

**College of Arts & 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 Research Scientist and Senior 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. 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 Professor of Practice title was a major step in modernizing Cornell's and the College of Arts & Sciences' (CAS) titles, and
- Whereas CAS could similarly benefit from adopting the Research Professor titles now in use in the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences, the College of Engineering, and at essentially all major research universities,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THIS ENABLING LEGISLATION BE ADOPTED BY THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & 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 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 and to have demonstrated the quality of research accomplishment appropriate to initiating independent research programs and 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 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 Associate Research Professor or to Research Professor, 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, subject to review. 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 all positions bearing any of the 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. A higher percentage may be afforded if, but only if, CAS, the department, or the program provides especially strong justification 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 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 <https://gradschool.cornell.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Code-of-Legislation-September-2018.pdf>. As members of the graduate faculty, they may serve as members and as chairs of Special Committees.

VI. Impact Statement

The use of the Research Professor titles should not have any impact on the number of tenure-track faculty in CAS. Specifically, the College's first priority should be to attract tenure-track faculty and fill tenure-track lines. Current holders of non-tenure-track positions in the CAS 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.

College of Arts & Sciences
Guidelines for (Re) Appointing Principal Research Scientists and Research Scientists
(also see https://hr.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/documents/academic_titles.pdf)

Principal research scientists and research scientists are responsible for 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. More information is available on the Office of the Vice Provost for Research website. Principal research scientists and research scientists may be appointed in academic departments or in research centers. They are not members of the University Faculty. Research scientists and principal research scientists are non-voting members of their college or school faculty and may be given the right to vote by that faculty.

An individual may be appointed directly to the principal research scientist title or promoted from research scientist. The line of progression in these titles is limited to research scientist and principal research scientist – there is no routine expectation of promotion from senior research associate. There is no routine expectation of promotion from these titles to senior scientist. Promotion from research scientist to principal research scientist is based on quality of achievement, productivity, national and international stature in the field, leadership of the independent research program, effectiveness with colleagues and with participants in the research program, and service to the field. Promotion is not automatic, for example after a particular number of years in title. A formal dossier review is required for promotion to principal research scientist and follows the procedures for the dossier-based appointment review.

Administrative Notes:

- These titles reflect salaried positions that are subject to affirmative action regulations. Search procedures should follow those used by a department to fill professorial positions.
- Appointment length for principal research scientist and research scientist may be for up to five years and is renewable.
- The differences between these titles relate to the balance in the individual's career between promise and achievement in establishing highly successful independent research programs.
- Principal research scientists and research scientists must hold a research Ph.D. degree (or foreign equivalent) in a field appropriate to the position. To qualify for the title, research scientists and principal research scientists also 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 achievement.
- Principal research scientists and research scientists normally are not permitted to teach courses for credit. In the event that some teaching of courses for credit is desired by the individual and requested by the appointing department, this teaching must be consistent with the terms of their funding and must be approved by the dean (and, if different, the dean of the college responsible for the teaching). Where 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.

- Principal research scientists and research scientists are academic and should not be used for those whose positions are primarily administrative, even if the responsibilities include some research. Some administrative responsibilities, however, are unavoidable in creating and managing research laboratories, and this should not be interpreted to preclude appointment to these titles.
- 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 include letters from confidential external referees, letters from participants in current or recent research programs, an analytical transmittal letter with report of the faculty vote, and the report of an ad hoc committee to advise the dean, who makes the ultimate decision about appointment.
- Reappointment decisions are recommended by the department or research center and are based primarily but not exclusively on quality of performance and on the availability of work and funds.

The reappointment recommendation must be reviewed at one more level of the academic reporting structure, if not more. The final decision about reappointment is made by the dean or vice provost (or designee). Negative decisions and decisions not to review for reappointment are subject to local appeals procedures.