



Research Scientist Policy

Approved February 9, 2011

About this Policy

This policy was recommended by a committee of Research Scientists including: Malcolm Cutchin, Janet Freburger, Judie Svihula, Sharon Williams, and Jennifer Craft Morgan.

This policy applies to investigator-level affiliates of the IOA.

Education and Experience

A doctoral degree is required, although in very exceptional cases, an individual with a master's degree who has demonstrated excellence in aging-related research, education or service may be considered. The individual with a master's degree typically has a minimum of 5 years experience in one or more fields related to his or her work in aging.

Categories

The following categories of IOA affiliated investigators are recommended as the basis of policy and practice development:

- 1) EPA non-faculty (hold an appointment at UNC as such)
- 2) Faculty @ UNC
- 3) Faculty @ other institutions
- 4) Non-faculty potential investigators (e.g. Recent post docs, PhD prepared researchers not otherwise affiliated)

The following nomenclature changes are recommended for internal IOA clarity:

- Groups 1 & 2 would retain the title "Scientist."
- Groups 3 & 4 would be designated as "Fellows" of the IOA.

Fellows

This group includes faculty from other institutions. It also includes affiliates who are trying to create or extend a research program through the IOA but do not have a permanent employment relationship with the University (e.g. post-docs completing funding, promising recent graduates interested in working with IOA investigators, investigators (EPA or SPA

working with the University but not necessarily in an investigator capacity). Fellows would only have a "Senior" designation if they have or transition into Associate or Full rank during their time as a "Fellow." Inclusiveness and collegiality should characterize these appointments.

Scientists

Appointment at the Scientist designation will be typically equivalent to a rank of Assistant Professor. Scientist is the title for individuals who have demonstrated significant professional contributions in aging-related research, education and/or service and who are actively engaged in public and professional service in an area that involves aging and/or work with older adults. The individual typically is an investigator on funded research, has contributed to externally funded research and has shared knowledge through journal articles, book chapters, curriculum or training materials, videos, or technological materials.

In addition to carrying out their normal job responsibilities, Scientists are expected to:

- Participate actively within the IOA community, which should include contributing to sponsored research proposals, collaborating with other research scientists on research projects and, as appropriate, contributing to Institute-wide events such as the seminar series, the Aging Exchange, the NC Conference on Aging, and other meetings/activities sponsored or administered by the IOA
- Provide support to other IOA scientists according to their areas of expertise, if asked.
- Contribute to the mission of the IOA through research, education, and or service.

Senior Scientists

Senior Scientist is the title for individuals who have demonstrated substantive professional contributions and consistent high-quality aging-related research, education or public service. The individual has demonstrated significant leadership by obtaining external funding, administering projects, publishing his/her work in high quality peer-reviewed journals, or exhibiting evidence of high quality technical expertise in his or her field of work and is noted for demonstrating creativity and originality in his/her contributions. The individual has achieved national or international recognition for his/her work and is called upon for advice and consultation by state and federal agencies as well as professional organizations. An individual with a master's degree will typically have a minimum of 10 years experience in one or more fields related to his or her work in aging.

Appointment or promotion to the Senior Scientist designation will be tied to tenure and promotion of UNC faculty in that those having or achieving Associate or Full Professor ranking shall be designated "Senior" Scientist. In the case of EPA non-faculty candidates (Group 1), rank should mimic their status with their home department (if the home department is not the IOA). For IOA-based EPA non-faculty, IOA should have a promotion policy in place (See Senior Scientist designation above). Promotion from Scientist to Senior Scientist signifies an important contribution beyond job duties and should be considered relative to salary increases in annual review cycles.

In addition to carrying out their normal job responsibilities, Senior Scientists are expected to:

- Participate actively within the IOA community, which should include contributing to sponsored research proposals, collaborating with other research scientists on research projects and, as appropriate, contributing to Institute-wide events such as the seminar series, the Aging Exchange, the NC Conference on Aging, and other meetings/activities sponsored or administered by the IOA
- Provide support to other IOA scientists according to their areas of expertise, if asked.
- Contribute to the mission of the IOA through research, education, and/or service.
- Serve or Chair IOA committees
- Provide mentorship to other IOA Scientists and leadership in their area of expertise.

Administrative Review

New Appointment

Scientists should be appointed to 3-year terms. Review should be completed by a standing Position Review Committee. The Position Review Committee will make recommendations for re-appointment to the Director. The purpose of this review is to provide regular feedback on contributions as a Scientist through a formal process. Scientists seeking appointment or re-appointment will be required to submit a 2-page personal statement and a CV. The personal statement will articulate how they meet the appointment criteria, what they plan to accomplish in the area of research, education and/or service in the next 3 years and why they want to be a Scientist with the IOA (See pages 1-2 on levels of scientists' position at the IOA).

Changing Scientist Status

Individuals (investigator-level affiliates or Scientists) can initiate a review outside of regular review cycles as well. During reviews, the Position Review Committee will also make a recommendation about promotion from Scientist to Senior Scientist designations as appropriate. Senior Scientists should be appointed to 5 year terms. Review should be completed by the Director. The purpose of this review is to discuss their performance and contribution to the Institute on Aging and their plans.

The transition from Senior Scientist to Fellow can be optional upon retirement or moving to other universities.

Position Review Committee

The PRC will be comprised of 2 Senior Scientists and 1 Scientist who will serve 3 year terms. The Director will serve as an ex officio member of the committee. One of the senior scientists will be appointed as chair. Members will have staggered terms such that some members of the committee will retain institutional committee knowledge of past reviews to maintain continuity.