

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
REGENTS COMMUNICATION

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ITEM FOR INFORMATION

SUBJECT: Modifications of the Position Descriptions and Review Guidelines
for the Research Scientist and Research Professor Tracks

The Office of the Vice President for Research recently reviewed the status of the Research Faculty tracks since the adoption of the Research Professor track in 2003. The review was undertaken to investigate the following questions:

- How have the tracks been implemented by the Schools/Colleges/Units?
- What criteria have the Schools/Colleges/Units employed for classification of research faculty in particular ranks?
- How has the hiring and promotion of research faculty been affected by adoption of the tracks?
- How has adoption of the new tracks affected the professional growth of research faculty?


The review indicated that the Schools/Colleges/Units had diverged in their adoption and interpretation of the new titles. Also, some have had difficulty determining the appropriate rank for both existing and newly hired research faculty. Finally, it suggested that faculty in the junior ranks (Research Investigators, Assistant Research Scientists, and Research Assistant Professors) might not be receiving an adequate level of mentoring and review.

OVPR has worked with the Schools/Colleges/Units, SACUA's Research Policies Committee, and the Provost's Office, to formulate changes in the position descriptions and the process for review and promotion of research faculty. The most significant changes include the following:

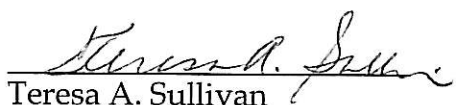
- A clear distinction is made between the Research Scientist and Research Professor tracks based on scholarship, teaching, service, and scholarly independence.
- A maximum time-in-rank for Research Investigators of 4 years is implemented, with provisions for extensions based on cause.
- A mandatory unit review of Assistant Research Scientists and Research Assistant Professors is required after 3-years in rank.
- A mandatory university level review of Assistant Research Scientists and Research Assistant Professors is required after 6-years in rank.

A transition plan providing current research faculty adequate time to meet the new criteria for promotion has also been developed.

Respectfully submitted:


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Vice President for Research

Recommendation endorsed by:


Teresa A. Sullivan
Provost and Executive Vice President
for Academic Affairs

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