

Appendix II

Policy on Establishment of Assistant Professor, Senior Research Positions in the Department of Forest Ecosystems and Society

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BACKGROUND

Assistant Professors, Senior Research are independent scientists working as fully functional professorial members of the Department. Their positions are funded, by and large, through external grants. Their responsibilities are similar to those of tenure-track faculty in terms of expectations for scholarship, independent leadership of a research program, obtaining outside funding for their research program, and Departmental/University service. Progress of Assistant Professors, Senior Research is evaluated using the same annual and mid-term reviews as for tenure-track professors, and their promotion is handled through the same procedures as tenure-track professors, except that they are not considered for indefinite tenure.

The purpose of this document is to outline the circumstances and procedures under which the position of Assistant Professor, Senior Research can be established. Basically, the position can be established either through hiring someone directly into the position or by changing the appointment of a post-doctoral employee of the Department. Both avenues are discussed here.

OSU is in a process of defining two distinct categories for post doctoral employees. One (“Post Doctoral Scholars”) will be limited to recent Ph.D.s and will have a fixed term of three years. The other (“Post Doctoral Fellows”) will not be limited to recent Ph.D.s and will not have a term limit for employment. This policy applies to both categories.

In the future, we believe there will be three tracks by which PhD-level employees may enter the Department of Forest Ecosystems and Society at Oregon State University in non-tenure track positions. They may enter as:

1. Post Doctoral Scholars for temporary post-doctoral training under the supervision of a professorial faculty member
2. Post Doctoral Fellows to perform a specific research tasks usually associated with one or more grants to a professorial faculty member
3. Assistant Professors, Senior Research to lead a research program

Post Doctoral Scholars occupy “scientist-trainee” positions usually under the guidance of an established professorial faculty member within the Department. A maximum stay of three years is generally permitted. Post Doctoral Fellows normally support an established research program that is being led by a professorial faculty member within the Department. The position may continue as long as funding continues. Both Post Doctoral Scholars and Post Doctoral Fellows may have a change in appointment to an Assistant Professor, Senior Research position if the individual has demonstrated an ability to fund and lead a research program that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the university and FES Department and if the Department has

sufficient resources to provide needed support.

There are costs and benefits to the Department associated with individuals holding the rank of Assistant Professor, Senior Research. Assistant Professors, Senior Research require resources such as space and administrative support. These are costs to the Department, although by bringing in grants and associated indirect costs, the research assistant professor often covers many of these costs. In addition, Assistant Professors, Senior Research make valuable contributions by: 1) developing a distinctive program of research that enhances the reputation of the Department and university, 2) providing specialized expertise, 3) serving on graduate student committees as either a major professor, regular member, or graduate representative, 4) funding graduate students and student hourly workers, 5) providing guest lectures and specialized courses, 6) serving on departmental, college, or university committees, and 7) otherwise being a fully functional department citizen.

Given current and projected budgets, it is highly likely that hiring of new tenure-track professors will be severely limited for at least a few years. To grow, much less maintain, expertise and research capacity it will often be necessary to recruit and maintain non-tenure track professors. This can be achieved by encouraging and rewarding the development of those individuals who can help the department's future. This approach, though, should not over-shadow the Department's continued attempt to increase the number of tenure-track professorial positions.

The appointment of someone to an Assistant Professor, Senior Research position involves "an appointment to faculty position through waiver of search". To initiate this process the Department must submit a waiver of search request to Affirmative Action to Human Resources. Once approved, the Department then submits a new position request through the online Human Resources process.

