

POLICY MEMORANDUM NO. 210

TO: All Faculty
FROM: Charles W. Steger
DATE: September 6, 2001
SUBJECT: Special Research Faculty Ranks

Approved by the Commission on Research: February 28, 2001; Revision approved April 11, 2001
Approved by University Council: May 7, 2001
Approved by the President: May 7, 2001
Approved by the Board of Visitors: June 4, 2001
Effective: Immediately

The University Council, on recommendation of the Commission on Research, approved by majority vote a resolution concerning special research faculty ranks.

Following is the text of the resolution as adopted by University Council.

WHEREAS, special research faculty are non-tenure track, usually restricted (fixed-length) appointments designed to promote and carry out research and other sponsored activities of the University; and

WHEREAS, the University Task Force on Special Research Faculty was charged with reviewing the existing ranks for such employees (research associate; senior research associate; postdoctoral associate; research scientist; senior research scientist; and research assistant, associate, and full professor) and recommending changes or additions as appeared appropriate; and

WHEREAS, a review of job descriptions for all special research faculty revealed that a number of such faculty are not conducting research per se, but rather technical assistance or outreach, and the use of a title such as research associate is not especially helpful in the grant-preparation process nor in carrying out sponsored projects; and

WHEREAS, the task force found that other minor changes were necessary to improve the usefulness and approval process for the research faculty ranks;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that section 2.1 of the Faculty Handbook for Special Research Faculty be revised to include:

- 1) Creation of three new ranks — Project Associate, Senior Project Associate, and Project Director — to recognize faculty employees on sponsored funding who are involved in the delivery of services, technical assistance, and/or project management and administration (text for the Faculty Handbook describing the three new ranks is below);

- 2) Requirement of the MASTER'S degree as the minimum qualification for appointment to the entry ranks of special research faculty with any exceptions to be approved by the Research Division;
- 3) Authority of research units not part of a degree-granting department to make initial appointments and promotions to the research professor ranks, without review or approval by a related academic department. However, appointment or promotion to the research professor ranks in a non-academic research unit does not convey authority to supervise graduate student theses or dissertations until approved to do so by the relevant academic department.

**New Material for the Faculty Handbook for Special Research Faculty
Describing Three New Ranks:**

2.1.2 Project Associate Ranks

The project associate rank series is most appropriate for faculty personnel involved in sponsored projects that provide technical assistance, outreach, consultation, preparation of specialized materials, or delivery of educational or other services, rather than conducting traditional research or scholarship. These ranks may also be appropriate for faculty personnel who are involved in the administration of large and complex research centers or programs. There are classified roles appropriate to many of these responsibility sets. For example, Public Relations and Marketing Practitioner is usually the appropriate classified role for personnel responsible for creating publications, reports, brochures, and similar materials. Positions requiring computer expertise are usually classified (such as Information Technology Specialist). Business management roles, such as Financial & Auditing Services Practitioner, are also appropriate for those handling many of the administrative functions required for sponsored projects. Human resource consultants are available to advise on the options. Careful preparation of the job description by the principal investigator and/or department head is essential in making a determination of whether the position is classified or research faculty. Classified positions must be used where they are appropriate. Personnel Services has the authority and responsibility to make the final decision on whether a position will be classified or faculty or to grant any exceptions.

Like all special research faculty members, those in the project associate series may be assigned a functional title in addition to their official faculty rank in order to facilitate their work. Given the range of activities that may be included under sponsored programs, use of the functional title may be the most effective way to clarify the faculty member's role to internal or external constituencies.

2.1.2.1 Project Associate

The project associate rank is the entry, or most junior rank for faculty members involved in sponsored projects where project activities are not research. The work may vary from that which is appropriate for a relatively new professional to broader or more significant responsibilities expected of more experienced faculty personnel. Project associates work under supervision and carry out project responsibilities, such as technical assistance or consultation, which require professional preparation and application of accepted principles and practices of the field. They may be involved in preparing reports, documents, or manuals for review by project leaders. They may develop and deliver educational programs, or coordinate activities involving a number of project members. They may provide input into the preparation of proposals or supervise project personnel, but typically they have limited responsibility and authority in these areas. Project associates are not eligible to be principal investigators.

In keeping with all faculty appointments at the university, a master's degree in a relevant field is the minimum qualification for appointment as a project associate. Requests for exceptions for individuals with a bachelor's degree and significant related experience should be addressed to the research division.

Original appointments including rank, salary and other conditions must have approval of the department head and dean (or next level administrator) before an offer is extended.

2.1.2.2 Senior Project Associate

The rank of senior research associate requires greater qualifications in either or both education and experience. The doctorate or a terminal degree in the field and some experience, or a lesser

degree and substantial related experience, are required. Senior project associates carry out project activities under limited supervision, providing a high level of professional service and expertise. They may create original materials or methods, requiring a high level of knowledge of and/or experience in the subject matter. Typically, they would have some significant supervisory responsibility for project personnel. They may contribute to the conceptualization and preparation of project proposals and reports, resource acquisition, and interaction with stakeholders. Senior project associates are not eligible to serve as principal investigators; exceptions may be granted by the research division.

Original appointments including rank, salary and other conditions must have approval of the department head and dean (or next level administrator) before an offer is extended.

2.1.2.3 Project Director

Project director is the most senior rank in the series. Appointment to this rank requires a doctorate or terminal degree and significant experience, or a lesser degree and related experience of substantial scope and duration. Project directors carry out independent activities under limited supervision. By virtue of their expertise and experience, they make significant contributions to the conceptualization and implementation of the project. They may be involved in the preparation of proposals, reports, and/or publications; and presentation of results to sponsors and/or other stakeholder groups. Typically, these faculty members would have significant responsibility for hiring and managing project personnel, assigning resources, and evaluating project effectiveness. Those functioning in an administrative capacity might serve in a role equivalent to an assistant center director, managing complex and varied business and other administrative responsibilities for a large research center. Project directors may serve as principal investigators with the approval of the department head.

Original appointments including rank, salary and other conditions must have approval of the department head, dean (or next level administrator), and research division before an offer is extended.