



BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

University Policy 5010

Research Faculty Policies and Procedures

Effective Date

September 2004

Last Revision Date

April 2020

Responsible Party

Vice President for Research and Economic Development, (208) 426-5732

Responsible parties are outlined in the policy. Questions may be directed to the respective dean of each college.

Scope and Audience

This policy applies to all research faculty.

Additional Authority

- Idaho State Board of Education Policy, Section II.G. (Policies Regarding Faculty)
 - Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, Standard 2.B.6
 - University Policy 4210 (Employment of Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty)
 - University Policy 4290 (Annual Faculty Performance Evaluation)
 - University Policy 7000 (Position Definitions)
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1. Policy Purpose

To establish policies and procedures for research faculty.

2. Policy Statement

Boise State University recognizes that research faculty play an important role at the university and are critical to the success of the university's mission. Research faculty are expected to contribute to the scholarship of discovery to help enhance all aspects of the university's research.

3. Position Description

The position description for a research faculty position must be consistent with the definition of research faculty in University Policy 7000 (Position Definitions). Typically, the research program expected of research faculty falls within the scholarship of discovery (see University Policy 4340 – Faculty Tenure and Promotion Guidelines) and will be evaluated according to the college and department criteria for the scholarship of discovery, unless otherwise specified.

4. Titles

- a. Titles for research faculty are selected from the research professor series:
 - Assistant Research Professor
 - Associate Research Professor
 - Research Professor
- b. As is the case with academic rank for tenured and tenure-track faculty, titles within the research professor series imply a hierarchy of combined education, experience, achievement, and responsibility, with the title of Research Professor corresponding to the highest rank.

5. Degree Requirements

A terminal degree (e.g., Ph.D.) appropriate for the field is normally required for all titles within the research professor series, but consideration is extended to individuals with an advanced degree (e.g., M.S., M.A.) supplemented by experience and achievement comparable to obtaining a terminal degree.

6. General Administration

6.1 Supervision

The department chair or unit supervisor is responsible for supervising the research faculty member. The chair or unit supervisor may delegate supervisory responsibility to an appropriate administrator in the department or unit.

6.2 Benefits

Members of the research faculty are benefit-eligible provided they meet state and university eligibility guidelines.

6.3 Funding Sources

Any combination of funding sources can be used to support the salary and research program of a research faculty member, provided that all policies and regulations of the university and the funding sources are satisfied.

6.4 Obligation of the University

- a. Each college/school employing a research faculty member is obligated to provide a minimum of 10% of the research faculty member's annual salary on an ongoing basis. This funding is to be used for proposal writing, administrative duties, meetings, and other activities ancillary to the position. Other funding may include payment for advising, start-up funding, and "bridge" salary support when external funding is projected to drop below the level required for benefit eligibility.
- b. Any other direct salary or financial support provided to a research faculty member will be explicitly noted in the employment offer letter.
- c. In the case of teaching, the salary will be paid by the department, school, or college at the research faculty member's Institutional Base Salary rate.
- d. For research faculty supported by smaller grants ineligible for vacation funding, the college/school will provide funding for a minimum of 50% of the faculty member's accrued vacation hours per year.

6.5 Program Development Funds

Each department or unit must develop a policy to determine what portion of the department or unit share of program development funds must be returned to research faculty for professional development purposes.

6.6 Voting Privileges

The voting privileges of a research faculty member are determined by policies of the appropriate college/school and department or unit, but only if such policies are consistent University policies.

7. Initial Appointment

7.1 Search Procedure

The initial appointment to an established research faculty position is made as the result of a search by a department or unit using a search procedure that is defined by the department or unit and is carried out in compliance with University and Idaho State Board of Education policies.

