November 2011

Policy and Revised Guidelines for Research Faculty

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is eligible to appoint Research Faculty?

Academic units, university approved college/school-based centers, university approved centers reporting to the Office of the Vice President for Research or Vice Chancellor at regional campuses, who have obtained Authorization to Establish Research Faculty Positions.

Do research faculty have to be appointed for 3 years?

No. Three (3) years is the maximum length of the contract period. Research Faculty can be appointed on a yearly basis or for any time interval up to 3 years. Research faculty appointed for less than one semester are not eligible for benefits.

What are the differences between research faculty and research scientists/associates?

The Research Faculty position is distinguished from the Research Scientist/Research Associate position by being a professorial level position with an expectation of scientific independence and national and international distinction. Whereas a Research Scientist/Research Associate is expected to make significant and innovative contributions to a research project, activity or facility, Research Faculty are expected to lead such projects and activities.

How is independence defined for Research Faculty?

Independence can be demonstrated in a variety of ways that may include, but is not limited to, serving as the Principal Investigator of externally funded research projects, serving as the Principal Investigator of sub-projects on large-scale interdisciplinary projects/centers, mentoring of postdoctoral research fellows and graduate students, and freedom to publish independently of senior faculty members.

For Research Faculty appointed in non-degree granting units (e.g., Discovery Park Centers), what does a departmental affiliation mean and how is it obtained?

It may be desirable for Research Faculty appointed in non-degree granting units such as Discovery Park Centers to be affiliated with an academic unit(s). Affiliation with an academic department(s) provides access to departmental graduate students and the ability to serve as the major professor to those graduate students consistent with the departmental policies for tenure-track and tenured faculty. Research Faculty who do not have academic affiliations can serve on graduate advisory committees, and co-mentor graduate students, but may not serve as sole supervisors for graduate students.

Seeking an affiliation with an academic unit is the responsibility of the center appointing the Research Faculty member. It is desirable that the department be involved in the review and selection of the

Research Faculty candidate and that the departmental affiliation is established at the time of the initial appointment. The academic unit will determine whether or not an affiliation is granted. Research Faculty appointed in a non-degree granting unit and affiliated with a degree-granting department will be classified as Research Faculty Center/Department.

Fiscal responsibility for Research Faculty appointed in non-degree granting units and affiliated with academic units resides in the appointing unit. Departments have no fiscal responsibilities for Research Faculty affiliated with, but not appointed in the department.

Departments may wish to establish policies for individuals holding a Research Faculty Center/Department classification. Such policies must be consistent with the University Research Faculty Appointment and Promotion Policies document.

Are Research Faculty allowed to teach?

Yes. Although Research Faculty do not have regular teaching duties and teaching is not a merit criterion for promotion, it is recognized that instances may occur when temporary, specialized teaching responsibilities are desirable to expose students, especially graduate students to specialized, technical expertise. In these instances, it may be appropriate for Research Faculty to offer limited, specialized mini-courses, workshops or a limited lecture/laboratory series.

Are Research Faculty required to be exclusively supported by extramural funds?

No. While it is necessary for Research Faculty to be supported primarily on extramural funds to fulfill the mission of advancing the research enterprise at Purdue University, it is recognized that proposal writing, graduates student committee service and related activities are not an allowed effort on extramural funds supporting specific projects. It is also recognized that Research Faculty may direct specialized research core facilities that may contribute partial salary support. Therefore appointing units may at their discretion provide partial salary support, not to exceed 25% of the total annual compensation, for each Research Faculty position from unrestricted internal sources including gift funds, general funds, and research core facilities.

What are part-time appointments?

Part-time appointments are defined as less than 100% CUL. Research Faculty may be initially appointed as part-time or a part-time appointment may result from a reduction in funding of a full time appointment. Research Faculty may not simultaneously hold tenured or tenure-track appointments. Research Faculty holding part-time appointments are subject to the same standards for promotion in rank as Research Faculty holding full time appointments.

What internal funding programs are available for Research Faculty?

Research Faculty are eligible to apply for competitive grants from trusts and research awards administered by the Office of the Vice President for Research (e.g., the Clifford B. Kinley Trust, Ralph W. Grace M. Showalter Research Trust, the Herbert Newby McCoy Award). Their eligibility to apply for other internal funding (e.g., PRF grants) and unit specific awards is determined by the policies established by the college/school/center in which they hold their appointment.