

Task Force Report on

# Non-Tenure Eligible Research Faculty

February 27, 2007

## Task Force Report on Non-Tenure Eligible Research Faculty

**To:** Faculty Senate Executive Board

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**Date:** February 27, 2007

The Task Force on Non-Tenure Eligible Research (NTER) Faculty was charged by the Faculty Senate Executive Board to investigate the extent to which non-tenure eligible persons are conducting faculty level research, and to assess the value of adding a NTER track to the university appointment structure.

**BACKGROUND:** ISU policies govern appointment and review of non-tenure eligible (NTE) faculty whose appointments relate to teaching. It has become clear, however, that NTE faculty may be appointed to other faculty responsibilities (e.g. research) in addition to or other than teaching. The existing policies governing NTE appointments speak only to teaching responsibilities and do not guide in decision making regarding other responsibilities.

Without policy framework, consistent mechanisms do not exist to guide and regulate the appointment, review, and employment of NTE faculty whose responsibilities lie in areas other than teaching; nor are the governance rights of faculty serving in these appointments stated. Procedures related to the appointment and review of NTE faculty with responsibilities in areas other than teaching may be at worst ad hoc and at best inconsistent among the units across campus in which they conduct their work.

To fulfill our charge, we surveyed ISU colleges and centers to identify current titles and duties of NTE persons conducting faculty-level research and conducted interviews with administrators, P&S, individuals holding NTE research positions, and concerned faculty. We also examined policies of peer institutions currently offering a NTE research position. This report contains summaries of the results.

## Conclusions

1. There is a tremendous heterogeneity in the way NTE individuals with terminal degrees and faculty-level responsibilities in research are designated on this campus.
2. Excluding centers, which overlap with colleges making counts difficult, the committee identified 86 NTE individuals with terminal degrees and faculty-level responsibilities in research. Most of these individuals would have salaries from grants or special appropriations and about half are currently in P&S designated positions.
3. There is no consistent position title that provides these individual with a status commensurate with the roles that they perform.
  - a) Lack of such titles is seen as an impediment to grant acquisition.
  - b) Lack of consistent titles is seen as an impediment to recruitment and retention, and partner accommodation.
4. The primary source of salary funding for NTE individuals conducting faculty level research is research grants.
5. There was unanimous support by NTER individuals interviewed for a designation such as “Research Professor” and “Assistant/Associate Research Professor” and very strong support for such titles by all but one administrator who was interviewed.
6. Administrators, some faculty and NTER individuals listed these advantages of a NTE research position:
  - a) increased grant activity by NTER individuals will enhance prestige and reflect on the ranking of the institution;
  - b) NTER positions enhance the agility of the university to respond to emerging opportunities;
  - c) enhanced recruitment and partner accommodation;
  - d) more accurate assessment and classification of research contributions for the purpose of policy/decision making.
7. Concerns about an NTER faculty position include:
  - a) the reduction of prestige of the title professor;
  - b) the increase (proportion) of faculty who are NTE;
  - c) NTE positions eventually replacing tenure-track positions;
  - d) potential “rolling over” of tenure denials into NTER positions;
  - e) benefits to units in which NTER faculty are working as a result of the new budget model.

Results of the investigation show a significant number of NTER individuals are on campus conducting faculty level research and that research is assigned to them without a consistent governance structure in place to guide these appointments and review their progress. A NTE research faculty track would provide the necessary oversight for these positions. In addition, it is felt that a NTE research faculty position will benefit the university for recruitment and partner accommodation applications.

## **Resolution**

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The Task Force on Non-Tenure Eligible Research Faculty recommends the implementation of a non-tenure eligible research faculty track and the development of a policy to guide conditions of appointment and review of non-tenure eligible faculty engaged in research. Policy shall follow and include these recommendations:

### **Recommendations for policy development**

#### **Governance**

- All NTER faculty will have a departmental home.
- Departments must have policies in their governance documents regarding the appointment and review of NTER faculty.
- Departments will decide the departmental rights and responsibilities of these individuals.