General Concepts Guiding Establishment of Assistant Professor, Senior Research Positions

1. *Establishment of Assistant Professor, Senior Research positions should follow a rigorous review process.* A change in appointment from Post Doctoral Scholar or Post Doctoral Fellow to Assistant Professor, Senior Research should be done consistently and rigorously, according to Departmental policy. This will require clear evidence of intellectual independence and creativity, the ability to successfully acquire research support for their programs, congruence with Departmental programs, and Departmental resources sufficient to provide support. A change in appointment to Assistant Professor, Senior Research should not be considered a routine progression in career development of Post Doctoral Scholars and Fellows, but rather a special event recognizing high performance and strong Departmental support. The evaluation for conversion should include reference letters from internal and external sources that address criteria for Assistant Professor performance. Faculty should only be hired directly as Assistant Professors, Senior Research from outside the Department when they can document clear evidence of performance at this level and Departmental support; in uncertain cases they should be hired as Post Doctoral Scholars or Fellows and then be evaluated for conversion to Assistant Professor, Senior Research when warranted.
2. *Change in rank of a Post Doctoral Scholar or Fellow to the Assistant Professor, Senior Research rank should be based on accomplishments and potential for independent funding*

more than on current grant status. An individual who has performed at the Assistant Professor, Senior Research level in the Department may be considered for the rank of Assistant Professor, Senior Research even if their grant situation at the time they apply for promotion is unclear. In some cases, promotion to Assistant Professor, Senior Research will aid in their ability to attract research funds. In other cases, the Assistant Professor, Senior Research rank will be an aid in their job search even if their stay at OSU will be short; the Department has a responsibility to promote them, if merited, to aid in career development.

POLICY

Responsibilities of Post Doctoral Scholars and Fellows and Assistant Professors, Senior Research

Research Associates

1. Post Doctoral Scholars and Fellows have the Ph.D. degree, but have limited experience in the development and conduct of an independent research program compared to professorial faculty members.
2. Positions for Post Doctoral Scholars and Fellows are normally established in support of a research program that is being led by a professorial faculty member within the Department.
3. The Post Doctoral Scholar or Fellow may be PI on a grant, but the grants are developed within the context of the larger research program of the professorial faculty member (who may often be a Co-PI). For Post Doctoral Fellows, the duration of the appointment is determined by the funds allocated to it. Post Doctoral Scholars, by comparison, are generally limited to a three-year appointment.
4. Post Doctoral Scholar and Fellow assignments are narrowly focused to ensure achievement of the research objectives of the program providing the funds for the position. They may include responsibility for resident instruction, CE or other departmental programs as part of a career development strategy. The assignment is made by the professorial faculty supervisor.
5. Post Doctoral Scholars and Fellows are directly supervised by a professorial faculty member who retains responsibility for assignment, performance evaluation, career development counseling, day to day supervision at the appropriate level, and for making recommendations for salary level to the Department Head.
6. Post Doctoral Scholars and Fellows can serve as members of graduate student committees, but not as major professors. Appointment to the Graduate Faculty of the Department is required for committee membership.

Assistant Professor, Senior Research

1. Assistant Professors, Senior Research are independent scientists working as fully functional professorial members of the Department. Their responsibilities are similar to those of tenure-track faculty in terms of expectations for scholarship, independent leadership of a research program, obtaining outside funding for that research program, and Departmental/University service.
2. The Department takes on a commitment of infrastructural support of the research program of the Assistant Professor, Senior Research.
3. Assistant Professors, Senior Research contribute to all aspects of the Department's program, including resident instruction, graduate student advising, continuing education, and general development of the Department and College. The level of activity depends on the source and conditions of their funding.
4. Assistant Professors, Senior Research report to the Department Head and they develop their assignment in consultation with the Department Head, who is responsible for supervision, performance review, and recommending salary and promotion to the Dean. Although they may be funded by grants led by others, just as often happens with tenure-track professors, their relationship with the PIs of these grants is as a colleague rather than an employee.
5. The progress of Assistant Professors, Senior Research will be evaluated using the same annual and mid-term reviews as for tenure-track professors, and their promotion is handled through the same procedures as tenure-track professors, except that they are not considered for indefinite tenure.

Recruiting Post Doctoral Scholars and Fellows vs. Assistant Professors, Senior Research

When a new position for a PhD-level staff member is desired for which the Assistant Professor, Senior Research rank may be appropriate, professorial faculty will consult with the Department Head about the appropriate level for the position. Recruitment will normally be into the rank of Post Doctoral Scholar or Fellow unless they have already demonstrated clear evidence of the ability to perform at the professorial level. Such evidence should include:

1. A record of publications from work on which they had primary intellectual leadership.
2. Ability to obtain external, competitive grant funding as the research leader (normally the principal investigator).
3. Clear evidence of the ability to provide creative, independent intellectual leadership of a research program that is congruent with Departmental programs.

