

# **Policies and Guidelines on Appointment of Research Professors**

This policy provides guidelines for appointment, evaluation, reappointment, and promotion for Research Professors at NJIT. It is noted that Research Professor is a “limited-term appointment” which refers to the time for which a person holds the research appointment contingent on funding. Therefore, the normal length of term is dependent upon available funding and reappointment. The renewable appointment is based on annual (12 months) contracts and subject to annual review.

## **1.1 Appointment**

Research faculty appointments are to be initiated by an academic department or by a Research Center. Appointments by the latter may be co-sponsored by an academic department(s) that will be the beneficiary of the potential scholarly contributions of the research faculty member. The rank of Research Professor must be Assistant, Associate, Full Professor or Distinguished Research Professor. Appointments will be specific to the sponsoring unit (e.g., Department or a Research Center). Research Professors will be on limited term appointments and are not eligible for tenure.

The sponsoring department(s) assumes the responsibility for providing the research faculty with adequate resources beyond what is typically funded by grants and contracts (e.g., laboratory, and office space). The nomination must include a long term plan and the sponsoring unit must commit to such resources for the duration of the appointment.

Each academic unit may develop its own procedures for the recruitment, selection and nominations of candidate (s) and follow university guidelines for hiring. It is recognized that individuals who are already present in the university system or are associated with a specific grant may not go through an open external search. For example, the availability of the position may depend upon the receipt of a specific grant by a particular individual. Attention must be paid to policies on Equal Opportunity Employment policies laid down by the Human Resources Department. In addition, approvals from the Department Chair/Center Director, the relevant Dean, the Vice Provost for Research and Development, and the Provost are required.

## **1.2 Salary**

The salary of a Research Professor will be set by the hiring division based on the appointee’s qualifications. The salary and fringe benefits (at full-time rate) for research faculty members are to be paid from research grants. The minimum salary has to be committed at the time of appointment with identified resources. The minimum annual salary for appointment of a

Research Professor is set by the Human Resources Department at NJIT. Please contact the Human Resources Department for the most current minimum salary.

A Research Professor is eligible to participate in University medical, life insurance and retirement plans. These plans are determined by the Human Resources Department. The cost of all benefits shall be borne by the sponsoring projects and these costs are specified by the Office of Sponsored Research Administration.

## **1.2. Research Professor Position Titles**

The qualifications of Research Professor candidates are mainly determined by the nominee's potential and ability to obtain sustained external funding, advise graduate/undergraduate students, and produce scholarly works. Teaching is not a part of the job description. Any exception for teaching a specialized course must be strongly justified for Research Professors meeting all requirements of their primary Research Professor appointment, and approved by Department Chair/Center Director, College/School Dean, and Vice Provost for Research and Development.

**Assistant Research Professor:** This position is the equivalent in research function at the level of Assistant Professor, but with no requirements in teaching and service. The person must have a PhD as terminal degree or whatever is typically required by the hiring discipline. The candidate must show the potential for independent research and research supervision at undergraduate and graduate levels. Subject to the availability of funding, the Assistant Research Professor will receive a renewable annual contract and undergo annual reviews. Exceptions must be approved by the Vice Provost for Research and the demonstration of exceptional and sustained research synergy and productivity is expected.

**Associate Research Professor:** This position is the equivalent in research function at the level of Associate Professor, but with no requirements in teaching and service. The person must have a PhD as terminal degree or as required by the hiring discipline. The candidate must have demonstrated the capacity for independent research, the ability to secure independent funding, and the ability to supervise research at undergraduate and graduate levels. The Associate Research Professor will receive a renewable annual contract and undergo annual reviews. Demonstration of exceptional and sustained research synergy and productivity is expected.

**Research Professor:** This position is the equivalent in research function at the level of Full Professor, but with no requirements in teaching and service. The person must have a PhD as terminal degree or as required by the hiring discipline. The candidate must have a strong track record in research and demonstrated ability to secure significant funding, and is expected (or at

least demonstrated capability) to run an independent research program. The Research Professor will receive a renewable annual contract and undergo annual reviews. Demonstration of exceptional and sustained research synergy and productivity is expected.

**Distinguished Research Professor:** This position is intended for individuals with exceptional accomplishments significantly exceeding those of Full Professor. National and international recognition in the field of expertise is expected. Consultation with Distinguished Professor's committee is required for approval of this position.

The Distinguished Research Professor will receive a renewable annual contract and undergo annual reviews. Exceptions must be approved by the Vice Provost for Research and the demonstration of exceptional and sustained research synergy and productivity is expected.

**Role of Research Professors in the University:** Research Professors are not eligible for sabbaticals and startup funds that are available to tenure track faculty. Eligibility to participate in faculty governance activities will be determined by the university Senate, and they are not meant to serve as voting members in departmental administration.

