

DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY

PRIMARY RESEARCH TRACK

The Department recognizes that individuals on the primary research track have important contributions to make to the intellectual life of the Department. Therefore, it is appropriate to set guidelines for appointment and promotion in these ranks similar to those set for faculty. It should be noted that, unlike tenure-track faculty, individuals in the primary research track are not eligible for tenure and receive up to 95% of their salaries from extramural grant support. However, should they lose their external funding, they may have the right to salary support for a limited time during a hiatus in funding, following OVPR and College guidelines.

Primary Research ranks in LSA are: Research Investigator, Assistant Research Scientist, Associate Research Scientist, Research Scientist, Associate Research Professor, and Research Professor. In general, junior research faculty will be appointed at the level of Assistant Research Scientist. In LSA, the Research Investigator rank is limited to candidates who, while meeting all other requirements, have not yet completed their Ph.D. Once a Research Investigator has had the Ph.D. degree conferred and documentation is provided to the College, his / her title may be immediately changed to Assistant Research Scientist. The expectation is that this should occur within one year of the initial appointment. Under no circumstances can it be longer than two years.

Promotion for all research faculty requires excellence in research, which should have a demonstrable impact on the area of study to which it is meant to contribute and should provide evidence for a strong presumption of continued impact. The only overriding criteria for granting or not granting promotion are the quality, quantity, and impact of the candidate's research and if appropriate the non-didactic teaching and appropriate service. This basic criterion holds for all research faculty regardless of their fractional appointment in the research track. However, the department will take into account the reduced time available for research activity when assessing research productivity for those with split appointments between the primary research track and either a staff or a lecturer position.

Promotion to Associate Research Scientist and then to Research Scientist requires an increasing publication record and other evidence of national and international reputation. Promotion to Associate Research Professor and then to Research Professor additionally requires evidence of non-classroom instruction such as mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students in research. In EEB, faculty on the primary research scientist track may be co-chairs of masters and dissertation committees. Faculty on the primary research professor track (associate research professor and research professor) may be sole chairs of masters and dissertation committees with approval of the executive committee. Sole chair status will be reviewed by the executive committee every five years. Research professors acting as sole chairs are expected to be

very familiar with expectations, policies, and rules for graduate student programs in the department.

To request an appointment on the primary research track, the candidate (or a faculty mentor in the case of the Research Investigator rank) should submit a complete curriculum vitae, a brief description of research interests and current projects, a minimum of three letters of recommendation, identification of the source of funding for salary for at least three years, description of laboratory and office space needs, and description of any other needs for departmental support (e.g., use of shared equipment or facilities). It is expected that individuals approved by the executive committee for appointment or promotion beyond the Research Investigator rank will be Principal Investigators or Co-Principal Investigators on extramural grants which provide up to 95% salary support as well as support of research activities. Expectations of leadership on grant proposals will be moderated for those with splits between staff or lecturer appointments and the primary research track, but grant activity is nevertheless essential. The Department will withhold any indirect cost accruing from these grants, up to the amount for which the Department would be responsible, should bridging support be necessary. Initial appointments will typically be for three years, with review for possible renewal and/or promotion.

Application materials should be submitted to the EEB Executive Committee, which must approve all appointments on the Primary Research track. Research Investigator and Assistant Research Scientist appointments must also be approved by an LSA representative. Associate and Full Research Scientist appointments must be approved by the LSA Dean's Office, the LSA Executive Committee, and the Office of the Vice President for Research.

Mentoring for Research Investigators will be by the faculty member in whose laboratory the Research Investigator works. Assistant Research Scientists will be assigned two mentors by the chair in consultation with the assistant research scientist; one will be a tenure-track faculty member with related research interests, and one will be a faculty member with a higher rank on the primary research track (e.g., Associate Research Scientist or Research Professor). It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that both mentors agree to serve in this role. It is up to the assistant research scientist and his or her mentors to define the format and approaches for meeting, but the relationships should involve ongoing discussions of the expectations for research in the Department, as well as advice directly on research, such as reading and commenting on grant proposals and manuscripts. A handbook on career advising for research faculty is available at: <https://advance.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CareerAdvising-Research.pdf> and is an excellent source of useful topics for discussion.