#### **Appointment Policies and Procedures**

- Funding for all positions must be external or the result of special project-specific appropriations from the federal, state, or local government. This restriction will limit the number of individuals who are eligible for these appointments.
- Applicants' credentials must be consistent with those for comparable tenure-track faculty appointments.
- The majority of the task force recommends these titles: Research Asst. Prof; Research Assoc Prof; Research Prof; however, a minority of the task force disagreed with use of the title professor.
- NTE Research faculty may hold joint appointments with one department declared as the academic home.
- Appointment procedures will be determined by the department/center/institute with faculty involvement required on appointment decisions.
- Appointment approvals will be made consistent with the approval procedure for tenure-track faculty.
- Persons may not hold simultaneous appointments as P&S and NTER faculty.
- All appointments are non-tenure eligible.
- Persons denied tenure at Iowa State University are not eligible for these positions.

## Renewal

- Term limits: five year renewable term
- Renewal contingent on continuation of external funding and departmental performance review
- Any bridge funding from the university will be limited to six months and must be approved by the department, the college, and the provost. Such bridge funding would only be available after five years of continuous external funding.

## Evaluation and Review

- A PRS is required of all NTER individuals.
- Procedures for review and advancement of these individuals will be in accordance with procedures for tenure track faculty.

## Summaries of Information Gathered

*(Unedited versions of these summaries are available in a separate appendix.)*

### College of Agriculture

The College of Agriculture includes five departments with 20 individuals who are NTE but conducting research at a faculty level. The titles include: Ag Specialist I, Ext. Program. Spec IV, Asst. Scientist II (3), Ext Program. Spec. III, Asst. Scientist III, Res. Assoc. II, Curator III, Program. Manager II, Res. Assoc. I, Adjunct Prof (4), Affiliate Asst. Prof., Collaborators (3), and Senior Lecturer. Ten of the 20 NTER positions were filled by females, and 17 of the positions were reported to be filled by Caucasians. There was no indication about the need to create a formal NTER faculty position.

### College of Business

The College of Business employs more than 25 individuals that are classified as non-tenure eligible (NTE). These include 1 adjunct assistant professor, 2 instructors, 17 lecturers, 1 senior lecturer, and 4 adjunct instructors. None of these NTE faculty engage in research in their official capacity as faculty.

### College of Design

The College of Design employs approximately 27 individuals that could be considered to be NTE in various capacities. Of these people, 22 have the title of lecturer and one has the title of senior lecturer. All of these individuals have teaching as their primary appointment. In addition, four people have some teaching responsibilities but at less than a 50% level of involvement. These four people also hold P&S titles and have assigned duties that include outreach, extension, or IT. None of these 27 individuals have research as part of their position requirements, although some are engaged in professional practice and other research or outreach related activities.

### **College of Engineering**

The College of Engineering employs more than 40 individuals, of which about 30 are in research. These thirty individuals could be considered to be at the NTER level in various capacities. These include 4 adjunct professors, 6 adjunct associate professors, 8 or 9 adjunct assistant professors (1 or 2 of these mainly in teaching) + 2 more at that level (including a clinician), 3 senior lecturers, and 17 or 18 lecturers. These positions include primary appointments in IPRT research centers, i.e. 7 with Ames Laboratory, 6 with the Center for Non- Destructive Evaluation, and 3 with the Center for Transportation Research and Education. Many of the about 20 adjunct appointments have official appointments in professional and scientific positions and are officially listed in ranks that vary from associate scientists to senior scientists. Ames Lab. also uses titles such as "physicist" or "chemist" that can be preceded with predicates such as "associate" or "senior". There are also at least 3 post-doctoral researchers that would deserve NTE positions. About 90% of the NTE positions were occupied by males and about 80% are Caucasian.

### **College of Human Sciences**

Five of six departments in the College of Human Sciences have 24 research positions with titles of clinician, collaborator, adjunct faculty, temporary professor, visiting scientist, visiting scholar, associate scientist, research associate, and postdoctoral research associates. FSHN has 14, HDFS 2, HHP one, C&I 2 and ELPS 5.

### **College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences employs approximately 120 individuals in various NTE appointments, the majority of whom are assigned largely or exclusively to teaching. Four departments reporting show nine individuals assigned to research. Their titles include senior lecturer, adjunct assistant professor, and affiliate assistant professor. (A small number of P&S, estimated less than 5 also have teaching and research duties) Besides research, other assigned duties include teaching graduate and undergraduate courses; coordination of grad programs and various courses; serving on POS Committees; various service obligations.

