

**College of Behavioral & Community Sciences  
University of South Florida**

**PROMOTION GUIDELINES FOR  
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE CAREER PATH**

**Assistant in Research  
Associate in Research  
Research Associate**

## RESEARCH ASSOCIATE CAREER PATH

This document applies to individuals seeking promotion through the Research Associate career path that includes the positions of Assistant in Research, Associate in Research, and Research Associate. Individuals in the Research Associate career path are responsible for assisting with research, dissemination, technical assistance, and/or service activities that are directly related to the mission of the Department and College.

### **Promotion Criteria**

Promotion within the Research Associate career path will be granted only to persons of significant achievement in their area(s) of assigned duties. As a minimum standard for promotion, there must be evidence of excellent performance in the primary area of responsibility (e.g., research, research dissemination) and in any secondary area of performance with an assigned FTE averaging between .20 and .50 in the last five years of annual evaluation. Promotion also requires collegiality and participation as a citizen of the department and college as this is an integral part of faculty performance.

Candidates for promotion will be evaluated solely on the duties included in the Assigned Faculty Duties (AFD). For example, candidates who do not have a service component in their AFD will not be evaluated for service.

Standards for each level are as follows:

#### Assistant in

- Promise of providing substantive and procedural assistance in an area of research and/or research dissemination in areas related to department/college mission.
- The master's degree in an appropriate area of specialization is required; University specifications allow for a bachelor's degree if the person has three years related professional experience.

#### Associate in

- Evidence of Excellent performance in the primary area of assigned duties (research/research dissemination).
- When individuals have multiple assignments, evidence of Excellent performance must be documented if the assigned FTE averages between .25 and .50 FTE in the last five years of annual evaluation.
- For promotion from Assistant in \_\_\_\_\_ to Associate in \_\_\_\_\_, excellence in research achievement must be documented such as being co-author or author on peer-reviewed publications (journal articles, book chapters); presenter at peer-reviewed or invited presentations at state, or regional conferences; Co-PI or PI on funded contracts or grants; project leader of research projects, contracts, or grants.
- Individuals whose primary duties are research dissemination are not required to have a research record in order to be considered for promotion. For those whose duties involve research dissemination, achievement must be documented in technical assistance, training, or other knowledge dissemination activities in areas related to the CBCS mission. Documented achievement may include quantitative information such as the number of training activities, number of participants,

evaluation data, evidence of impact as well as contributions to the field such as development of new training methods and new training curriculum.

- The master's degree in an appropriate area of specialization is required.

### Research Associate

- Evidence of excellent performance in primary area of assigned duties (research/research dissemination).
- When individuals have multiple assignments, evidence of excellent performance must be documented if the assigned FTE averages between .25 and .50 FTE in the last five years of annual evaluation. For assignments that average less than .25 FTE in the last five years of annual evaluation, a minimum of "Satisfactory" performance must be documented.
- For promotion from Associate in \_\_\_\_\_ to Research Associate, individuals whose primary duties are research must document excellent research achievement, such as being primary or co-author on peer-reviewed publications (journal articles, book chapters) and/or peer-reviewed or invited presentations at state, regional, and national conferences; first authorship on at least one peer-reviewed publication or national presentation is required. PI on at least one contract or grant or Co-PI on multiple contracts or grants, or project leader on multiple research project(s), contract(s), or grant(s).
- Individuals whose primary duties include research dissemination are not required to have a research record in order to be considered for promotion. For those whose duties are research dissemination, excellent achievement must be documented in technical assistance, training, or other knowledge dissemination activities in areas related to department or college mission. Documented achievement may include quantitative information such as the number of training activities, number of participants, evaluation data, evidence of impact as well as contributions to the field such as development of new training methods and new training curricula.
- The Master's degree in an appropriate area of specialization is required.

An individual eligible for consideration for promotion may request in writing, on an annual basis, an appraisal by their Department Chairperson of their progress toward promotion. If concerns regarding the appraisal cannot be resolved in discussions with the Department Chair, a meeting may be requested with the College Dean to discuss those concerns.

An employee is not required to apply for promotion. However, a complete application must be prepared and submitted by the faculty member in order for the person to be considered for promotion.

### **Research Dissemination Duties**

The primary duties of some individuals hired in this career path focus on research dissemination. These individuals disseminate the results of the research findings to individuals, agencies, school districts, and other organizations. They conduct training on

the interventions, consult with users, observe and evaluate implementation fidelity, and provide other resources to assist with the overall change that is desired and needed to implement an evidence-based practice. Individuals with these responsibilities should be evaluated using the guidelines specified for research dissemination. Individuals whose primary duties are research dissemination are not required to have a research record in order to be considered for promotion.

Research dissemination is the purposive distribution of information and intervention materials to a specific public providers (health and behavioral health), service agencies, and institutions such as school districts and government agencies. The intent is to spread information and the associated evidence-based interventions that evolve from research. Common methods of dissemination include presentations, written materials, workshops and training sessions, consultation, technical assistance, website postings, media coverage, and others.