All faculty on the primary research track will fill out the annual faculty report form required of all faculty in EEB. Assistant research scientists will meet annually with the Promotions and Merit Committee and/or the Department Chair to discuss progress towards promotion. The meeting should address areas of strength and areas for improvement in research, offer advice and encouragement to the candidate and seek

constructive ways of addressing any emerging problems. Written feedback will be provided to the Assistant Research Scientist following this meeting.

Procedures for promotion to ranks above Assistant Research Scientist will be the same as for promotion in the tenure-track faculty rank (<https://lsa.umich.edu/eeb/eeb-internal.html>). At present, reviews for promotions in EEB are conducted by a tenure or promotion review panel, followed by discussion and vote on departmental recommendations by a group of 9 faculty appointed as per departmental policies. Recommendations for promotion or not are then forwarded to the College by the Chair. Any change in the Department procedures for faculty promotions will automatically apply to promotions above the rank of Assistant Research Scientist.

In 2009, the University adopted a time-in-rank (six years) and mandatory review (at three years) policy for faculty on the primary research track. Mandatory third year reviews for Assistant Research Scientists are handled at the department level but not reviewed by the College; procedures will follow those for tenure-track faculty (<https://lsa.umich.edu/eeb/eeb-internal.html>). Associate Research Scientists, Research Scientists, Associate Research Professors, and Research Professors can remain in rank indefinitely. An evaluation for promotion for Associate Research Scientist or Associate Research Professor may be conducted at any time after the first three years in rank. A formal review for promotion may be requested by the candidate in six-year cycles. The criteria defined by OVPR for all ranks in the primary research track are described in Appendix I; note that LSA has slightly different criteria from OVPR, as described in this document.

TIMETABLE FOR A PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION IN THE SIXTH YEAR:

- **Early February of the 5th Year** – Chair meets with the candidate to review the entire promotion process.
- **April** – The department selects the candidate’s review panel in accordance with EEB policies and the candidate and department develop a list of external reviewers with a minimum of 12 names.
- **May** – The Chair, in consultation with members of the Promotion Review Panel (PRP), selects external reviewers. The Chair begins to contact reviewers informally to determine their availability.
- **Early June** – The candidate provides the department with his/her CV, research statement, and copies of publications.
- **June** – The Chair sends the candidate’s materials to external reviewers with an early September deadline for receipt of letters.
- **Early September to early October** – the PRP reviews the case and prepares its preliminary report. The preliminary PRP report is given to the candidate, allowing two weeks for a written response from the candidate. The final PRP report is updated based on the written response from the candidate if necessary.

- **Mid-October to early November** – The faculty voting body reviews the final PRP report and the candidate’s response and votes. The Chair composes the cover letter and assures proper assembly of the dossier to be submitted to the College.
- **Mid-November** – Deadline for departments to submit promotion dossiers for Research Faculty.

Relevant documents:

- OVPR policies: <https://research.umich.edu/policies-on-appointments-and-promotions-for-research-scientist-track/>
- LSA policies: <https://gateway.lsa.umich.edu/research.html>
- OVPR implementation plan: <https://research.umich.edu/research-resources/research-faculty-affairs/>

<i>Approved by the EEB Executive Committee:</i>	<i>March 7, 2011</i>
<i>Revision approved EEB Executive Committee:</i>	<i>March 21, 2011</i>
<i>Revision approved EEB Faculty:</i>	<i>March 14, 2011</i>
<i>Revision approved EEB Executive Committee:</i>	<i>September 11, 2013</i>
<i>Revision approved EEB Faculty:</i>	<i>November 11, 2013</i>
<i>Revision approved EEB Faculty:</i>	<i>January 19, 2015</i>

Appendix I: Criteria for Appointment and Promotion to Research Faculty Ranks

This appendix is taken directly from the OVPR policies:

<https://research.umich.edu/policies-on-appointments-and-promotions-for-research-scientist-track/>. **Note that in LSA, the title of Research Investigator is reserved for those without a PhD and that LSA does not appoint Assistant Research Professors.**

The criteria for appointment and promotion to research faculty ranks are defined using four fundamental characteristics of all faculty positions: scholarship, teaching, independence, and service. The Research Scientist Track is differentiated from the Research Professor Track on the basis of all four criteria. The level of and potential for scholarship and independence differs between the tracks. Teaching and service are not required activities for any rank in the Research Scientist Track.

