DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PROMOTIONAL EVALUATION CONSIDERATIONS AND CRITERIA

FIXED-TERM RESEARCH PROFESSORS

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Heuristic criteria and considerations for evaluations of research professors for promotional decisions by the Department of Psychology at Arizona State University (ASU) are presented in this document. To avoid potential misunderstandings of the nature of the research professor title and to clarify voting privileges in the Department of Psychology, we distinguish among three types of title options that non-tenure track researchers can hold in the Department of Psychology. These descriptions were adapted from those provided by the CLAS. We also specify voting eligibility on Department issues as indicated by our By Laws.

**Faculty Research Associate:** This title option is being phased out by the CLAS. It is appropriate when a researcher who holds a Ph.D. is working less than 50% time on a funded project or has no postgraduate experience. A Faculty Research Associate works cooperatively with others in conducting research and is supervised by a project leader. This is a *faculty membership* title.

**Research Scientist (assistant, associate, or full):** This title option is appropriate when a researcher who holds a Ph.D. is working cooperatively or independently in conducting research and in seeking outside funding and supervising others in carrying out significant research projects. For example, a researcher who has just completed a post-doc might be offered an appointment as an Assistant Research Scientist. This is an *academic professional* title.

**Research Professor (assistant, associate, or full):** This title option is appropriate for researchers who hold a Ph.D. Typically, an individual appointed as a research professor, as opposed to a research scientist, has more experience with research funding, has held a similar position at another university, and/or or has operated with more autonomy on a research project. Research faculty are fixed-term faculty members who are qualified to engage in, be responsible for, or oversee a significant area of research. They can also serve as principal, multiple principal, or co-investigators on grants or contracts administered by the university or take on other appropriate responsibilities. Research professors are designated fixed-term to convey that they are in non-tenured and non-tenure track positions whose primary professional activities involve externally funded research and the generation and dissemination of new knowledge. In addition, fixed-term research faculty are expected to have collegial and collaborative relationships within the Psychology Department and to contribute to regional or national professional organizations that focus on research. Fixed term faculty who are hired or supported by research grants or contracts are not guaranteed space, facilities, or services beyond those approved for currently active grants or contracts. This is a *faculty* title.

According to the Department By Laws, Research Professors would not be eligible to vote at faculty meetings. As indicating on p. 4 of the By Laws, voting is restricted to tenure-track and tenured faculty and principal lecturers, senior lecturers, and lecturers who are employed 50% or more of full-time effort. (The latter are not eligible to vote on personnel issues for tenure-track and tenured faculty.)

**College Promotion Criteria for Fixed Term Research Professors**

The CLAS Constitution and Bylaws amended and approved on 9-17-12 address the promotion of fixed-term faculty (see pp. 11-12):

“In addition to the expectations and requirements within ACD 506-05: Faculty Promotion, the College is guided by specific promotion criteria as articulated by each unit. Due to the differences in types of work performed by faculty with fixed-term appointments, academic units must clearly define the criteria for promotion to each rank.”

“While guided in large part by unit and university criteria, the College also requires evidence of a demonstrated and sustained record of excellence for all fixed-term faculty members seeking promotion. Demonstrated excellence must *exceed* the criteria for the candidate’s current rank.”

The CLAS bylaws indicate that candidates for promotion to associate rank typically have a minimum of five years of experience at rank and candidates for promotion to professor typically have a minimum of seven years of experience at rank.

**Department Promotion Criteria**

The primary criteria for promotion include a record of (a) procurement of external funding including clear evidence of leadership, such as serving as a principal investigator, or a multiple principal investigator or a co-investigator on multiple grants; and (b) programmatic research resulting in the publication of high quality journal articles that have an impact on the field. Secondary criteria include engaging in collegial and collaborative relationships within the Psychology Department and evidence of service to regional or national research organizations and journals. It should be noted that whereas evidence bearing on the secondary criteria, such as helping colleagues by reading drafts of their grants and manuscripts and editorial work for research journals, is seen as positive, it cannot be used to compensate for a deficient record in regard to the two primary criteria.

**Area of Research**

It is expected that the candidate’s research will be relevant to at least some of the sub-disciplines of psychology such as clinical, cognitive, developmental, quantitative, and social psychology and will yield high quality publications in “mainstream” psychology journals including journals published by the *American Psychological Association* and the *Association of Psychological Science*. At the same time, we encourage researchers to develop new and interdisciplinary areas of research. When the work of a candidate for promotion has been submitted to “non-mainstream” outlets or journals outside of psychology, the candidate must justify the choice of outlets. Factors that might be included in developing such a justification are a) the journal addresses an interdisciplinary audience, or an otherwise more appropriate audience than mainstream psychology, and (b) the excellence of the journals in their domains as indicated by rejection rates and impact factors comparable to those of journals published by the *American Psychological Association* and the *Association of Psychological Science*. Ultimately, the research must be of high quality and have an impact on the field.