As part of their research dissemination duties, faculty may provide technical assistance to provide specialized advice and customized support to resolve specific problems and increase individual and organizational capacity (Barton, 2004). Capacity development is the “process by which individuals, organizations, institutions, and societies develop abilities (individually and collectively) to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives (Godfrey et al., 2002). Technical Assistance is provided to (1) help individuals and organizations access resources on specific topics and challenges; (2) assist with policy planning and program implementation; and (3) develop capacity and produce demonstrated impacts at multiple levels. Technical Assistance involves multi-level capacity building along four interrelated dimensions:

- The development of individual skills and the conditions to ensure that skills are used productively;
- The development of effective organizations within which individuals can work;
- The strengthening of interrelationships among entities;
- The development of enabling environments for addressing issues across societal sectors.

Technical assistance may be conducted through a variety of activities including professional training, consultation, expert advice, reviews, policy analysis, provision of resources, and other relevant activities.

### **Promotional Increases for Contract and Grant Faculty**

It is intended that promotional opportunities be available to all faculty in this career path regardless of funding source. If a faculty member who has been awarded promotion is funded wholly or in part by contract and/or grant funding, it is the responsibility of the P.I. to include the promotional increase in the contract and/or grant budget whenever possible and allowable.

## **REVIEW PROCESS FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE RESEARCH ASSOCIATE CAREER PATH**

### **Department Advisory Committees**

Two committees will provide advice on promotion decisions within the Research Associate career path:

Departmental Research Associate Promotion Committee (D-RAP)  
College Research Associate Promotion Committee (RAP)

The purpose of these committees is to review applications for promotion and to provide faculty advice to the Chair and Dean on each application. The dean makes the final decision on promotion.

### **Departmental Research Associate Promotion Committee**

Each department shall establish on an annual basis, as needed, a Departmental Research Associate Promotion Committee (D-RAP) to review applications of faculty and to make recommendations to the Department Chair and the RAP Committee.

Where possible, departmental representatives serving on the RAP Committee should not serve on the D-RAP. In cases where a faculty member serves on both the RAP and D-RAP, the faculty member may vote on an application only once, i.e., either at the D-RAP or the RAP meeting. As per University guidelines, individuals serving on more than one advisory committee should vote only at one but may advise on another committee, i.e., vote on D-RAP, but may participate in the discussion of the candidate during the meeting of the RAP Committee. The procedures for selecting members of the D-RAP will be specified in the department governance document. The D-RAP committee shall select the D-RAP Chairperson who shall be responsible for writing the evaluation of the majority opinion of the D-RAP committee, entering the vote of the committee into the promotion application, noting the evaluations made by the D-RAP Committee and signing the application on behalf of the D-RAP.

The D-RAP must consist of a minimum of three members. The size of the committee may be larger at the discretion of the department. If a department does not have a sufficient number ( $n = 3$ ) of eligible faculty to compose the D-RAP, the membership of the committee may be supplemented with (1) individuals from other career path groups within the department who hold rank higher than that of the candidate or (2) by eligible (by rank) individuals from the Research Associate career path from other departments within or the University. The selection process of the D-RAP in these situations will be specified by the department in the Department Governance Documents.

### **RAP Committee**

The Research Associate Promotion Committee (RAP) will function as the college-level advisory committee to the Dean regarding applications for promotion of individuals appointed within the Research Associate career path.

The RAP Committee will consist of five faculty members appointed by the Faculty Council in consultation with the Dean based on a list of nominees submitted by Department Chairs to the Dean. Each department (where feasible based on the number of faculty in the career path) will submit to the Dean three nominations of eligible faculty from the Research Associate career path using the selection process described in their Departmental Governance Documents. The Dean will select five members from the lists and submit the list to the Faculty Council for their review and concurrence.

Preference for appointment will be given to individuals who have held an appointment within the Research Associate career path for at least two years. Each of the three departments who have faculty members in the research associate career path shall be represented on the committee unless the department does not have a faculty member who holds the minimum rank necessary for eligibility to vote. Department Chairs are not eligible to serve on the RAP Committee. Committee members will serve for a period of two active years, i.e., two years in which the committee is convened to review promotion applications, at which time they may be re-appointed for one additional term. As much as is practicable, terms of the committee members should be staggered.

Committee members shall not vote on applications for promotion to a rank higher than that which they themselves hold. If there is an insufficient number of individuals eligible or available to serve on the RAP Committee, the Faculty Council and Dean will constitute the RAP Committee with individuals from (1) other career path groups within the College who hold a rank higher than that of the candidate and/or (2) eligible individuals (by rank) from the Research Associate career path from other departments at the University.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

Individuals in the Research Associate career path will be reviewed for promotion by a departmental advisory committee consisting of individuals who hold appointments in the Research Associate career path with positions higher than that of the candidate.

Each year, the Department Chair will begin the process for promotion by announcing to the faculty the timeline and schedule for the submission of applications and requesting all potential candidates to consult with the Chair. The following procedures will be used for the review of promotion applications of faculty in the Research Associate career path: the employee shall have the right to review the file at each stage of review (i.e., department, college) and attach a brief response to any materials contained therein, including the evaluation section(s), prior to the next stage of review.