In addition to the criteria listed below, candidates for *all* research faculty appointments must have demonstrated personal characteristics consistent with good scholarship and professionalism.

Research Faculty Rank Specific Criteria for Appointment and Promotion to the Research Scientist Track

Research Investigator

Key Characteristic	Requirements
Scholarship	Scholarly reputation equivalent to a person who has recently completed a Ph.D. and/or postdoctoral training.
Independence	Independence not expected but may be a goal of training.
Teaching	No formal requirement for teaching.
Service	No formal requirement for institutional service.

Assistant Research Scientist

Key Characteristic	Requirements
Scholarship	Potential for scholarly development, possibly as part of a larger research program. Record of peer-reviewed publications. Participation in relevant academic or professional meetings.
Independence	Independence not required but may be developing.
Teaching	No formal requirement for teaching.
Service	No formal requirement for institutional service.

Associate Research Scientist

Key Characteristic	Requirements
Scholarship	Strong local and growing national scholarly reputation on the basis of research productivity and contributions over several years, possibly as part of a larger research program. Record of peer-reviewed publications. Participation in relevant academic or professional meetings.
Independence	Independence not required but may be developing.
Teaching	No formal requirement for teaching.
Service	No formal requirement for institutional service.

Research Scientist

Key Characteristic	Requirements
Scholarship	Strong national and international scholarly reputation on the basis of sustained research productivity and contributions. Substantial record of peer-reviewed publications. Significant, sustained participation in relevant academic or professional meetings.
Independence	A record of independent scholarship and funding.
Teaching	No formal requirement for teaching.
Service	No formal requirement for institutional service.

Research Faculty Rank Specific Criteria for Appointment and Promotion to the Research Professor Track

Research Assistant Professor

Key Characteristic	Requirements
Scholarship	Potential for scholarly development at a rate consistent with that of an assistant professor on the tenure track.

	<p>Record of peer-reviewed publications in which they are a primary author or co-author.</p> <p>Participation in relevant academic or professional meetings.</p>
Independence	<p>Strong potential for or documented evidence of extramural funding.</p> <p>Strong potential for development into an independent scholar.</p>
Teaching	<p>Evidence of, or the potential for, substantial non-didactic teaching and mentoring of postdoctoral fellows, junior research colleagues, or students at any level within the context of one or more research fields (e.g., laboratory bench science, social science, or other disciplinary setting).</p>
Service	<p>Institutional service expected, but not at the level expected for an assistant professor on the tenure track.</p>

Research Associate Professor

Key Characteristic	Requirements
Scholarship	<p>Strong local and national reputation on the basis of research productivity and contributions over several years consistent with that of a tenured associate professor.</p> <p>Substantial record of peer-reviewed publications.</p> <p>Significant, sustained participation in relevant academic or professional meetings.</p>
Independence	<p>Independent scholarship and funding.</p>
Teaching	<p>A record of substantial non-didactic teaching and mentoring of postdoctoral fellows, junior research colleagues, or students at any level within the context of one or more research fields (e.g., laboratory bench science, social science, or other disciplinary setting).</p>
Service	<p>Institutional service expected, but not at the level expected for a tenured associate professor.</p>

Research Professor

Key Characteristic	Requirements
Scholarship	Exemplary and sustained national and international reputation and achievements equivalent to a tenured professor.
Independence	Independent scholarship and independent sustained funding.
Teaching	A record of substantial non-didactic teaching and mentoring of postdoctoral fellows, junior research colleagues, or students at any level within the context of one or more research fields (e.g., laboratory bench science, social science, or other disciplinary setting).
Service	Institutional service expected, but not at the level expected for a tenured professor.

Appendix II
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts
Memorandum of Understanding
Additional Characteristics of Research Faculty Appointment

To: **Candidate's Name**

Title: Assistant Research Scientist

Unit: Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Date:

The intent of the MOU is to address characteristics of your research faculty appointment that are not included in your offer letter.

