

# School of Education University of Michigan

## Procedures and Criteria for Primary Research Scientist Appointments and Promotions

Approved – SOE Executive Committee – April 9, 2002

Approved – Provost and OVPR – April 15, 2002

### Introduction

This document describes guidelines and procedures associated with Primary Research Scientist (PRS) track appointments in the School of Education (SOE). PRS appointments are intended for individuals whose primary activity is research. If teaching is done while holding a PRS appointment, a fractional appointment must be established to support the teaching effort.

All openings for PRS positions will be advertised and processed in accordance with established University policies and procedures.

### Research Scientist Ranks

Appointments to the PRS faculty within the School of Education are made at one of four ranks authorized by the University of Michigan Board of Regents. These ranks are shown in Table 1, along with the equivalent instructional faculty title and the characteristic level of activity associated with each rank. The School of Education currently makes appointments only within the Track I established by the University PRS framework.

Table 1  
PRS Faculty Ranks within the School of Education

PRS Faculty Rank	Equivalent Instructional Track Rank	Characteristic Level of Activity in Rank
Research Investigator	Instructor	Research conducted usually within program of a senior colleague; independence not expected, but may be goal of training
Assistant Research Scientist	Assistant Professor	Research conducted within program of a senior colleague, and evidence of growth in independent scholarship
Associate Research Scientist	Associate Professor	Strong local reputation on the basis of research productivity and contributions over several years, but without the necessity of conducting an independent research program
Research Scientist	Professor	As for Associate Research Scientist, but with expanded reputation based on continued essential contributions to a research program

## Special Cases (All Ranks)

**Adjunct Research Scientist** appointments are made when an individual's primary employment responsibilities lie outside the School of Education. It indicates that the individual is working for a limited portion of his/her time (part-time) on a research project housed within the School of Education. Adjunct appointments may be made at any PRS rank, but must be consistent with the individual's stature as described above.

**Visiting Research Scientist** appointments are for scholars visiting the University for a predetermined time (one year or less) to conduct research. Their primary appointments would typically be at another academic/research institution and they would be expected to return to that position. Visiting appointments may be made at any PRS rank, but must be consistent with the individual's stature.

Regardless of academic rank, Visiting or Adjunct PRS appointments are approved by the Associate Dean for Research upon recommendation of the academic program chair within which the sponsoring project director is appointed, and do not require approval from the Vice President for Research.

## Research Scientist Appointments

The appointment process for faculty within the PRS track is detailed in Figure 1, and is differentiated on the basis of anticipated appointment level. In all cases, the appointment process is initiated by a sponsoring project director interested in establishing a position and should be done in consultation with appropriate program chair and with SOE Administrative Services in order to organize the PRS search process. At the conclusion of the search process, Research Investigator and Assistant Research Scientist appointments are reviewed by the SOE Executive Committee upon recommendation of the appropriate academic program chair, and do not require approval from the Vice President for Research. Appointments (and promotions) to the advanced ranks (Associate Research Scientist, Research Scientist) are reviewed/approved by the SOE Executive Committee and, in turn, the Vice President for Research.

Appointment at an entry level rank anticipates that while working with a senior colleague, the PRS will gain research experience and show evidence of growth as an investigator. For **Assistant Research Scientists**, the recognition standard for the purpose of appointment means that peers and senior colleagues are aware of the individual's scholarly activities and can attest to the person's contribution to knowledge in the field. Evidence for scholarship can also be demonstrated by publications, presentations at scientific meetings, assisting students' independent projects, and by appropriate professional service activities.

Appointment or promotion to the **Associate Research Scientist** level depends on a strong local reputation (e.g., at the University of Michigan and within the School of Education), 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. The candidate must have demonstrated personal characteristics consistent with good scholarship

and professionalism. Service within the University and to governmental and or other groups outside the University, or society in general, will also be considered.

For appointment or promotion to **Research Scientist**, it is expected that the candidate will have a broadly established reputation, a continuing record of scholarship, and demonstrate promise for making substantial future contributions 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 unit, and will have demonstrated an ongoing record of research success. He/she will have participated appropriately in service activities to the University and/or external communities.

