

**PLANT SCIENCES AND PLANT PATHOLOGY DEPARTMENT
RESEARCH FACULTY APPOINTMENTS**

May 25, 2007

I. FACULTY HANDBOOK:

All PSPP Department policies and guidelines follow the definitions and policies stated in the MSU Faculty Handbook:

340.00 Research Appointments

Research titles are used for individuals employed on research projects funded by grants and contracts whose primary responsibility is to contribute to the research mission of the University. Individuals appointed to the research appointments described in this section are not eligible for tenure. Time in nontenurable research appointments does not count toward tenure.

Nontenurable research employees are usually appointed on letters of appointment and are subject to the availability of funds. In the event that funding is not available or is not sufficient to support the position, the appointment may be terminated before the expiration of the term of the appointment.

Nontenurable appointments are for a specified term and expire automatically without notice at the end of the term unless renewed prior to expiration. There is no continuing right to reappointment to any nontenurable research appointment and reappointment is solely at the discretion of the University.

Except as limited by this Handbook, research appointments carry all faculty and campus privileges. Departments and colleges may extend to research appointees the right to vote in departmental meetings, serve on committees, and vote on curricular matters.

340.01 Annual Evaluation

Research appointees are to be evaluated annually in accordance with adopted evaluation procedures.

341.00 Research Professionals with Academic Responsibilities

The following titles are used for experienced, independent researchers who have qualifications comparable to those expected of the tenurable ranks; the appointee is expected to make significant contributions to the research field:

- Research Professor
- Associate Research Professor
- Assistant Research Professor

Appointees to the above titles have instructional responsibilities including but not limited to advising graduate students, teaching seminars and courses, and serving on departmental or college curriculum committees.

341.01 Determination of Title

The title of a research professor appointment is determined at the time of hire and is dependent upon the experience and qualifications of the appointee. Initial assignment of title should be based on qualifications comparable to the research criteria and standards expected of tenurable faculty in the department. In exceptional circumstances, outstanding scholar-researchers of national or international repute who lack the terminal degree may be appointed to these titles. However, in most cases, a terminal degree and research experience are minimum requirements for appointment to these titles.

341.02 Advancement

Individuals who are reappointed from term to term may advance within these titles in accordance with departmental policies and procedures which are comparable to the research criteria and standards for tenurable faculty. An individual's advancement must be approved by the department, college dean, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Vice President for Research and Creative Activities. Advancement in title creates no right to reappointment from term to term.

342.00 Research Professionals

The following titles are used for experienced researchers, engaged in on-going research projects and experiments, who have minimal or no academic or instructional responsibilities:

- Senior Research Scientist
- Research Scientist
- Senior Research Engineer
- Research Engineer

342.01 Determination of Title

The title of a research professional appointment is determined at the time of hire and is based upon her or his experience and qualifications. Initial assignment of title should be based on qualifications comparable to the research criteria and standards expected of the tenurable faculty in the department. Previous research experience and an advanced, but not necessarily a terminal, degree are required for appointment to these titles.

342.02 Advancement

Individuals who are reappointed from term to term may advance to a Senior appointment in accordance with policies and procedures developed by the department. The advancement must be approved by the department, college dean, and Vice President for Research and Creative Activities. Advancement in title creates no right to reappointment from term to term.

343.00 Postdoctoral Research Associate/Postdoctoral Scholar

The titles "Postdoctoral Research Associate" and "Postdoctoral Scholar" are used to appoint an individual who is engaged in advanced scholarship or research, frequently as part of a research team. Postdoctoral positions require a terminal degree; appointment is renewable annually for up to four years. Individuals cannot be reappointed to this title after four years of service. Postdoctoral appointees are subject to minimal supervision and are expected to publish the results of their research as a primary author. Individuals appointed as Postdoctoral Research Associates or Postdoctoral Scholars are not expected to participate in the instructional program of the University.

344.00 Research Associates

The title "Research Associate" is used to appoint individuals who perform research duties for the institution under the supervision of academic faculty or research professionals. Research associates are not expected to participate in the instructional program of the University. Appointment as a Research Associate requires the individual to have a minimum of a Master's degree with no substitution of experience for education.

II. DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES:

A. Definitions: types of research appointments

1. Postdoctoral Research Associates: term-limited appointments (4 years max, Faculty Handbook). Postdocs have no instructional expectations. MSU policy does not allow postdocs to serve as PI or co-PI on grant proposals.

2. Research Scientist/Senior Research Scientist: appointed annually with no term limit on reappointment, with no instructional expectations. Research Scientists may be PI or co-PI on grant proposals. Research Scientists are typically not responsible for their own support, but are supported on grants on which their supervisor – a tenure-track or research faculty member – is PI. The title will be determined at the time of hire by the supervisor in consultation with the Department Head at the time of appointment.

3. ”Research Faculty”: Members of the Research Faculty are those members of the PSPP Department with the following appointment titles:

- (1) Research Professor
- (2) Associate Research Professor
- (3) Assistant Research Professor

Research Faculty are appointed annually with no term limits on future reappointments. Research Faculty have instructional expectations as noted in the Faculty Handbook (can be met in a variety of ways). Research Faculty are expected to be PI on the majority of grants that provide their support.