Research appointments in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts are without tenure. While possible, it is unlikely that a research faculty position will be converted to an appointment in the instructional (tenure) track at the University of Michigan.

Continuation of a research faculty appointment is subject to performance that meets or exceeds the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and University criteria and the availability of continued funding.

The mentoring and career development of research faculty is an important issue. Helpful information is provided in "Giving and Getting Career Advice: A Guide for Junior and Senior Research Faculty" developed by the University of Michigan ADVANCE Program and the Office of Vice President for Research. This guide can be found at <http://www.advance.rackham.umich.edu/ResearchFacultyCareerGuide.pdf>. Assistant Research Scientists will be assigned two mentors by the Chair in consultation with the assistant research scientist; one will be a tenure-track faculty member with related research interests and one will be a faculty member with a higher rank on the primary research track (e.g. Associate Research Scientist or Research Professor). It is up to the assistant research scientist and his or her mentors to define the format and approaches for meeting, but the relationships should involve ongoing discussions of the expectations for research in the Department, as well as advice directly on research, such as reading and commenting on grant proposals and manuscripts.

The University has a mandatory unit review policy for Assistant Research Scientist appointments: a mandatory unit level review by the third (3rd) year and a mandatory University level review by the sixth (6th) year. Consult the University; College of Literature, Science, and the Arts; and Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology policies provided with this MOU for the detailed policies governing your appointment.

Recommendations for salary increase based on merit for Research Faculty will be made by the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Promotion and Merit Committee. Review of Research Faculty will be done in conjunction with the tenured/tenured track annual review process. Research Faculty will be required to submit an annual report as part of this process. The EEB Chair will finalize the exact amount of the yearly raise, consistent with the Promotion and Merit Committee recommendation.

It is an expectation that all Research Faculty will work towards securing extramural grant support to generate up to 95% of their salary support on sponsored funds. Funds are available to support 5% of your position for the next three years through general or gift funds. Should you lose your external funding, you may have the right to salary support for a limited time during a hiatus in funding, following OVPR and College guidelines. Information concerning the amount of support, eligibility criteria, and application process are available on the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts website: <https://gateway.lsa.umich.edu/research.html>

Research and office space will be accommodated within the space assigned to *Faculty Sponsor*.

Research faculty must fill out an electronic time sheet and the faculty sponsor is responsible for approving the time sheet.

Per SPG 201.64 Research faculty accrue vacation at a rate of 2 days per month and receive compensation for accrued vacation time should their appointment be terminated. Therefore, it is critical that vacation usage be monitored and use encouraged to avoid a payout. Should a large vacation balance be accrued (i.e. over 80 hours) the faculty sponsor may be required to establish an escrow fund or encumber the funds on accounts supporting the research faculty member's salary to cover the payout. If the Research Faculty member is supporting some or all of their salary on extramural funding, they will need to encumber the vacation payout on their own grant funds.

Attachments: University and School/College/Unit Policies for the Appointment and Promotion of Research Faculty
Giving and Getting Career Advice: A Guide for Junior and Senior Research Faculty
OVPR Policy on Bridging Support

Appendix III
LSA RESEARCH FACULTY FORM
UNDERSTANDING REGARDING RESEARCH FACULTY UNIT COMMITMENTS

The Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology requests appointment of **CANDIDATE NAME** at the rank of Assistant Research Scientist.

Unless otherwise specified, the initial term of appointment will be 3 years. Funding must be identified for the initial appointment period at the time of appointment.

Length of initial appointment (if less than 3 years) _____

Source of funding for initial term _____ Shortcode: _____

Note: At most 95% of research faculty salary may be charged to external sponsors. Please provide shortcode for 5% from unit's general fund or other non sponsor shortcode.

Source of funding _____ Shortcode: _____

Initial space assignment:

As the chair/director of the unit recommending the individual for appointment/promotion, I understand my unit's responsibility for mentoring, promotion review, pre- and post-award support, as described in LSA Policy Documents. Depending on the nature of the appointment, there may be unit obligations for bridging funds. If so, I have made provisions to encumber sufficient funds to provide bridging support in accordance with the schedule established by OVPR (Appendix 8 – Section 14).

Signature

Printed Name

Date

Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
Unit