

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Academic Program Group  
Research Unit Directors  
Research Associate Deans

FROM: Rebecca Cunningham, Vice President for Research

DATE: July 30, 2021

SUBJECT: Promotion Recommendations for Research Scientists

This memorandum summarizes the procedures that need to be followed for promotion recommendations for individuals appointed to the Research Scientist (RS) track. The RS track includes individuals holding the following ranks:

- Research Investigator<sup>1</sup>
- Assistant Research Scientist
- Associate Research Scientist
- Research Scientist

The University of Michigan Office of Research (UMOR) is responsible for oversight and administration of promotions for the RS track faculty. All promotions to the ranks of Associate Research Scientist and Research Scientist must be reviewed and approved by the Vice President for Research. As a reminder, Schools and Colleges on the Ann Arbor, Dearborn, and Flint campuses, along with the Life Sciences Institute and the Institute for Social Research, have the authority delegated to them by the Vice President for Research to make promotions to the Assistant Research Scientist rank. Units that report to UMOR must submit their promotion recommendations to the Vice President for Research.

**Extension Requests Due to COVID-19**

Due to COVID-19, units may elect to postpone the promotion cycle for one year. This should be done in consultation with the candidate and should not be viewed as automatic. Rather, units should look at the circumstances and determine whether productivity was sufficiently impacted to grant an extension. Such extensions need not be approved by UMOR, but notification must be provided.

I am asking for your cooperation to ensure that the promotion review process for our Research Scientists is thorough, equitable, and timely. Specific dossier requirements accompany this memo and I encourage you to pay close attention to all of the required elements which include, but are not limited to: 1) copies of all correspondence to potential reviewers (including those individuals who are unable to provide a letter); 2) a current and complete curriculum vitae that must include a listing of all current sponsored research and an accurate and updated publications listing; and 3) a thorough and comprehensive report from the Promotion Review Committee that accurately summarizes the outcome of the committee's deliberations. Please note that we are unable to accept incomplete dossiers, so please be very thorough as you assemble the dossier.

As a general guideline, please keep in mind that putting the proper effort into preparing the promotions casebook is crucial to this process. This includes establishing a Promotions Review Committee to review each candidate. The Committee membership should include peers at an equal or higher rank than the proposed rank for the candidate, and should have at least one member from outside the department or unit. Please take care in selecting arm's length non-U-M reviewers of the candidate's work to get the most objective view. We do not consider former teachers, advisors, mentors, or current or former colleagues to be "arm's length." Co-authors or major research collaborators are also not "arm's length" unless the most recent shared work occurred over 10 years prior to the promotion. Co-authorships on major academy reports of

less than 10 years may be granted exceptions, but please check with the Office of the Vice President for Research for clarifications.

Please forward this memorandum and the attached casebook template to Department Chairs, Program Heads, or others in your unit who are directly responsible for the promotional review of Research Scientists. These materials are also available electronically at:

<https://www.research.umich.edu/office-research/research-faculty-policies-procedures>

### **Recommendations for RS Track Promotions to Associate Research Scientist and Research Scientist**

UMOR considers RS promotions just once a year (as is true for all faculty appointments). This ensures that a common frame of reference is used in making these decisions and enables UMOR to review the total research faculty promotional pattern within the University. Accordingly, recommendations for all RS promotions, the effective date of which would be September 1, 2022, are due:

**Deadline: Wednesday, February 9, 2022**

Please note that the schedule for the RS promotion review process is the same as that of all faculty promotions and that casebooks are to be submitted electronically following UMOR instructions.

### **Promotions of Research Faculty holding Multiple Appointments**

If a research faculty member holds appointments in more than one unit (whether as research, clinical, or instructional faculty), the units involved are strongly urged to collaboratively and simultaneously conduct the promotion review process. Use the same letters of recommendation for both instructional, clinical, and research faculty promotion processes, and be certain to include a statement in your letter of solicitation indicating that the letter of recommendation will be shared with the Promotions Committee, Dean/Director, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Vice President for Research. Please note that **separate casebooks are not necessary**, but if the research and instructional faculty appointments do not report to the same Dean/Director, then both Dean(s)/Director(s) should sign the appropriate forms and submit their respective letters addressed to both the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Vice President for Research.

### **Affirmative Action Responsibilities**

In reviewing Research Scientists for promotion, units are reminded of their affirmative action responsibilities and are encouraged to carefully consider promotions to ensure that they are not affected negatively by considerations of gender, race, age, or other irrelevant characteristics.

### **Notification**

The Office of Research will complete the review of all RS promotion dossiers and will notify Deans and Departments of the decisions no later than June 1, 2022. I would also like to remind you that it is the Dean's/Director's responsibility to contact individual faculty regarding a negative decision for promotion.