B. Criteria for appointment to the Research Faculty

1. MSU Faculty Handbook:

The following titles are used for experienced, independent researchers who have qualifications comparable to those expected of the tenurable ranks; the appointee is expected to make significant contributions to the research field:

- Research Professor
- Associate Research Professor
- Assistant Research Professor

2. Departmental Guidelines for Appointment:

A. Evidence that the candidate can successfully obtain sufficient grant funds to support their position and associated personnel (e.g., postdocs, technicians and students) and operating costs for their program.

B. Evidence that the candidate is willing to fulfill an instructional role in the PSPP Department.

C. Evidence that the candidate’s appointment would strengthen existing research in the department. Candidate should identify a tenure-track (TT) faculty member (or members) who will accept responsibility for lab space needs from within their own allocated space as the candidate’s “sponsor”.

C. Application for appointment to the Research Faculty

1. Any candidate for a Research Faculty position in the PSPP Department will submit a formal application, including:

A. A complete C.V. including full professional history, list of publications and invited talks.

B. Complete information about past and present grant funding, including proposal titles, agencies, dates, amounts, accepted/rejected/pending, and role of the candidate on each proposal (i.e., PI or co-PI).

C. Statement of research experience and interests and research plan for the next five years.

D. Summary of teaching experience, including classroom teaching with student evaluations or other evidence of teaching quality, advising research students (undergraduate and graduate), and any other relevant experience. Indicate plans for future involvement of students in research program, and how the candidate might be involved in the instructional mission of the PSPP Department.

E. Letter(s) of support from PSPP tenure-track faculty stating what particular benefits the appointment would have on the department's research, students, teaching, and/or outreach. The letter(s) of support must identify the tenure-track faculty that will be the candidate's "sponsor" (or sponsors), providing the candidate's lab space.

2. The candidate's application will be reviewed by the department's P&T committee and Department Head. The P&T committee and Head will determine the appropriate rank to assign to the candidate (i.e., Assistant, Associate or Full Professor). All tenure-track faculty will vote on whether to accept the candidate's application. A majority vote of a quorum of faculty is required. All appointments are to be renewed annually based on funding, satisfactory performance as determined by the annual evaluation and availability of space.

D. Expectations of Research Faculty

1. A defining characteristic of a research university is the involvement of students (undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral) in the research program. All Research Faculty in the PSPP Department are expected to have MSU students significantly involved in their research programs and to play a role in the instructional mission of the department. Such involvement can take on a variety of forms, including but not limited to:

A. acting as principal advisor to graduate students working on M.S./Ph.D. theses/dissertations,

B. serving on graduate committees of M.S. and Ph.D. students,

- C. acting as research advisor to undergraduate students,
- D. provide service as a (paid) adjunct teaching a regularly scheduled course in the department,
- E. offering specialized upper-level graduate courses and seminars in areas related to the special and particular expertise of the research faculty member, and
- F. acting as a volunteer lecturer, when needed.

2. Research Faculty are expected to provide service to the department and profession, and to conduct outreach activities.

- A. Research Faculty are expected to serve on departmental committees; individual assignments are negotiated between the research faculty member and the Department Head.
- B. Research Faculty are expected to be active members of appropriate professional organizations, and to review journal articles and proposals for funding agencies.
- C. Research Faculty are expected to undertake an appropriate level of outreach activities.
- D. Research Faculty are expected to include the PSPP Department and Montana State University, as part of their affiliation shown in all professional work, whether in journal articles, talks presented, outreach presentations, proposals, etc.
- E. Grants received by Research Faculty are expected to generate returned F&A charges to the department to cover the costs of services provided by the department to the Research Faculty member.

D. Resources provided to Research Faculty

1. Research Faculty are entitled to receive mail at the PSPP Department offices. They will be given a departmental e-mail address.

2. Space allocation:

A. Office space:

- (1) An office for the Research Faculty member will be assigned by the Department Head on an as-available basis.
- (2) Offices for members of the Research Faculty member's group (research scientists, postdocs, technicians, etc.) will be assigned by the Head as available.
- (3) Lab space: Research Faculty will have a tenure-track faculty member as their "sponsor". Lab space for the Research Faculty member is to be assigned by the sponsor from within their

own departmental allocation. All assignments are reviewed and approved by the Department Head. Factors to be considered in space assignments include:

- Number and size of grants involved in the research program, including F&A return to the department on those grants.
- Number of students involved in the research program.
- Program productivity (papers, talks, new proposals generated).
- Relevance of research program to department research groups.

3. Research Faculty are provided access to and assistance by the PSPP Department staff at the same level as that provided to tenure-track faculty.

4. There is no obligation by the PSPP Department to provide salary or other financial support to a member of the Research Faculty.

E. Evaluation

Research Faculty will be evaluated annually. The review will be conducted by the faculty sponsor or by the Department Head as appropriate.

F. Promotion

Research faculty may be promoted to a higher rank based on the same schedule and criteria and standards applied to tenure-track faculty. The specific criteria and standards applied will be appropriate for the individual, i.e., if the Research Assistant Professor had no teaching responsibilities, the Criteria and Standards that apply to Instruction would not be considered. The PSPP Department P&T committee and the Department Head will conduct a complete and substantive review of the promotion materials and decide whether the candidate has earned promotion.