For individuals to be recruited as an Assistant Professor, Senior Research, the Department also must be committed to providing infrastructural support for the area of research of the applicant for at least three years. In cases of ambiguity about an applicant's qualifications as a professorial faculty member, or of the level of Departmental support for their research, faculty should be

recruited as Post Doctoral Scholars or Fellows and conversion to Assistant Professor, Senior Research sought when it becomes appropriate.

“Conversion” from Post Doctoral Scholar or Fellow to Assistant Professor, Senior Research

“Conversion” from a Post Doctoral Scholars or Fellows to an Assistant Professor, Senior Research, is not considered to be part of a normal progression for Post Doctoral Scholars or Fellows in their career at OSU, but instead provides recognition for outstanding Research Associates who have demonstrated performance at the professorial level, as listed above. Post Doctoral Scholars or Fellows who believe they should be considered for conversion will discuss the matter with their professorial supervisors. Both will then consult with the Department Head to determine if a recommendation for conversion should be made to the faculty. If a Post Doctoral Scholar or Fellow decides to seek conversion after these consultations, he or she will prepare a promotion dossier and a subcommittee will be appointed to assist in dossier preparation and review of the case. Letters of reference will also be sought from their supervisor and external scientists. The recommendation for “conversion” will be affirmed by a vote of the faculty of the rank of Assistant Professor, Senior Research and above. **The recommendation will be summarized in a letter to the Department Head.**

Appendix III

Proposed POLICY ON CONVERSION OF PROFESSORIAL FACULTY FROM FIXED-TERM TO TENURE-TRACK APPOINTMENTS

BACKGROUND

Many academic departments have fixed-term, professorial faculty that serve important roles in research, teaching, and outreach activities. These faculty are generally supported by grants and contracts, and thus often desire the financial security as well as the academic recognition of a tenure-track position. In addition, Departments sometime have needs for filling new and vacated tenure-track faculty slots that can be met by the conversion of productive fixed-term faculty into these slots. The purpose of this policy statement is to provide guidance on how such cases are to be viewed and considered in the Department of Forest Ecosystem and Society.

Tenured positions are critical to the vitality and reputation of the Department in carrying out its mission. These positions reflect a long-term relationship between the Department and the faculty that involve considerable economic commitment. It is therefore essential that the Department have the very best faculty in tenure-track positions.

POLICY

The Department will consider filling a tenure-track position without a nationally competitive competition only in highly unusual circumstances. For an individual in a fixed-term, professorial position to be considered for a tenure-track position, the following criteria must be met:

The individual's disciplinary area must be important to the Department and the College, as reflected in the opinions of the faculty, Dean, and Department Head. There should be plans for an open recruitment for a position in that discipline were the direct appointment not to be made. The individual must have qualifications for the described position description that most tenured faculty of the Department strongly believe would clearly surpass the large majority of other potential candidates for the position were it to be nationally advertised.

The individual must provide clear evidence of scholarly performance at a rate expected for granting of tenure, considering their years of scholarly activity, as reflected in publications, grants, and professional activities. They should also have demonstrated effectiveness in teaching and/or collaborative research.

PROCEDURE

The final decision about whether to fill a tenure track position without a search, or to directly recommend a non-tenure track faculty member for tenure, will reside with the Dean and Department Head, who must first seek counsel of tenured faculty in the Department. The Department Head will provide a position description, dossier for the person, and detailed justification for their reason for wishing to fill a tenure track position without a nationally competitive search. The materials supplied by the Department Head may also include evaluative letters from promotion and tenure or mid-term reviews, or new letters from external referees. In all cases, tenured faculty will meet to discuss the case, and will vote by secret ballot to document their level of support. Where there is significant uncertainty among faculty about whether a

candidate would be among the finalists after a national competition, an open search is strongly encouraged.