

Guidelines for Texas A&M University Research Professor Positions

1. General

- 1.1. The following guidelines apply to the appointment, evaluation, responsibilities and reappointment of Texas A&M research professors as well as the limitations pursuant to this position.
- 1.2. Texas A&M University System Policy 12.01 and Texas A&M University Rule 12.01.99.M2-University Statement on Academic Freedom, Responsibility, Tenure, and Promotion apply to research professors as appropriate.

2. Definition and Rationale

- 2.1. The purpose of these guidelines is to define procedures and processes that govern Texas A&M research professor positions. References in these guidelines, as well as in the Attachment, "Questions and Answers Regarding Research Professor Positions," to the term "Texas A&M research professor" apply also to the titles of research professor, research associate professor, and research assistant professor.
- 2.2. Among the professional positions in research at Texas A&M University, it is proper to make particular provision for those that most clearly resemble regular faculty positions in regard to responsibility for designing, carrying out, and managing research (including service as principal investigator when appropriate), preparing research publications, supervising research students, and actively participating in the continuing effort to improve departments, colleges, centers, institutes, and the University.
- 2.3. The main distinction between these positions and that of regular faculty members is that these positions do not carry eligibility for tenure. Moreover, holders of these positions are not generally obligated to teach regular courses. A more intensive participation is expected of them, however, in the management of research projects.

3. Requirements

In all instances, selection criteria for appointments to research professor positions will reflect the stated priorities and restrictions established when the position was created. The following general definitions and selection criteria will apply to all positions:

- 3.1. Minimum requirements to be met for appointment of or promotion to Research Assistant Professor:
 - 3.1.1. A Ph.D. or terminal degree in a discipline germane to the research programs of Texas A&M University; and

- 3.1.2. Evidence of strong research abilities and potential for scholarship.
- 3.2. Minimum requirements to be met for appointment of or promotion to Research Associate Professor:
 - 3.2.1. An exemplary level of accomplishment as measured against the contribution of others in his or her field;
 - 3.2.2. Professional conduct conducive to a collegial work environment and standards of professional integrity that will advance the interests of Texas A&M University;
 - 3.2.3. An area of specialization germane to the research programs of Texas A&M University; and
 - 3.2.4. Evidence indicating a commitment to maintaining the level of competence in research expected of a faculty member.
- 3.3. Minimum requirements to be met for appointment of or promotion to Texas A&M Research Professor:
 - 3.3.1. Continuing accomplishments and evidence of national and international recognition in research; and
 - 3.3.2. Evidence of valuable professional service.

4. Limitations

- 4.1. No appointment (including reappointment, with or without promotion) to a Texas A&M research professor position shall be for a term of more than three years.
- 4.2. Like other faculty members, a holder of a Texas A&M research professor position shall be evaluated annually. The evaluation should focus on performance in the category of research, scholarship, or artistic activities.
- 4.3. The official duties of a Texas A&M research professor shall consist of at least 50 percent research, scholarly, or artistic endeavors, but will have no significant amount of reoccurring teaching assignments.
- 4.4. Other benefits and privileges (e.g., one-year termination notice) may be negotiated and should be clearly stated in the offer letter or the reappointment letter.
- 4.5. Texas A&M research professor positions are non-tenure track, non-tenure

accruing, and no form of tenure, implied or otherwise, are associated with these positions.

- 4.6. A Texas A&M research professor is expected to be an integral part of the academic unit and to actively participate in departmental and college scholarly activities within the guidelines of the University and the A&M System procedures and rules.

5. Process of Appointment, Reappointment, and Promotion

- 5.1. A request for an appointment to a Texas A&M research professor position (including reappointment, with or without promotion) must be initiated by a Texas A&M academic unit following procedures in place for all faculty appointments, including those in colleges, departments, centers, and institutes. The package must include an approval of offer form and a tenure agreement form showing that the appointment is not tenure accruing, as well as the credentials of the candidate and a letter of recommendation from the unit head(s) justifying the request for the title.
- 5.2. The promotion procedures for the department and college must be followed if the case is for a promotion.
- 5.3. A request package for an appointment to a Texas A&M research professor position (including reappointment, with or without promotion) must be submitted through the academic department and college in which the position is located to the Office of the Vice President for Research which should make the decision on promotion and then forward that decision to the Dean of Faculties. Upon approval of the request, the signed forms will be returned to the requesting unit. An approval process is completed by returning a written acceptance by the appointee and a signed agreement form on details of the appointment to the Offices of the Vice President for Research and the Dean of Faculties. **All approved letters MUST contain signatures from the department head, college dean, the Vice President for Research, and the Dean of Faculties.**

**Attachment to Texas A&M Research Professor Guidelines:
Questions and Answers Regarding Research Professor Positions**

1. Will a person with a research professor title be allowed to seek a tenure-track position in the future?

In Section 2.3 of the Guidelines, it is stated that (research professor) positions do not carry eligibility for tenure. However, research professors, as any other candidate, have the option of applying for tenure-track positions in the future. In this case, they shall be treated the same as other candidates.

2. Is a Research Professor considered a graduate faculty member (i.e. can she/he can supervise graduate students)?

The Office of Graduate Studies has defined a procedure for the membership of graduate faculty in Texas A&M University. A Texas A&M research professor who wishes to be a member of graduate faculty shall follow the procedure and obtain an approval from the Dean of Graduate Studies.

3. Which funding source will pay the Research Professors salary?

Texas A&M research professor positions will be usually funded by external research grants which are usually referred as “soft money”. However, it is up to the management of the administrative unit to decide and justify the source of funding and to obtain the approval.

4. Can a research professor teach classes?

First, in Section 2.3., it is stated that holders of these (research professor) positions are not generally obligated to teach regular courses. Further, in Section 4.3., it is stated that the official duties of a research professor should “... have no significant amount of reoccurring teaching assignments”. That is, teaching significant amount of classes on a regular basis shall not be included in a Texas A&M research professor’s regular duties.

5. Is a research professor’s academic freedom, responsibility and tenure protected as outlined in Texas A&M University System Policy 12.01 and Texas A&M University Rule 12.01.99.M2 (University Statement on Academic Freedom, Responsibility, Tenure and Promotion)?

Yes. Please see Section 2.2.4 in Guidelines for Texas A&M University Research Professor Positions.