

# Regulation of Research Appointments

ACA-20

## About This Policy

**Effective Dates:**

02-07-1981

**Last Updated:**

05-14-2020

**Responsible University Administrator:**

Board of Trustees, Indiana University

**Policy Contact:**

Campus Chief Academic Affairs Official

## Scope

All individuals holding appointments as a Research Scientist or Scholar.

## Policy Statement

### 1. Research Ranks

- a. Research scientist or scholar appointments are appropriate for individuals who typically hold the terminal degree and post-doctorate experience (or its equivalent) and who are appointed by Indiana University for research responsibilities. These appointees may do some teaching, but research responsibilities must be their primary responsibility, and they will be evaluated only on their research.
- b. A separate title should be used for those individuals with lesser qualifications who are assigned to research jobs which are routine and supervised, but call for qualifications and responsibilities greater than those of technicians. In addition, individuals working at Indiana University as postdoctoral fellows shall be designated as postdoctoral fellows. Qualified research appointees are eligible to apply for openings in the three-rank system but are not considered automatically for promotion to the beginning rank.
- c. The research scientist or scholar appointment category is a three-rank system that is regarded as a career ladder framework, with appropriate policies and procedures for appointment, annual review, and promotion. The creation of positions within the three-rank system, advertising for qualified candidates, selection and appointment procedures, annual review, promotion, and termination should be under well-defined procedures administered through academic units by the chief academic official for the campus. Postdoctoral fellows are eligible to apply for a position in one of the research ranks under certain conditions upon satisfactory completion of the terms of the post-doctorate.

### 2. Qualifications for Rank

The qualifications for each of the three research ranks are as follows:

- a. Typically a candidate for the rank of Assistant Scientist or Scholar would have to have completed the terminal degree in the candidate's discipline and, in some fields, have at least one year of successful postdoctoral research experience. An individual at this rank would be fully capable of original, independent research work, but would typically work under the direction of a more senior faculty member, which includes an Associate Scientist or Scholar or a Senior Scientist or Scholar.
- b. An individual at the rank of Associate Scientist or Scholar would have begun to establish a national reputation through published work and would typically have responsibility for carrying out independently, as principal investigator, projects of the individual's own devising. Normally an individual should have achieved a minimum of three years of successful research as reflected in published work in refereed sources before attaining or being appointed to the rank of Associate Scientist or Scholar.

- c. A Senior Scientist or Scholar would have shown a career of continued growth in scholarship which has brought a national or international reputation as a first-class researcher who has made substantial contributions to the individual's discipline.

### 3. Dismissal

Dismissal of an individual with a research appointment holding a long-term appointment which has not expired may occur because of loss of research funding, closure or permanent downsizing of the program in which the faculty member serves, or loss of other outside funding on which the appointment was based; otherwise, dismissal of such faculty shall occur only for reasons of professional incompetence, [serious personal or professional misconduct](#), or [university financial exigency](#). Non-reappointment of research faculty to a new appointment term may occur for the foregoing reasons or may occur as well for reason of changing staffing needs of the program. The jurisdiction of campus faculty grievance processes shall include cases of dismissal and non-reappointment of research faculty.

### 4. Research Associates and Postdoctoral Fellows

The title of Research Associate is limited to those research personnel who are not qualified for a research rank but whose positions call for full-time research under the supervision of a faculty member. Individuals working at the university as postdoctoral fellows shall be designated as postdoctoral fellows.

## Definitions

**Serious Personal or professional misconduct:** Conduct that has been determined to violate a misconduct policy of the university or a campus which has been enacted or approved by a faculty governance organization, including [UA-03, Sexual Misconduct](#); [ACA-30, Research Misconduct](#), [ACA-33, Code of Academic Ethics](#), and campus policies on personal misconduct.

## History

*This policy was adopted on February 7, 1981. This policy was revised in 2020 to define serious personal and professional misconduct, to cross-reference ACA-41, the university's financial exigency policy, and to eliminate references to part-time research appointments, which category no longer exists. (UFC Executive Committee, May 14, 2020)*

## Related Information

[ACA-18, Regulation of Clinical and Lecturer Appointments](#)  
[ACA-19, Regulation of Professor of Practice Appointments](#)  
[ACA-30, Research Misconduct](#)  
[ACA-33, Code of Academic Ethics](#)  
[ACA-41, Faculty Role Regarding University Financial Exigency](#)  
[ACA-52, Permanent Separations for Academic Appointees](#)  
[UA-03, Sexual Misconduct](#)