

**School of Information  
University of Michigan**

**Policies and Procedures for the Appointment and  
Promotion of Research Faculty**

*1. Definitions*

Two tracks of titles exist for Research faculty at the University of Michigan (Research Scientist (RS) track and Research Professor (RP) track) for scientists whose activities are principally research.

As needed, the School of Information will appoint researchers to the research faculty ranks as part of its research programs. Other appointments might include adjunct or visiting research faculty (see Special Cases below).

The paths and levels of research faculty appointments will be used for scientists who expect a long-term association with School of Information research projects. Although these appointments will have open durations, they are subject to periodic review as indicated below.

*2. Authority for Approving Appointments and Promotions*

For the Research Scientist Track, the Vice President for Research has delegated to the Dean the authority to appoint and promote individuals to the titles of Research Investigator and Assistant Research Scientist. For the titles of Associate Research Scientist and Research Scientist, the Vice President for Research has authority for approving appointments.

For the Research Professor track, the Provost and the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Research have delegated authority to the Dean for appointing individuals to the title of Research Assistant Professor. For the titles of Research Associate Professor and Research Professor, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Research have joint authority for approving appointments.

*3. Initial Appointments*

There are currently two tracks of research faculty appointments in the School of Information: the Research Scientist track and the Research Professor track.

Within the School, the Associate Dean for Research has the responsibility to recommend appointments to the Dean for new research faculty appointments. The Governing Faculty will then have an opportunity to review the nomination and make a recommendation to the Dean. The Dean then makes a decision or forwards the nomination for review at a higher level, depending on who has authority to approve the appointment (see item 2 above). For the title of Research Investigator, the Associate Dean for Research can recommend a candidate to the Dean and the Dean has the authority to make a decision on this recommendation without bringing the nomination forward to the governing faculty.

Candidates for all research faculty positions will submit an up-to-date vita, a narrative summary of current and planned research, the names of at least five references, and reprints of relevant articles. The Associate Dean or Dean may require additional information for the purpose of deciding or recommending to the full faculty.

#### 4. *Promotion*

To promote a research faculty member from Research Investigator, Assistant Research Scientist, Associate Research Scientist, Research Scientist, Research Assistant Professor, Research Associate Professor or Research Professor to the next highest rank the Dean will begin the review process by requesting from a candidate a complete curriculum vitae; a description of past and current research activities, including funding; and the names of at least five external reviewers deemed appropriate by the candidate. The Dean will request letters from external reviewers, including at least two reviewers not on the candidate's list. The Dean will also request one or more letters from School of Information faculty.

If the Dean recommends a promotion for a member of the research faculty, the Governing Faculty will then have an opportunity to review the faculty member's promotion dossier. If the Governing Faculty recommends in favor of promoting the faculty member, the Dean then makes a decision or forwards the nomination for review at a higher level, depending on who has authority to approve the appointment (see item 2 above).

#### 5. *Criteria for Appointment and Promotion*

The principal criteria for promotion shall be independence, autonomy, and excellence in the initiation, direction and completion of research projects. For promotions in the Research Professor track, there is an added requirement of teaching and mentorship. All candidates for a research faculty appointment in the School of Information must have demonstrated personal characteristics consistent with good scholarship and professionalism.

#### **Research Scientist Track**

- **Appointment at the entry level – Research Investigator or Assistant Research Scientist -- or promotion to Assistant Research Scientist** allows the investigator to work with a senior colleague to gain research experience and show evidence of growth as an investigator. Candidates for the position of Assistant Research Scientist must have received positive recognition, which means that peers and senior colleagues are aware of the individual's scholarly activities and can provide some detail of the person's contribution to the field. Candidates must also show evidence of scholarship in the form of publications, presentations at scientific meetings and conferences, a role in students' independent projects, and appropriate professional service activities.
- **Appointment or promotion at the Associate Research Scientist** level depends on a strong local reputation, with the expectation that the number and perceived value of publications and/or other research contributions exceeds the standards expected of those in the Assistant Research Scientist rank. Service within the University and to governmental and/or other groups outside the University, or society in general, will also be considered.

