Guidelines\(^1\) for Research Associates with parenthetical ranks of (assistant professor), (associate professor), and (professor)

*Job description:* Research Associates with parenthetical rank are appointed to advance the research program of a member of the faculty. Research Associates with parenthetical rank conduct research in collaboration with other investigators or groups of investigators. They also may provide the experience, expertise and leadership needed for the efficient running of core laboratories, and may have command of novel and technically demanding research technologies, making them available to a broad range of faculty. Participation in the other missions of BSD is not required and may be precluded by stipulations of the funding source or effort allocation. Scientific independence, while allowed and credited, is not required.

*Quality:* Research Associates with the above parenthetical ranks should have the technical knowledge, expertise, experience and accomplishment in research to make meaningful, original, intellectual contributions to research programs. This aspect and the necessity for associated due diligence distinguish them from Research Professionals, where the focus is on technical contributions to the research.

*Distinct from faculty:* Research Associates with parenthetical rank cannot be promoted to the UChicago faculty tracks. Research Associates with parenthetical rank who believe themselves to be qualified may compete in national searches for open faculty positions.

*Process:* Departments proposing appointments and promotions will evaluate the candidate’s satisfaction of the relevant criteria (see below), and obtain at least three assessments of the candidate’s satisfaction of the relevant criteria, and vote on the proposal. The departmental chair is responsible for preparation of a letter describing the evaluation and the process leading to it. The Dean’s evaluation is transmitted to the Provost for final action.

More specific criteria for appointment and promotion to each parenthetical rank are set forth below.

A. Research Associate (Assistant Professor)

Appointment at this rank requires that research training be complete, and that the appointee has the aptitude and motivation to advance to Research Associate (Associate Professor) in due course. Where promotion or work towards it is not desirable or feasible, the position of Research Professional should be used. Terms are for a maximum of three years, and reappointment requires evidence of adequate progress towards Research

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\(^1\) This document is designed to aid faculty, Research Associates with parenthetical rank, Department chairs and appointment and promotion committees in outlining expectations of Research Associates with parenthetical rank that will lead to successful career development and promotion at the University of Chicago. Our intention is to provide guidelines, meaning that significant room is left for reasonable expert judgment. Thus the document intentionally does not spell out every rule in detail. Just as prior documents that addressed these issues, the University Statutes and the Johnson Report, articulate general principles and are interpreted by the body of law that follows them, these will too.
Associate (Associate Professor). Where terms are shorter than three years, typically because they need to be coterminous with funding, review of adequate progress towards Research Associate (Associate Professor) is required every third year. Appointments beyond 9 years in rank normally will not be approved.

Implementation: Existing Research Associate (Assistant Professors) are not now subject to any limitation in reappointment by policy. Research Associate (Assistant Professors) with six years or more at this parenthetical rank as of 1 July 2012 will be given until 1 July 2015 to advance to Research Associate (Associate Professor). Research Associate (Assistant Professors) with fewer than six years total at this parenthetical rank as of 1 July 2012 will be subject to the 9 year limit guideline.

B. Research Associate (Associate Professor)

1. Criteria.
   • Compelling rationale for an academic appointment (versus staff position).
   • Intellectual contribution of the candidate, typically evident through
     a. Authorship of original publications in peer reviewed journals. The number of publications is considered; however, of more importance is the quality of the body of work as evidenced by the sources of publication and by the national and international impact of the contributions. This scholarly recording of the investigator’s work is the major criterion that establishes academic credibility. Research Associates are expected to have significant intellectual contributions to this work but are not expected to have initiated and lead the research effort.
     b. Contributions to programs that have extramural peer-reviewed financial support for basic and/or clinical investigation. Research Associates are expected to have made important contributions to successful grant applications, though not necessarily as the Principal Investigator. Obviously, success as a Principal Investigator receives considerable credit.
     c. Other evidence of research and scholarly accomplishments that may be considered include authorship of textbooks, book chapters and scholarly reviews acknowledged in the specialty, as well as authorship of “nontraditional” educational materials (such as health agency publications and computer programs) or research materials (such as development of databases and research software).
     • External standing of the candidate, typically documented by one, some, or all of the following or by other indicators:
       a. Invitation as a speaker or visiting professor at other academic institutions, and invited presentations at meetings.
       b. Presentations that were selected based on competitive peer-review at national and regional meeting.
       c. Election to membership and positions of leadership in professional societies.
       d. Editorial board memberships and other editorial review assignments.
       e. Consultative positions with various government and private agencies (e.g., study sections, foundations, American Cancer Society, etc.).
f. Organizer of regional, national, and international meetings or meeting sessions.
g. Intellectual contribution (see above) recognized outside the institution.

Administration and teaching (including mentoring) in departmental, divisional, program, or University activities are not obligatory responsibilities for Research Associates but can nonetheless be considered as a positive factor in promotion.

At least three assessments of the candidate's satisfaction of the above criteria will be sought from "at arm's length" experts outside the institution. The Dean may seek the advice of the BSD Committee on Appointments and Promotions (COAP) in evaluating the proposal.
Terms are up to 5 years, and are renewable with continued satisfaction of the above criteria.

C. Research Associate (Professor)
Appointment or promotion as Research Associate (Professor) is an honor that requires careful evaluation. A Research Associate (Professor) at UChicago should be nationally recognized for investigative excellence in his/her specialty or subspecialty, as well as for other activities described above.
Process is identical to that for Research Associate (Associate Professor).