### **Step 1**

Applications for promotion shall be initiated by the candidate in consultation with their supervisor and Department Chair during the spring preceding the promotion process that occurs the following fall. Chairs should inform candidates of the materials they will be expected to provide in support of their application. Candidates are advised to consult with their Department Chair regarding the documentation to include in the Supplemental

Notebooks to be submitted with the application.

### Step 2

Candidates should submit a completed promotion application to the Department Chair including a letter from the immediate supervisor if the applicant does not report directly to the Chair. When applying for promotion, candidates shall submit documentation of all information encompassing their professional activities during the period under consideration i.e., since the time of their last promotion or since their initial appointment if seeking promotion for the first time. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that the application is complete.

Committee members will confine themselves to making decisions solely upon the information provided in each candidate's official promotion file. No committee member shall solicit or consider any additional information conveyed privately, through personal contact, by phone, letter, email, or other means. The entire committee may vote by a two-thirds majority to authorize the Committee Chair to solicit additional information if necessary. All requests for additional information must be in writing by the Committee Chair who will provide the candidate and the Chair of the candidate's department with copies of the request.

If any material is added to the file after the commencement of consideration, other than the completion of the evaluation sections (including the recording of votes) of the file by the reviewing bodies/individuals), a copy shall be sent to the employee within five (5) days (by personal delivery or by mail, return receipt requested). The employee may attach a brief response within five (5) days of his/her receipt of the added material. The file shall not be forwarded until either the employee submits a response or until the second five (5) day period expires, whichever occurs first. The only documents which may be considered in making a promotion recommendation are those contained or referenced in the promotion file.

### Step 3

The Department Chair will meet with the D-RAP to provide the committee with a charge and to explain the evaluation process and criteria. It is the responsibility of the committee members to familiarize themselves with the procedures for conducting the review of the application and the criteria for promotion within the career path.

The D-RAP shall review and evaluate each application for promotion in accordance with the departmental criteria. Individuals serving on more than one committee (i.e., D-RAP and departmental RAP) should vote at the department level on candidates from their home unit but not on these candidates at the RAP Committee level. If a faculty member has a special personal and/or professional association with a candidate, that committee member will leave the room during all deliberations concerning the candidate and will abstain from making a recommendation concerning that candidate. (See "Procedural and Formatting Guidelines" document posted on CBCS intranet for clarification as well as relevant USF policies).

The Committee members will vote on promotion for each application by confidential

ballot. A brief written evaluation and the results of the vote will be recorded as a part of the application and forwarded to the Department Chair. Where a split evaluation exists, a minority report will accompany the majority recommendation.

Candidates for promotion may request a meeting with the D-RAP to discuss the application prior to the committee's evaluation of the application. The purpose of this meeting is solely to inform the committee of the candidate's scholarly activities and future directions in research and other areas of assigned duties, if applicable. No evaluative feedback will be given to the candidate. This meeting is optional for the faculty member.

#### Step 4

The Chair shall review the application for promotion of each candidate and the recommendations of the D-RAP and add an evaluative letter and recommendation for promotion.

The employee shall have the right to review the file following the departmental review and attach a brief response to any materials contained therein, including the evaluation sections(s) prior to the next stage of review.

The application will be made available to the College RAP Committee for review and recommendation.

#### Step 5

After each member of the RAP Committee has reviewed the candidate's credentials, the committee will meet to prepare its recommendations to the Dean. The Committee's deliberations will focus exclusively on how well a candidate meets the criteria for promotion.

If a committee member has a special personal and/or professional association with a candidate, that committee member will leave the room during all deliberations concerning the candidate and will abstain from making a recommendation concerning that candidate. (See "Procedural and Formatting Guidelines" document posted on CBCS intranet for clarification as well as relevant USF policies).

The RAP Committee shall review and evaluate each application for promotion in accordance with the departmental criteria. The Committee members will vote on promotion for each candidate by confidential ballot. A brief written evaluation and the results of the vote will be recorded as a part of the application and forwarded to the Dean.

Where a split evaluation exists, a minority report will accompany the majority recommendation.

The employee shall have the right to review the file following the RAP Committee review and attach a brief response to any materials contained therein, including the evaluation section(s) prior to the next stage of review.



## Step 6

If applicable, the Regional Chancellor shall review the application for promotion and add an evaluation letter and recommendation for promotion. The employee shall have the right to review the file following the Regional Chancellor review and attach a brief response to any materials contained therein, including the evaluation sections(s) prior to the next stage of review.

The Dean shall review the application including the recommendations of the D-RAP, the Chair, the RAP Committee, and if applicable the Regional Chancellor. The Dean shall then complete the appropriate sections of the Promotion Application Form. The Dean shall provide the candidate with the opportunity to review the results of the review process and the Dean's recommendations, and invite the candidate to discuss the recommendations and supporting materials within ten days. The candidate may add a concise response to any materials in the application, if the candidate so wishes. The final determination of the promotion application will be made by the Dean.

### Approval History:

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Approved by Faculty Vote on May 15, 2020

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