7.2 Initial Title

- a. The initial title of the appointment is determined by the following criteria:
- b. Assistant Research Professor is the usual entry-level rank for individuals with little or no experience beyond the degree requirements. The candidate's resume and letters of reference should document independent capability for conducting reliable research, the capacity to generate significant external funding to support research, a potential for substantive professional growth, and a collegial approach to the academic research environment.
- c. Associate Research Professor is a rank marking an individual who has been instrumental in establishing a research program characterized by significant external funding, primary author peer-reviewed publications, and (in some disciplines) the potential for generation of marketable intellectual property. Steady growth in research skill is easily documented by examining proposals and papers. Colleagues recognize the individual's capacity for future leadership in the relevant discipline.
- d. Research Professor is a rank of high distinction for an individual regarded as a national authority in the relevant discipline. A sustained record of regular contributions to the peer-reviewed literature, steady external funding to support a vigorous research program,

leadership in program building and group research efforts, participation in professional service at the national level, and (in some disciplines) marketable intellectual property are some easily recognized hallmarks. External letters of evaluation from recognized leaders in the relevant discipline are used to document achievements commensurate with this rank.

7.3 Initial Employment Procedure

The procedure for employing the successful candidate is the same as the procedure for employing tenured and tenure-track faculty and is described in University Policy 4210 (Employment of Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty). The following information should be included in the offer letter:

- a. Basic position information to include:
 - A recommended title;
 - Annualized salary;
 - Initial base full-time equivalent (FTE) of the appointment, and
 - Term of the appointment (9, 10, 11, or 12 months)
- b. A concise description of the source of funds for salary support;
- c. A statement of justification for the appointment and salary including the qualifications of the recommended individual (attached resume of candidate);
- d. Expectations regarding workload content and distribution: percentage of time spent on research and any portion of time spent on teaching and service. This section may address participation in seminars, supervision of graduate students, and participation on service committees;
- e. Agreements regarding the supporting resources and commitments required of the department or unit, the college, and the University, including office and lab space, administrative and technical support, communications (mail, photocopy, phone, fax, internet), laboratory equipment and field equipment, disposable supplies, and computer usage;
- f. Other conditions of employment such as expectations for securing external funding for research activities, expectations for teaching and service or other non-research activities; and

- g. Eligibility to receive funding by the college/school for a minimum of 10% of the annual salary ongoing;
- h. Eligibility to receive funding by the college/school for a minimum of 50% of accrued vacation hours per year if supported by a smaller grant ineligible for vacation funding.

8. Other Appointment

An appointee to the research professor series may be nominated for consideration by the Graduate Council for appointment to the graduate faculty (see University Policy 4710 - Graduate Faculty Appointments).

9. Performance Evaluation and Salary Adjustment

9.1 Performance Evaluation

- a. The performance of a research faculty member must be evaluated at least annually by the department chair or unit supervisor using the timelines and procedures defined in University Policy 4290 (Annual Faculty Performance Evaluation) and with emphasis on research activities. More frequent evaluations may be conducted at the discretion of the department chair or unit supervisor.
- b. If teaching and service are part of the current position description, these activities will be assessed as part of the evaluation.
- c. The chair or supervisor should pay particular attention in the evaluation to the relationship of performance to promotion. As part of the evaluation process, the employee undergoing evaluation must prepare an annual activity report in a format specified by the department chair or unit supervisor. Additionally, a documented workload assignment must be included in the evaluation for the research faculty member as described in Section 4.3 of University Policy 4560 (Workload for Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty).

9.2 Annual Salary Adjustment

Salary adjustments for research faculty are considered on an annual basis according to procedures and guidelines established by the University for faculty.

10. Promotion

10.1 Maximum Time in Title

A member of the research faculty cannot hold the title of assistant research professor for more than six (6) years measured from the date of initial appointment, not including a workload release or one or more authorized leaves of absence. An assistant research professor must therefore be approved for promotion before the end of the sixth year or seek a new position within the University or elsewhere. Maximum time in title does not apply to research faculty holding the titles of Associate Research Professor or Research Professor.

10.2 Experience Requirements

- a. Advancement within the research professor series must not occur before the acquisition of a required number of years of experience as a research faculty member.
- b. In addition to requisite skills and performance requirements, for promotion to: 1) Associate Research Professor, five (5) years of full-time experience as a research faculty member is required; and 2) Research Professor, eight (8) years of full-time experience as a research faculty member is required.
- c. At the time of initial appointment, the department chair or unit supervisor must make a written recommendation to the college/school dean regarding the application of experience at another academic institution and application of professional (nonacademic) experience toward the years of experience required for promotion. The dean is responsible for making the final determination.
- d. An application for promotion can be submitted no earlier than during the third (3rd) full year of employment at Boise State University, except under extraordinary circumstances. Experience requirements are necessary, but not sufficient conditions for promotion.