### **Expectations Regarding Appointments and Promotion**

Research and Scholarly Contribution: In most cases, publications, especially those in peer-reviewed journals provide the basic currency for examining the nominee's scholarly contribution. Advancement is based on the quality and consistency of scholarly publications. In evaluating publications, major weight is placed on evidence of significant contributions to knowledge. Peer reviewed publications are generally expected. Occasionally, other evidence of scholarly accomplishment (for example, patents, software, or other non-peer-reviewed scholarly materials) may be the most appropriate measure of an individual's scholarship. If non-peer reviewed work is offered as part of the portfolio, assessment of its worth and of its scholarly impact must be sought from external reviewers.

1. Creativity in initiating and completing research projects must be demonstrated by publications being sole-authored or first-authored by the nominee or by demonstration of other major contributions to the preparation of manuscripts or other scholarly materials. Comments of external reviewers are also sought on the issue of creativity, initiation and productivity.
2. A record of *research* funding, as principal investigator, from outside sources does not, by itself, guarantee research competence, just as inability to attract research funding does not necessarily demonstrate a lack of research competence. On balance, however, a record of peer reviewed research funding reflects well on the nominee's standing in the academic community, and funded research of various types provides materials that enable the first two criteria for advancement to be met. Research funding reflects particular credit on the nominee when it is obtained through a competitive, peer-reviewed process.

Service: Nominees will have demonstrated a reasonable level of contribution to public *service* at various levels in the University as a whole, as well as in appropriate activities at the community, state, national, or international levels.

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

## Appointment Duration

Appointment length for PRS faculty vary depending upon the needs and resources of the sponsoring project. Research scientist appointments are not appointments to the tenured or tenure-track instructional faculty. Prior to initiating a search, the School of Education expects sponsoring project directors to secure sufficient funding to provide candidates appointed at or above the rank of Assistant Research Scientist with the expectation of a viable position for a minimum of three years.

There are no maximum times in rank associated with any PRS rank. Appointments may, however, be established as term-limited at the outset. In any case, when positions are established for a specific research project, appointed individuals will be classified in ranks that match their qualifications and be given appointment forms that specify that the employment is for the term of the project only. These individuals will receive letters that specify the end dates of their appointments.

The expected minimum time in rank at various ranks is shown in Table 2. Candidates seeking promotion before the expected minimum amount of time in rank will be considered for promotion only in those unusual instances when exceptional performance has been demonstrated both in research and service. Promotion is based on excellence in research achievement and contributions through service activities, as opposed to length of service. The degree of excellence in research should be of the highest order. Evidence of promise will be drawn primarily from the previous record of accomplishment.

Table 2  
Minimum Time in Rank Expectations for PRS Faculty Seeking Promotion

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PRS Faculty Rank	Time in Rank to Establish Eligibility
Research Investigator	2 years
Assistant Research Scientist	3 years
Associate Research Scientist	5 years

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## **PRS Performance Review**

Consistent with the goals and procedures established for instructional track faculty, PRS faculty performance will be reviewed in two ways. The performance of all PRS faculty will be evaluated annually, in a manner consistent with that for the regular instructional staff to the extent applicable. In addition to the annual PRS review, PRS may elect to seek review as part of the promotion process.

### **Annual Review**

Each member of the PRS faculty will compile a School of Education Faculty Activity Report (FAR) portfolio, which will ordinarily include descriptions of research activities and publications during the year, and an overview of contributions the PRS has made to the research program and to the University. The sponsoring project director will review the FAR completed by the PRS, and will provide a written report to the relevant academic program chair as well as the Associate Dean for Research as part of the annual School of Education faculty review process. The Associate Dean for Research will coordinate the annual review process for PRS faculty (involving instructional track and PRS faculty as appropriate), and be responsible for making merit increase recommendations to the Dean. Consistent with the processes established for instructional track faculty, academic program chairs are encouraged to provide detailed feedback to entry-level PRS in order to facilitate their continuing scholarly development.

