

Research Scientist

Scope

Unclassified Staff

Policy

Research Scientist or Engineer (Assistant, Associate, Full Research Scientist/Engineer)

Research scientist/engineer appointments are established with the expectation that the research scientist/engineer will participate in and/or develop a sustainable, externally funded research program. To create a new position, the department and division are required to identify ~~external~~ research funding sources (current and anticipated) that are reasonably expected to support the ~~first three years of the~~ appointment. The creation of a research scientist/engineer position is subject to the approval of the Vice President for Research and Innovation and the Provost.

Qualifications

A Research Scientist/Engineer must:

1. hold a Ph.D. or other terminal degree from an accredited college or university or the equivalent thereof;
2. have demonstrated effectiveness as a scholar and researcher;
3. have the potential to develop a sustainable, funded research program,

Assignment

1. A research scientist's/engineer's primary full-time, twelve-month assignment is to engage in, be responsible for, or oversee a significant area of research or scholarship in a manner that advances the mission of the University in a significant and substantial way.
2. Research scientists/engineers are encouraged to participate in educational activities of their department to the degree consistent with their research

responsibilities. When appropriate, they may contribute to seminars, classes and symposia as may be arranged with their department chair. In many cases, research scientist/engineers can assist in the research training of undergraduate or graduate students or post-doctoral trainees by teaching courses in research methods and laboratory instruction.

Assistant Research Scientist/Engineer

Assistant research scientist/engineer appointments will typically be made on a fiscal year basis. If not renewed, the assistant research scientist/engineer will be given 90 days' notice of non-reappointment. An assistant research scientist/engineer is eligible to receive, but not entitled to expect, annual renewal of the appointment. No person shall serve more than six (6) years as an assistant research scientist/engineer.

Following a comprehensive evaluation and review, an assistant research scientist/engineer may be promoted to the Associate level. In the event the associate research scientist/engineer does not achieve promotion by or during their 6th year, their employment will cease at the end of their 6th year. A person may only apply for promotion to associate research scientist/engineer twice.

Promotion to the Rank of Associate Research Scientist/Engineer

1. Assistant research scientist/engineers who wish to be considered for promotion to the associate rank are responsible for assembling and submitting a dossier of research accomplishments and relevant supporting materials to the Primary Investigator with whom they work most closely (as applicable) and the department chair and/or program chair/director (when appropriate), demonstrating the following:
 - a. A program of sustainable, funded high quality research and its prospective continuation;
 - b. Ability to generate external grant and/or contract research funding; and
 - c. Collegiality
2. The candidate's dossier will be evaluated by the Primary Investigator (PI) with whom the research scientist/engineer works most closely (if applicable), the department chair or program chair/director (when appropriate) in consultation with the tenured members of the faculty in the department/program, the dean and the Vice President for Research and Innovation. If there is a positive recommendation for promotion from the PI or the department chair and/or program chair/director (when appropriate) and a positive recommendation from

the academic dean and/or the Vice President for Research and Innovation, the dossier will advance to the Provost for final consideration and decision.

3. Appointments at the rank of Associate are renewable in three-year increments.
4. Appointments of individuals demonstrating a comparable level of competence elsewhere may be made directly to this rank.

Promotion to Rank of Research Scientist/Engineer

1. A candidate may apply for promotion to the rank of full research scientist/engineer at any time after serving at least three years at the rank of associate research scientist/engineer. Associate research scientist/engineers who wish to be considered for promotion to full status are responsible for assembling and submitting a dossier of research accomplishments and relevant supporting materials to their department chair or program chair/director (when appropriate) demonstrating the following:
 1.
 - a. A cumulative record of sustainable, funded high quality research;
 - b. A cumulative record of serving as the primary investigator on external grants and/or contracts;
 - c. Distinction or excellence in their area of research or scholarship. Evidence of distinction or excellence must include four external letters of evaluation. Selection of the external reviewers is the responsibility of the chair or program director/chair (when appropriate) and divisional dean. Of the reviewers, only one (1) may be emeritus. A list of eight (8) to ten (10) potential reviewers should be developed in consultation with the candidate. The candidate must describe, in writing, the nature of the relationship the candidate has with each of the potential reviewers; and
 - d. Collegiality.
 2. The candidate's dossier is evaluated by the department chair or program chair/director (when appropriate) in consultation with the tenured members of the faculty in the department/program, the academic dean and Vice President for Research and Innovation. If there is a positive recommendation from the department chair or program chair/director (when appropriate) for promotion and a positive recommendation from the academic dean and/or the Vice President for Research and Innovation, the dossier will advance to the Provost for final consideration and decision
 3. Appointments at the rank of full are renewable in five-year increments.

4. Appointments of individuals demonstrating a comparable level of competence elsewhere may be made directly to this rank.

Non-Renewal of Research Scientist/Engineers

Research scientist/engineers at the rank of associate or higher may be non-renewed. Reasons for non-renewal include but are certainly not limited to failure to perform duties and associated responsibilities in a satisfactory manner, lack of sufficient research progress and violation of University policy. Notice of non-renewal should ideally be given at least four months before the end of the appointment but in no event may less than 90 days' notice be provided.

Termination of Research Scientist/Engineers

Research scientists/engineers may be terminated for cause at any time by the Provost. Chairs/program directors and deans may recommend termination by providing written notice specifying the reasons for the proposed termination, along with supporting documentation, to both the research scientist/engineer and the Provost.

The notice will be accompanied by an opportunity for the research scientist/engineer to be heard either in a meeting with the Provost (to include an individual designated by the Provost to act in the Provost's stead) or to respond in writing, at the research scientist/engineer's election. Research scientist/engineers are entitled to be accompanied by an advisor of their choice (including legal counsel) to the meeting with the Provost.

If, following the meeting or receipt of the research scientist/engineer's written response, the Provost determines that termination is not appropriate, the Provost may impose one or more disciplinary sanctions and/or specify the terms and conditions under which the research scientist/engineer may remain employed. If the Provost determines that termination is appropriate, the Provost shall provide a written notice stating the reasons for termination. The decision of the Provost is final.

Position Elimination

The position of research scientist/engineer is a grant and externally funded position. In the event, the University determines the external funding is insufficient to sustain the position, the University may terminate the appointment on 90 days' written notice.

Related Form(s)

Not applicable.

Additional Resources and Procedures

Not applicable.

FAQ

Not applicable.

Policy Administration

Next Review Date

7/1/2025

Responsible Officers

Associate VP of Academic Personnel

Legal Authority

Not Applicable.

Compliance Policy

No

Recent Revision History

New July 2021

Reference ID(s)

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[Amended July 2022](#)

Reviewing Bodies

Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Personnel