### **1.3. Nomination Documents for Assistant/Associate/Full professor/Distinguished Research Professor**

An up to date curriculum vitae that includes scholarship such as publications and grant funding is required. The Vitae should highlight the capability to write proposals and secure funding. External letters of supports (3 to 5) are required. A brief statement from the nominee describing his/her research and student mentoring plans is required. In addition to the above, an assessment by the nominating Department Chair (or Program Director) is needed. The nomination package should include the following information:

- Department Chair or Center Director's report on the need for the position, job description and selection process of the nominee; or departmental (or research center's) search committee report (if a search was conducted).
- A description of the nominee's expected and planned contributions to the specific research project(s). Nominee's role as PI or Co-PI.
- A description of the nominee' potential scholarship and student research mentorship, and impact on department/center and university research.
- A statement from the sponsoring Department Chair/Research Center on long and short term support. Support includes infrastructural, operational (e.g. laboratory space, office space, and equipment etc.), and also sources of salary and fringe benefit.

## **2. Annual Review and Reappointment**

All research faculty will be subject to annual performance evaluations carried out according to the procedures of the sponsoring unit, analogous to the reviews of university professors. This review will be carried out by the Department Chair/Center Director. The review should provide constructive feedback to the research faculty member concerning his/her performance and progress. Salary increments may be recommended at the time of performance evaluation.

### **2.1 Reappointment**

The reappointment will be based on performance during the previous appointment period. The main criteria are proposal activities, scholarship, mentoring of students and the ability of the candidate to sustain funding. This will be true for all Research Professor categories but clearly the level of expectation will depend upon the rank. Some important considerations are as follows:

- Research performance during the previous appointment period.
- Impact on research activities of the department/institute.
- Mentoring of graduate and undergraduate students for research in his/her field.
- Other research-related contributions to the university.
- Financial resources for sustained future external funding during the reappointment period.

Important documents for reappointment application include:

- Current curriculum vitae (including publications).
- In case of joint research, the distinctive role that the research professor played for both scholarship and grants should be provided.
- Details of grants submitted and their status including grants under review.
- A letter from the Chair/Center Director assessing the nominee's performance including a vote (or review) if a committee was involved.
- Details of future support from the department and long term external funding potential
- An assessment of the Professor's efforts in securing external grant/contract funding.
- Annual reports submitted in the past appointment period.

- At least two letters of evaluation from others familiar with the Professor's research.
- A brief plan from the Professor summarizing his/her proposed research activities during the reappointment period.

### **3. Promotion**

After multiple reappointments, Assistant and Associate Research Professors will be encouraged to seek promotion. The evaluation of nominees for promotion should focus on significant growth in research, funding activities and graduate student research advising. Specific evaluation criteria include:

- Research Professor's performance taking into account the nominee's contribution to the department research enterprise or institutional research center
- History of the past external funding and future potential
- Graduate and undergraduate research advising/supervising activities
- While service to the department and university is not critical, research related services to the profession such as working with national societies and organizing conferences that bring visibility to the university are important.

Suggested Documents that are relevant for promotion are:

- Updated current curriculum vitae.
- In case of joint research, the distinctive role of the Research Professor in both scholarship and grants. Details of grants submitted and their status.
- A letter from the Chair/Center director assessing the nominee's performance including a vote/review if a committee was involved. The letter should include and an assessment of the Professors potential for securing external grant/contracts in the future.
- Details of future support from the department and the reappointment period
- Annual reports submitted in the past appointment period.
- A brief plan from the Professor summarizing his/her proposed research activities during the reappointment period.
- At least five letters of references are required. At least two letters of reference from within the university with at least one selected by the Chair /Center Director

#### **4. Gap Funding**

By definition, the Research Professor is expected to fund their salaries and benefits through external grants. The University or the sponsoring unit may provide interim support when there is a gap in external funding by research grants. The sponsoring faculty member or Department Chair/Center Director may apply for the interim funding to the Vice Provost for Research and Development, who in consultation with the sponsoring unit and Dean will determine the level of funding to be awarded. Funding will be for a maximum of one year or until external research funds are available, whichever comes first. The sponsoring faculty member will be expected to have proposals for external funds submitted and pending at one or more external funding agencies. The potential of such funding to support the salary of the Research Professor and the associated research should be considered for decisions on interim funding. Applications must be supported by the sponsoring units.

It is once again noted that the Research Professor position is a “limited-term appointment”. In the absence of grant funding, the University may or may not provide interim funding. Therefore, the normal length of term is dependent upon available funding and reappointment. All renewable appointments are based on annual contracts and subject to annual review. Exceptions may be granted for additional years on an annual basis by Vice Provost for Research and Development based on the exceptional research synergy and productivity brought by the Research Professor. Renewal is not guaranteed and is contingent upon the sponsoring unit (s) being able to provide the appropriate support and strong justification. In addition, all research faculty are subject to dismissal for causes applicable to regular faculty members and university staff.

**Addendum to the Policies and Guidelines on Appointment of  
Research Professors**

**June 3, 2016**

If the proposed appointment is either a continuation, or an appointment of an internal candidate, external letters can be substituted by internal letters at the discretion of the departmental chair.