### **Promotion Review**

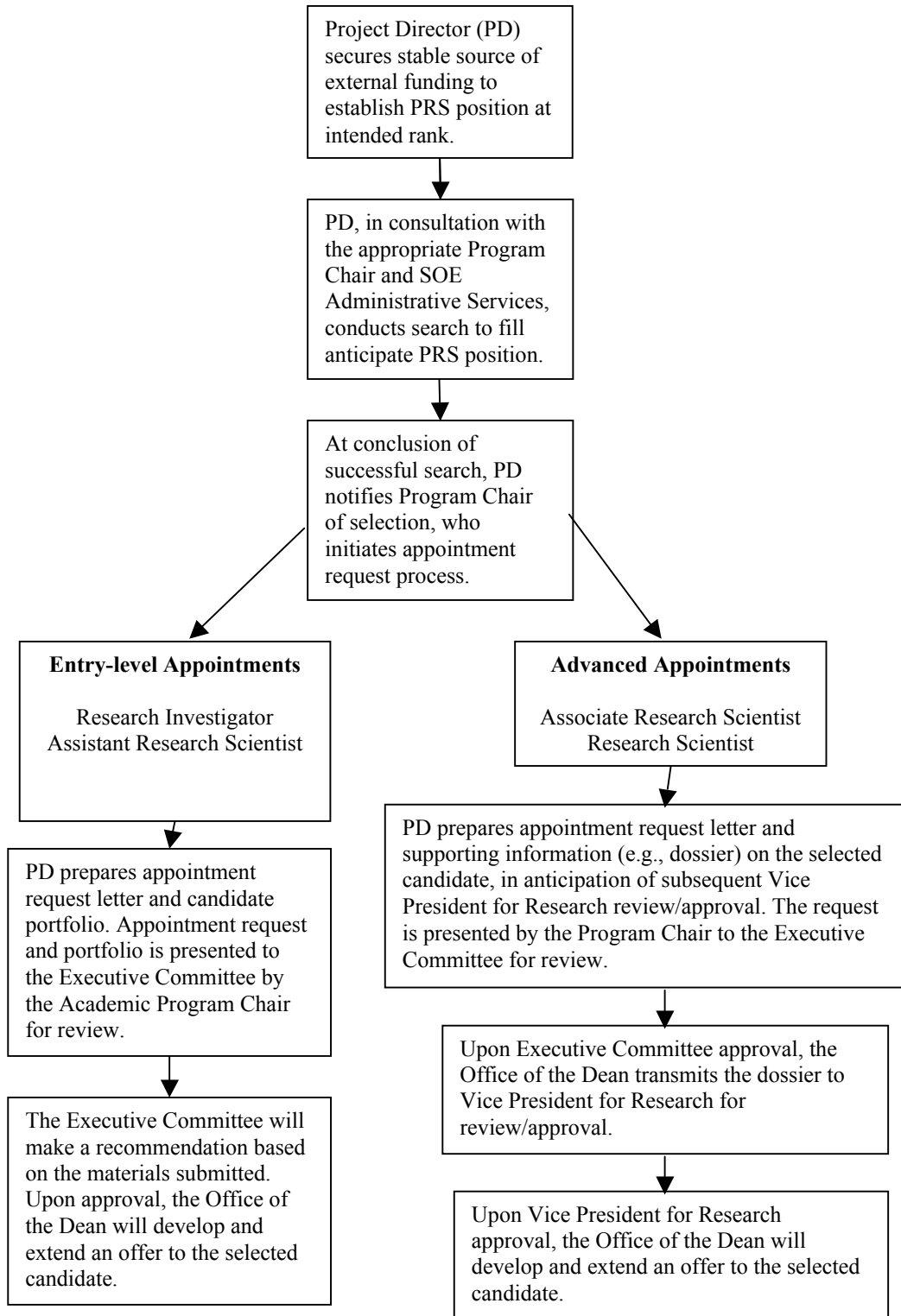
Promotion review for candidates for advanced level PRS positions will be conducted by the School of Education Promotion Committee, following the regular schedule established by the committee. The process for considering PRS for promotion will be consistent with those applied to instructional track faculty within the School of Education to the extent possible, and should yield the documentation required by subsequent review by the Vice President for Research.

The Promotion Committee shall compile a summary of the candidate's background, research, publications, and contributions (with all evaluation letters appended), and make a recommendation for consideration by the School of Education Executive Committee. Final recommendations, as appropriate, to the Vice President for Research shall be the responsibility of the School of Education Dean.

## **Faculty Governance**

Faculty governance for PRS is determined at the program and School levels. The governing faculty may extend voting privileges to PRS faculty in accordance with University and School bylaws.

**Figure 1: Appointment process for Primary Research Scientist (PRS) positions**



Note: Regardless of rank, Adjunct or Visiting PRS appointments are approved by the Associate Dean for Research and do not require Executive Committee review or Vice President for Research approval.