

ILR School
Proposal for the Academic Title of Research Professor

A. Justification for the Position

The purpose of proposing the use of the Research Professor titles in the School of Industrial and Labor Relations is to attract highly qualified people into such roles. Most of the top U.S. research universities use the Research Professor titles for non-tenure track faculty engaged primarily or exclusively in research related activities, as do the other contract colleges at Cornell. Practices of peer schools, other colleges at Cornell, and the impact on recruitment and retention efforts are relevant factors. Without these nationally recognized titles our recruitment and retention efforts will suffer, limiting the ability to bring individuals with strong research qualifications into ILR's centers and institutes. Highly qualified potential hires may be reluctant to take positions if the titles are unavailable, hindering efforts to build the academic strength of ILR's centers and institutes.

ILR's centers and institutes bring in the large majority of the School's external research grant funding and most of this activity is conducted by non-tenure track RTE faculty. When hiring individuals for non-tenure track positions in our centers and institutes ILR wants to be able to recruit the strongest candidates that it can find; availability of the titles of Assistant, Associate, and Full Research Professor would help do this. Funding agencies are also familiar with and recognize the status of the Research Professor titles, making grant applications more likely to be successful if submitted by appropriately qualified principal investigators with Assistant, Associate, or Full Research Professor titles.

B. Description of the Position

The title of Research Professor will be used for a limited number of long-term, non-tenure track appointments with the use of modifiers of Assistant, Associate, and Full Professor rank, or when appropriate by the term "visiting." Individuals holding the Research Professor title should demonstrate research excellence equal to that required for the same level of tenured and tenure-track faculty at the ILR School. To qualify for the title, an individual is required to have a PhD or equivalent terminal degree, to have achieved significant stature in the scholarly discipline appropriate to the rank sought, to have demonstrated the quality of research accomplishment appropriate to initiating independent research programs, and to have demonstrated a trajectory that promises a continued high level of achievement.

At ILR, the typical duties of research professors will involve advancing the research programs of the ILR School's centers and institutes. Research professors will have non-voting appointments within one of ILR's resident division academic departments and also affiliations with one of ILR's extension division centers and institutes.

Responsibilities of research professors include initiating new research programs; seeking funding opportunities, submitting proposals, and fulfilling the terms of research grants and contracts; planning, conducting and reporting on original research; and representing their research groups externally. Persons appointed to these titles may serve routinely as principal investigators on grants and contracts. Securing substantial external funding to support the position is an expectation of the job.

The title of Research Professor may not be used for positions whose responsibilities substantially replicate those of tenure-track faculty. Accordingly, the primary duties of individuals in these positions do not involve routine teaching of courses for credit. However, occasional teaching of courses by research professors is allowed to promote the complementarity between research and teaching at Cornell. In the event that some teaching of courses for credit is requested by a department, this teaching must be consistent with the terms of the individual's funding and must be approved by the Dean. When such teaching is assigned, care must be taken not to shift teaching expenses inappropriately to research grants or contracts.

C. Terms of Appointment

Search and appointment procedures: Search procedures will generally follow those used to fill other professorial positions following established ILR School procedures. A dossier-based review must be conducted for initial appointment. This dossier shall typically include a research statement from the candidate, letters from confidential external referees, an example of research writing, a report of the faculty vote, and recommendations by the department chair and the center or institute director to the dean, who makes the ultimate decision about appointment. Through an exception approved by the dean, the dossier-based review may be conducted during the first year after hire, with continued appointment contingent on successful review.

Criteria and process for reappointment and promotions: The criteria for reappointment should be continued excellence in research, substantial success in securing external funding, and significant contribution to the intellectual life of the School. These criteria are separate and the research professor is expected to satisfy each of them. The reappointment of a Research Professor will be based on a discussion among department faculty members and formal recommendation for reappointment to the dean. The dean reserves the right to appoint an ad hoc committee to provide advice on the reappointment decision. If based on the reappointment review the dean decides not to reappoint, the termination process is the same as that for tenure-track faculty who are not renewed or promoted. Promotions to the associate and full research professor ranks will follow procedures used for other professorial-level appointments at the ILR School.

Credentials and criteria for appointment: Individuals appointed to the position will hold a Ph.D. or equivalent terminal degree in a relevant field. The criteria for appointment of a Research Professor are research experience in a field relevant to the School, demonstrated excellence in research, scholarly distinction, and likelihood of continued high achievement.

Location and duration of the appointment: The position may be a full-time, full-year appointment, but this is not a requirement of the position. The position is intended to be long-term. A year-to-year appointment is inconsistent with this intent. Terms of positions bearing these titles shall normally be up to five years. Unless otherwise specified, they shall be renewable indefinitely. While there may be a transition period before research funding supports the position, appointments normally are expected to be supported largely by such funds; other funding sources are permitted.

Relationship to existing titles: Individuals holding other academic titles, such as Senior Research Associate, cannot convert to Research Professor titles, but may seek appointment to such titles and be considered through normal appointment processes.

Miscellaneous provisions:

A research professor shall submit an annual report to the dean.

A research professor is not eligible for sabbatical leave.

A research professor has the same access to the ILR School grievance procedures as any other professor has.

Movement to a tenure-track position is possible through the normal processes for tenure-track hiring. Approval for consideration of such movement must be approved by the dean prior to such consideration.

D. Percentage limitation

The combined number of Research Professor and Professor of the Practice positions is limited to a maximum of 10% of the Full-Time-Equivalent Professors, Associate Professors, and Assistant Professors in the ILR School.

E. Voting and other rights

Voting/university faculty membership: Research Professors are not members of the University Faculty. They have the same voting rights as other RTE faculty.

Graduate faculty: Individuals holding Research Professor titles shall be eligible to be members of the ILR graduate field with appointment to the field following the same procedures used for the appointment of tenured and tenure-track faculty. If appointed to the field, individuals holding Research Professor titles shall have the same opportunities to be members of graduate committees as other ILR Field members.

Moving from a Research Professor position to a tenure track position: A Research Professor may move from this title to a tenure track position only if the position is filled under normal appointment procedures for such positions.

F. Impact statement

The research professor title will only be used for individuals who would otherwise be hired into other non-tenure track titles, such as senior research associate. It will not be used as a substitute for tenure track hires. Greater ability of non-tenure track faculty to obtain external grants due to use of the Research Professor title has the potential to bring in additional research grants and increase IDC funds, which would enhance School resources and benefit ILR's tenured, tenure track and non-tenure track faculty. The intent of adopting this title is to enhance the academic stature of a small number of non-tenure track positions in ILR's extension division's centers and institutes. It is anticipated that this would only involve at most 2-4 research professor positions, less than the 10% overall limit, and would be positions otherwise held by individuals holding the senior research associate title at ILR. No individuals currently in non-tenure track positions at ILR will have their employment terminated to replace them with research professors. Individuals currently in non-tenure track positions at ILR could apply for research professor positions through the normal application processes.