### **College of Veterinary Medicine**

The College of Veterinary Medicine currently employs 33 people with NTE appointments. Two of these are part time positions. Of the total NTE appointments, 17 are female and 16 are male. Approximately 18 have significant clinical responsibilities that include substantial teaching. Many others have combined research and teaching responsibilities. Three individuals have responsibilities restricted to research. Close to half of the appointments include a service component. The titles vary considerably among these individuals. They include: clinician, senior clinician, lecturer, adjunct assistant professor, adjunct instructor, veterinary specialist, affiliate associate professor, affiliate assistant professor, and postdoctoral associate. Among these, there is also a mixture of P&S and faculty appointments.

## **Vice President for Research and Economic Development (Centers)**

Seven centers and institutes reporting to the Vice Provost for Research and Economic Development reported a total of 31 individuals who are NTE but conducting research at a faculty level.

The titles held include:

- 2 adjunct professors;
- 4 adjunct associate professors;
- 1 adjunct assistant professor;
- 23 P&S employees; and
- 1 individual of unreported rank.

The centers and institutes reporting were:

- The Center for Non Destructive Evaluation (11);
- The Center for Transportation Research (3); and
- The Institute for Combinatorial Discovery (1).

In addition, the Institute for Physical Research and Technology reported 22 individuals who are NTE but conducting research at a faculty level; however, some of these overlap with those reported for the Center for Non-Destructive Evaluation. The Plant Sciences Institute, the Institute for Social and Behavioral Research, and the Iowa Energy Center reported none. There was a strong expression of support for the creation of NTE research faculty positions among virtually all of the directors of the reporting units.

## **Peer Institutions**

Inquiries were sent to ten of our peer institutions (Arizona, Cal Davis, Illinois, Michigan State, Minnesota, North Carolina State, Ohio State, Purdue, Texas A&M, and Wisconsin). Responses were received from five institutions (Wisconsin, North Carolina State, Michigan State, Ohio State, and Purdue); these responses will constitute the basis of this report.

**The University of Wisconsin** Of the five schools responding, four had some form of NTE research faculty designation. The one exception, Wisconsin, defines “faculty” very narrowly with all faculty being either tenure track or tenured. They do use “faculty-like” titles (Clinical Professor) but they are categorized as Academic staff and not faculty. The University of Wisconsin does have honorific titles (e.g. Research Professor), but these are not official university titles but rather primarily provide recognition to outstanding scientific staff and assist in grant submissions. Only fifteen of these honorific titles have ever been awarded.

**Michigan State** officially responded that they have no NTE research professor designation, but the impression of the Task Force is that it seems that the designation of NTER exists at Michigan State University. They have instructor through professor “fixed term” appointments. People in these positions primarily conduct research, although there can be flexibility in the specific duties. Tenured faculty in a unit can extend voting rights to fixed-term NTER faculty and they can also be chosen to represent colleges in university governance. MSU has two other types of NTE employees whose primary function is to do research, the “Academic Specialist” and the “Senior Research Associate”. Both of these positions require a terminal degree and employees with these titles can serve as PI’s on grants. These positions can be appointed year by year or for a multi-year term.

**North Carolina State** has “special faculty appointments” which are NTE professorial ranks. Each non-tenure track professorial rank is designated by a prefix title: Clinical, Extension, Practicum, Research, or Teaching (e.g. Research Associate Professor or Teaching Assistant Professor). Special faculty appointments are not to exceed five years but personnel may be reappointed to additional terms up to five years. Promotion through ranks is based upon a Statement of Mutual Expectations that appears to be similar to the Position Responsibility Statement used at Iowa State University and requires the same process and expectations as regular faculty appointments. Appointments on soft money are contingent upon continued availability of grant funds. If qualified, special faculty can compete for tenure track faculty positions.

**The Ohio State University** has a designation of Research Assistant, Associate, or Professor of specific departments (e.g. Associate Professor of Agronomy). The primary function of these positions is research, but limited teaching is permitted, but not on a recurring basis. No more than 20% of the number of tenure track faculty is allowed, except by departmental vote, but never more than a majority at the departmental level. These positions are eligible to engage in campus-based service, but not on governance committees and these positions are not eligible to vote on P&T. These appointments are for at least one, but not more than five years and individuals are informed at the end of each probationary year if they will be reappointed.

