, CALS, the department, or the program makes an overpowering showing that: (1) there is a need for the higher percentage of non-tenure track professors; (2) the positions in question would not replicate the functions of positions ordinarily held by tenured or tenure-track faculty; and (3) any additional non-tenure track professor positions in a department or program would not detract in any way from the potential for adding tenured or tenure-track positions in that department or program.

V. Voting and Other Rights

- i. Voting/University Faculty Membership. Research Professors are not members of the University Faculty. They are nonvoting members of their college or school faculty unless given the right to vote by the particular faculty.
- ii. Membership on Graduate Committees. Individuals holding Research Professor titles shall have the same opportunities for and restrictions on membership on graduate committees that currently pertain to the Research Scientist, Principal Research Scientist, and Senior Scientist titles. Such individuals are eligible to be nominated as a general or minor member of a graduate field's faculty according to the procedures of the Code of Legislation of the Graduate Faculty.

VI. Impact Statement

The use of the Research Professor titles should not have any impact on the number of tenure-track faculty in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Specifically, the College's first priority should be to attract and fill tenure track lines. Current holders of non-tenure-track positions in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences may apply for any advertised positions at the titles of Research Professor if they meet the criteria for such appointment. The same procedure will be used for their consideration as used for a new appointment with this title.

*Note: "Academic unit" refers to Department, School, or other organizational level of faculty within programs within the College.

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Guidelines for (Re) Appointing Research Scientists

This document discusses the process through which Research Scientists appointed in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences are to be reviewed for reappointment. Reappointments are to be reviewed every 5 years by the Senior Associate Dean.

Reappointment should be based on a full and realistic appraisal of consistently demonstrated competence of the individual and an evaluation of his or her capability and prospects in respect to the position description. Questions to consider include:

1. Does the performance of the individual meet requirements of the position?
2. What is the standing of the individual in his or her discipline and research program area as viewed by other Cornell faculty and colleagues outside Cornell?
3. What does the evidence reveal about the performance of the candidate since the initial and/or last appointment?
4. What does the evidence reveal about the promise of the candidate over the reappointment period proposed?

The department chair or school director should gather the following materials:

From the Department or School

1. Letter from Chair or Director of primary unit to the Senior Associate Dean including:
 - Chair's/Director's evaluation of candidate's research program and performance.
 - Chair's/Director's indication of support from department or faculty sponsor.
 - Faculty evaluation of research - The Chair/Director should solicit a statement from a faculty member evaluating the direction and accomplishment of the research program, including assessment of the research program's relationship to the department/unit's mission.

- Letter of endorsement from Chair/Director of any secondary department to which candidate has responsibility or from which candidate receives funding.
2. (For re-appointments) Documentation of annual performance reviews. Lack of documentation of annual reviews can negatively impact consideration for reappointment. Any absent evaluations must be explained.
 3. Draft letter of notification of reappointment & updated job description to the incumbent.
 4. At initial appointment or at reappointment every 10-years:
 - Four to six letters or email evaluating the candidate based on the criteria below from peers or appropriate leaders in a related discipline at Cornell and from outside sources at the local, state or national levels. At least three letters must be external to Cornell.

From the Candidate

1. Updated curriculum vita.
2. A research statement from the candidate that includes the following:
 - Goals/Accomplishments for previous appointment period.
 - Goals/for upcoming appointment period.
 - Funding applied for as well as received to support program.
3. List of courses taught, including course outline, years offered and enrollments per offering. For team-taught courses, include a statement of specific involvement by the candidate.
4. Student evaluations summarized in a table, not actual evaluations, including statement of changes made or planned

Review/Communication

The primary Chair or Director will review the materials with faculty and:

- a) If reappointment is recommended at the department level, submit them to the Senior Associate Dean.
- b) If reappointment is not recommended at the department level, the Chair must discuss the situation with the Senior Associate Dean and Associate Dean of Research before any official notification is sent either to the Dean or the candidate.

The Dean and Senior Associate Dean will review the department's recommendation in conjunction with any other Deans as appropriate for shared departments. Notification of reappointment to the incumbent will be conveyed by a letter from the department Chair.