10.3 Promotion Criteria

Criteria for promotion of research faculty are to be developed in advance of the need by the department or unit. The criteria for promotion must be approved by the department chair or unit supervisor and by the college dean, must be consistent with the general criteria given in section 7.2, and must be followed by the Promotion Committee for Research Faculty defined in section 10.

10.4 Promotion Folder

The promotion folder must contain at least the following documents:

- A letter from the applicant requesting promotion,
- A comprehensive resume,
- A concise summary of activities that address the promotion criteria,
- All annual evaluations,
- A copy of the position description for the position held by the applicant, and
- Letters of support from at least two (2) colleagues holding research or tenure-track faculty appointments at the University

10.5 Promotion Committee for Research Faculty

The Promotion Committee for Research Faculty is composed of the existing Tenure and Promotion Committee for the college/school/department, plus one research faculty of at least Associate Research Faculty rank, and if possible, from the applicant's college/school/department, or a related field, when a research faculty is to be considered for promotion. Once the committee is fully composed, each member has one (1) vote on all matters. In the event of a tie vote, the vote cast by the committee chair is the deciding vote.

10.6 Procedure and Timelines

The following procedure and timelines closely follow the promotion guidelines for tenured and tenure-track faculty described in University Policy 4340 (Faculty Tenure and Promotion Guidelines).

- a. If applying for promotion in fall 2023 or earlier, the candidate for promotion submits to the department chair a promotion folder by September 1st. Candidates going up for promotion in fall 2024 or thereafter must submit a promotion folder to the department chair by September 15.
- b. The chair or supervisor identifies at least two (2) unbiased and highly qualified external reviewers from the relevant discipline and requests letters from them evaluating the candidate's research record. The letters are to arrive by October 1.

- c. The chair or supervisor forwards the promotion folder, along with their recommendation, any clarification that may be required on the applicant's specific responsibilities; the external letters of evaluation; the written input from the tenured, tenure-track, and research faculty of the department or unit; and a copy of the department or unit promotion criteria for research faculty, to the Promotion Committee for Research Faculty by October 15.
- d. The Promotion Committee for Research Faculty reviews all documents, decides on a recommendation, and notifies the applicant of such recommendation no later than December 1. In the case of a recommendation to deny promotion, the candidate may request a meeting with the committee. The request must be made within five (5) working days of the notification of denial, and the meeting must occur within five (5) working days of the request for a meeting.
- e. The Promotion Committee for Research Faculty forwards all documents and its recommendation to the college dean by December 15.
- f. The college dean reviews all documents and recommendations and notifies the candidate of their recommendation by January 15. In the case of a recommendation to deny promotion, the candidate may request a meeting with the dean. The request must be made within five (5) working days of the notification of denial, and the meeting must occur within five (5) working days of the request for a meeting. The dean forwards all documents and their recommendation to the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs by January 31.
- g. The Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs reviews all documents and recommendations and brings them to the attention of the President. The President, in consultation with the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, makes the decision to grant or deny promotion and notifies the candidate of the decision by March 1. In the case of a decision to deny promotion, the candidate may request a meeting with the President. The request must be made within five (5) working days of the notification of denial, and the meeting must occur within five (5) working days of the request for a meeting.
- h. A candidate may withdraw from consideration for promotion at any time in the above process.

10.7 Salary Enhancement

The salary enhancement for promotion of a member of the research faculty is the same as for promotion of a member of the tenured and tenure-track faculty for comparable ranks.

11. Related Information

University Policy 1090 (Intellectual Property)

University Policy 4210 (Employment of Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty)

University Policy 4290 (Annual Faculty Performance Evaluation)

University Policy 4340 (Faculty Tenure and Promotion Guidelines)

University Policy 4560 (Workload for Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty)

University Policy 4710 (Graduate Faculty Appointments)

Revision History

November 2010; April 2020

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June 18, 2024