**Purdue University** has a designation of Research Assistant, Associate, or Professor. Typically, people with these designations do not teach unless they are on a partial research appointment, in which case they can be hired on for teaching. No state money or general university funds can be used to support these positions. All salary, plus benefits, must come from soft money. Individuals with these appointments can serve on committees, but P & T involvement is not allowed except in those cases relating to other Research faculty. These positions cannot serve on Faculty Senate. These appointments are for three year renewable terms and part time hires into these positions are acceptable. Promotion for individuals with these appointments follows general university guidelines. Research faculty can apply for tenure track openings, but years in a research faculty rank are not used to determine tenure decisions, rather an assessment is made on scholarly accomplishments and translated into years toward tenure. The policy to allow these positions was instituted primarily for recruitment and retention purposes.

### **Results of Interviews with NTE individuals conducting faculty level research**

Among the six faculty members that were interviewed, there was little commonality across titles and most had more than one title. Three did have “adjunct” in their titles (one each, Professor, Associate Professor, and Assistant Professor), and each of these also had a second title such as Scientist II, Senior Metallurgist, and P&S Associate Scientist. Titles of other faculty members were Research Associate, Affiliate (of several ISU centers), Clinician, and Affiliate Assistant Professor. Responsibilities in their positions were broad, reflecting many of the responsibilities of tenure track faculty to include research, teaching, and service. One has a heavy teaching load. The others may teach occasionally, but work primarily in research. Specific work activities include writing grant proposals, organizing and conducting research, reporting on research including peer reviewed articles, books, and patents, serving on research review panels, and advising graduate students. One mentioned serving as a senator on the Faculty Senate. They were

unanimous in their agreement on the title “Research Professor” as the title that would be most beneficial in their roles.

### **Results of Interviews with Administrators**

Administrators, including center directors and an associate dean reiterated the points of the individuals who are conducting faculty-level research. Administrators felt the lack of a research track position has impeded the hiring of qualified individuals and presented problems with funding agencies that question their eligibility to apply for funding. A NTE research track would be advantageous for partner accommodation, recruitment, and career development of individuals holding the position. Other universities already have this position; it is unusual that ISU does not. Despite the advantages noted by administrators, they also cautioned that this position should not be a means of replacing tenure track faculty.

### **Results of Interviews with Concerned Faculty**

Statements were made in opposition to granting the title of “Professor” to non-tenure track eligible research (NTER) faculty. Opposition arguments focused on the concerns that granting the title of Professor to NTER faculty would diminish the ability of non-academics to differentiate between NTER and tenure eligible faculty, undermine the tenure system, resulting in a trend to replace tenure track faculty lines with NTER lines and thus weakening the University professoriate. It was also suggested that the new budget model may encourage the hiring of more NTER faculty; if so, this could represent an attack on the tenure system.

### **Governance Documents**

A review of governance documents shows department oversight of non-tenure eligible faculty engaged in research to be varied.

### **AAU/AAUP Guidelines Regarding NTE Faculty**

An AAU report (April 10, 2001) focused on NTE faculty engaged primarily in the teaching responsibilities of the university. This report stated that while research universities are committed to continuing teaching, scholarship, and governance sustained partially by the tenure system, universities must, at the same time, carry out their missions in an environment that requires flexibility and agility. Use of NTE faculty is not new but their numbers have increased. The report also indicates that numbers of tenure track faculty have remained “virtually constant” but the average number of NTE faculty has increased by 41% at the issue of the report.

A report issued by AAUP (November 9, 2003) also focused on the teaching role of NTE faculty. This report recommended continuing limits on the use of NTE faculty with no more than 15% of total instruction within an institution and no more than 25% of instruction in any department conducted by NTE faculty.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A – Data from Colleges and Centers**

Agriculture

Design

Engineering

Human Sciences

Liberal Arts & Sciences

Veterinary Medicine

Office of the VP for Research and Economic Development

### **Appendix B - Results of Interviews With NTE Individuals Conducting Faculty Level Research**

Results of Interviews with Administrators

NTE Minutes 11/30/06: Interviews with Concerned Faculty

### **Appendix C - 2006 Association of American Universities (AAU) and American Association of University**

Professors (AAUP) Positions on Non-tenure Eligible Appointments

### **Appendix D – Models From Other Institutions**

University of Maryland

The Ohio State University