- **Appointment or promotion at the Research Scientist** level depends on a broadly established reputation, a continuing record of scholarship, and promise of substantial future contribution to his or her disciplinary field. Under normal circumstances, the nominee will also have established an area of unique contribution to the research program of the department and will have demonstrated an ongoing record of research success. He/she will have participated appropriately in public service (state or regional advisory boards, Federal agency study sections, other ad hoc working groups or activities in International agencies) or service to the academic community at large.

### **Research Professor Track**

- **Appointment or promotion at the Research Assistant Professor** level depends on a strong potential for development into an independent scholar, a record of peer-reviewed publications, potential or actual evidence of extramural funding and participation in relevant academic or professional meetings. The candidate should demonstrate evidence of or the potential for, substantial teaching and mentoring of postdoctoral fellows, junior research colleagues, or a student at any level within the context of one or more research fields (laboratory bench science, social science, or other disciplinary setting).
- **Appointment or promotion at the Research Associate Professor** level depends on evidence of independent scholarship, independent sustained funding, national reputation, and research achievements fully equivalent to an Associate Professor in an appropriately related academic discipline. The candidate will also have a record of substantial teaching and mentoring within the context of one or more research programs (e.g., laboratory bench science, social science, or other disciplinary setting) with postdoctoral fellows, junior research colleagues, or students at any level.
- **Appointment or promotion at the Research Professor** level depends on evidence of independent scholarship, independent sustained funding, international reputation, and research achievements fully equivalent to a Professor in an appropriately-related academic discipline. The candidate will also have a record of substantial teaching and mentoring within the context of one or more research programs (e.g., laboratory bench science, social science, or other disciplinary setting) with postdoctoral fellows, junior research colleagues, or students at any level.

**Note:** The term *substantial* with regard to teaching and mentoring is measured in two ways.

1. Quantity (i.e. that there should be evidence of a significant amount of teaching and/or mentoring), and;
2. Quality (i.e. that the teaching and/or mentoring done by the individual is effective and has significant impact on the students, fellows and colleagues being taught).

### **Special Cases**

**The School of Information makes adjunct research faculty** appointments when an individual's primary employment responsibilities lie outside the University. An adjunct faculty appointment indicates that the individual is working for a limited portion of his/her time (part-time) on research. Adjunct

appointments may be made at any research faculty rank, but must be consistent with the individual's professional stature.

Visiting research faculty appointments are for scholars visiting the University for a predetermined time (one year or less) to conduct research. Typically such an individual holds his or her primary appointment at another academic/research institution, and the School expects him or her to return to that position. Visiting appointments may be made at any research faculty rank, but must be consistent with the individual's professional stature.

#### 6. *Funding*

The School of Information expects its research faculty to be paid principally from external funds (grants, contracts, gifts). Such appointments could be for any fraction between 0% and 100%. Funding will be worked out between the Principal Investigator of specific projects and the Associate Dean for Research. Unless overridden by the Dean, research faculty without external funding will be terminated after one year. Consistent with current University of Michigan policies, the School of Information and the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) may provide bridging funds.

#### 7. *Periodic Review*

The Associate Dean for Research will review all research faculty members on an annual basis. The Associate Dean will inform each research faculty member of such a review and request from him or her an up-to-date vita, reprints of recent articles, and any other information the School might require.

#### 8. *Teaching*

If teaching is part of the duties of a member of the research faculty, it is expected that an appointment to an instructional title will be arranged with the appropriate academic program and that the teaching and research units involved will coordinate to specify appointment fractions and compensation arrangements for teaching and research duties.

#### 9. *Coordination with other Units*

From time to time a research faculty member may have a comparable appointment in another department or unit. Issues of review and promotion will be coordinated between the Chairs, Directors, or Deans of such units, with the proviso that at a minimum the procedures described above will be followed.

Revised: May 2005