Please contact the Office of Research at 763-1290 with any questions about the promotion process.

cc: Mark S. Schlissel  
Susan Collins  
Rebecca Cunningham  
Patricia Smith

### **Attachments**

<sup>1</sup> Entry level position appointed directly by the individual school, colleges, Dearborn, LSI and JSR. There is no promotional path to this rank.

**2022**  
Outline of Procedures for Research Scientist Promotions  
(effective 2021-2022)

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**GENERAL NOTES:**

- All promotion recommendations for Research Scientist track faculty are reviewed by the Vice President for Research.
- Please upload a bookmarked PDF to Dropbox by **Wednesday, February 9, 2022**. **The effective date for these promotions will be September 1, 2022.**
- It is desirable for promotions to be considered by the various units in a group to ensure that a common frame of reference will be used in making decisions. **It is therefore important to minimize the number of out-of-season promotions. Recommendations for promotions outside the normal cycle should be restricted to exception cases and/or circumstances, which are to be explained in the cover letter accompanying the file. Please note that, given the challenges of managing out of season promotions, the timeline for disposition of such cases cannot be guaranteed.**
- The attached instructions apply to Research Scientist track faculty promotions, which require approval by the Vice President for Research.
- Promotions for Instructional tenure track, Research Professor track and Clinical Instructional track require approval by the Provost and the President, and approval by the appropriate Chancellor for Flint or Dearborn faculty. ([Research Professor Track Promotion Guidelines](#))
- All Medical School promotions must also have the endorsement of the Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs.
- The review and signature of the Dean of the school/college or Director of an institute are required on all recommended promotions.
- Promotion recommendations for individuals holding joint regular (not adjunct) faculty appointments should be coordinated. They require the signatures of the Chancellor/Deans/Directors from all campuses/schools/colleges where the individual holds instructional appointments, even if those are dry appointments. **Only one casebook should be prepared for a faculty member with joint appointments.** The cover letter for each joint appointment casebook should be signed by all of the appropriate Chancellor/Dean(s)/Director(s). This letter should describe the processes used in each school or college to reach a promotion recommendation, as well as a description of the ways in which the two (or more) schools and colleges coordinated their promotion processes in this case. If the individual is not recommended for promotion in any of the units in which he/she holds an appointment, the cover letter should clearly indicate the reason(s) for this decision.

Instructions for Research Professor Faculty promotion recommendations are available on the Office of the Provost website: [https://www.provost.umich.edu/faculty/promotion\\_guidelines/](https://www.provost.umich.edu/faculty/promotion_guidelines/)

**CHECKLIST FOR  
RESEARCH SCIENTIST PROMOTION CASEBOOKS**

Please upload a bookmarked PDF file of the following materials for each casebook to the designated  
**RESEARCH SCIENTIST CASEBOOKS** Dropbox folder by **Wednesday, February 9, 2022.**  
Confirm submission with an email to [OVPR.Faculty.Affairs@umich.edu](mailto:OVPR.Faculty.Affairs@umich.edu)

**For further information, contact:**  
**Wendi Mohl in the Office of the Vice President for Research, [wendig@umich.edu](mailto:wendig@umich.edu) (734) 763-1290.**

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**1. Summary Memorandum from Dean/Director**

- The Dean/Director should include a summary memorandum indicating the names of all individuals being recommended for promotion and the promotion action.
- For a Research Scientist track appointment, the summary memorandum from the Dean/Director should be addressed to the Vice President for Research.
- The summary memorandum must include an Employee ID number for each individual being recommended for promotion.
- For faculty holding joint appointments (including Instructional tenure track, Research Professor track, and Clinical Instructional track appointments), please include details of the recommendation from each unit in which they hold an appointment.
- Please upload to the OVPR Research Scientist Dropbox folder the signed summary memorandum as a separate PDF document.

**2. Unit Criteria for Evaluation of Teaching, Research/Scholarship, and Service**

- No formal requirement for teaching at the Research Scientist level.
- Address how your school/college and the various promoting departments, programs, or other units define and evaluate teaching, research, and service in their areas. If there are material differences in the criteria used by different areas in your school/college to evaluate candidates for promotion, please describe these (e.g., external funding is an important criterion in some disciplines; in others, it is not).

**3. Documentation for each Candidate:**

- A. Cover Letter from the Dean/Director
- B. Chair/Department/Unit Director Letters
- C. Documentation of Research
- D. Documentation of Service
- E. Documentation of Teaching (**Not Required for Research Scientist track**)
- F. Brief Description of Credentials of External Reviewers and Relationship to Candidate
- G. Sample Letter Sent to External Reviewers
- H. Evaluation Letters by all External Reviewers
- I. Evaluation Letters by all Internal Reviewers (if required by unit policy, this is not mandatory for most units)
- J. Curriculum Vitae

Appendix: Records of Communications