**Qualitative Evaluations**

The main question to be answered when candidates seek promotion during their career development is, *does the candidate meet high expectations as evidenced by a) the competency, quality, creativity, and impact of the published work, b) leadership roles in external funding and scholarly contribution, and c) promise for sustaining, or even improving, in the future? In addition, the Psychology Department looks for evidence of collaborative relationships within the Psychology Department community, as well as service to the scientific community.* Qualitative assessment typically avoids treating an evaluation process simply as a number game. This is avoided by evaluating the quality of the (a) grants and (b) publications and their impact as well as collegial relationships within the Psychology Department community and contributions made to the extramural research community.

Within the frame of reference provided above, the remainder of this document outlines the factors involved in the determination of our recommendations for promotion of research faculty.

**Promotion: Assistant Research Professor to Associate Research Professor**

When candidates seek promotion from the Assistant Research Professor level to the Associate Research Professor level, we look for clear evidence that a candidate has successfully launched his or her own research program. One of the primary indicators of success involves funding of grants, ideally as a PI (principal investigator) or MPI (multiple principal investigator), although involvement as a co-Investigator on multiple externally-funded grants is also viewed favorably.

Another primary indicator of success is published work of high quality that constitutes a program of research. Success is also indicated by publishing in top-tier journals (highly cited journals with high rejection rates) and number of citations by other researchers. Invited presentations, symposium contributions, and book chapters are also indicators of visibility in the field. Evidence of principal-authored publications is important, although the candidate’s full publication record during years in rank at ASU will be considered in the evaluation of scholarly productivity, including co-authored publications.

Other indicators of success (although carrying less weight in the promotion decision) involve participating in the extramural scientific community by, for example, accepting *ad hoc* requests to review journal manuscripts, helping to organize an APA division programs for the annual meeting, serving on review committees for external funding agencies, and providing assistance to colleagues on projects on which the candidate is not directly involved.

Although research faculty are not required to engage in teaching or service, research faculty often make important contributions to the department and university through mentoring of post-doctoral, doctoral, and undergraduate students in areas such as research methodology and implementation, statistical methods, and manuscript development. If there is ambiguity we may consider the candidate’s teaching, mentoring and service contributions; however, *these contributions will not compensate* for the lack of a clearly established record of research success as evidenced by external grant funding and scholarly publications.

The Committee of Review will weigh the contributions both to garnering extramural funding and to authoring high-quality publications.

Because it is often necessary for research faculty investigators to procure or help procure multiple grants simultaneously and sustain multiple grant funding over time in order to maintain full-time salary support, in some cases, a candidate’s grant record may be stronger than his/her publication record. A strong grant record can *partially compensate* for a weaker publication record, although there must be clear evidence that the candidate has generated high-quality journal articles from his/her research program that have been published or in-press in prestigious outlets.

In summary, faculty seeking promotion to Associate Research Professor should establish a clear track record of their capacity for (a) playing a key role in securing external funding and (b) programmatic scholarship of enduring significance.

**Promotion: Associate Research Professor to Research Professor**

When candidates seek promotion from the Associate Research Professor level to the Research Professor level, they should have demonstrated a capacity to be a principal investigator or multiple principal investigator, a continuous record of scholarly productivity, and further development of research interests over the period of time after the initial promotion to Associate Research Professor.

Fresh scholarly contributions through this period should be evident, showing an upward trajectory in productivity. Activities indicating professional maturity are expected to have become increasingly prevalent in a candidate’s record since promotion to Associate Research Professor. Such activities include regular extramural funding as principal investigator or multiple principal investigator, although exceptions may be made for psychologists with specialized scientific expertise who play critical roles in multiple grants but who may not be a PI on any. In addition, review articles, books, invited chapters, special journal editions, invited symposia, distinguished presentations, special awards, consultation activities, editorial board memberships, serving on external funding review committees, chairing committees of professional organizations, and fostering collegial relationships with less senior research faculty are expected. The quality and visibility of one’s accumulated contributions are also important. Such activity should be clearly evident for work completed since the original promotion to Associate Research Professor.

Although teaching and service are not demanded of research faculty, Associate Research Professors may increasingly engage in mentoring activities of post-doctoral, doctoral, and undergraduate students, including participating in Honors, Master’s and Ph.D. committees. If there is ambiguity we may consider the candidate’s teaching, mentoring and service contributions; however, *these contributions will not compensate* for the lack of evidence that the candidate has established him/herself as a prominent contributor to the research enterprise in some realm of psychological science.

The Committee of Review will weigh the contributions to procuring external funding and publishing high-quality journal articles. A strong grant record can *partially compensate* for a weaker publication record, although there must be clear evidence that the candidate has continued to disseminate results of his/her research program since being appointed to Associate Research Professor (e.g., principal-authored publications in press and co-authored publications).

In summary, faculty seeking promotion to Research Professor should demonstrate an upward trajectory in their ability to secure external funding on a regular basis and to publish programmatically on topics that advance psychological science.