

Proposed Revisions to Research Ranks on the Bloomington Campus

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On behalf of the Research Affairs and Faculty Affairs Committees of the Bloomington Faculty
 Council

Status updates:

19 December 2023	Initial draft by Ben Kravitz and Jillian Kinzie (RAC co-chairs)
24 December 2023	Sent to Jessica Lester and Katherine Ryan (FAC co-chairs), Brea Perry (VPR), Judah Cohen and Carrie Docherty (OVPFAA) for preliminary comments
8 January 2024	Sent to RAC and FAC members, as well as Research Ranks Working Group members for comments
24 January 2024	Revised, considering all comments received thus far
28 January 2024	Sent to all BFC members and a few other key contributors for comments
16 February 2024	Send to Faculty Council Office for review by Executive Committee

Proposed timeline:

8 January 2024	Complete draft by co-chairs of RAC and FAC, submit to RAC and FAC members for comments and discussion
22 January 2024	Deadline for initial round of comments
29 January 2024	Finalize revisions from RAC and FAC members, submit to the wider IUB community for comments
19 February 2024	Deadline for comments from wider IUB community
27 February 2024	Deadline for submitting materials to BFC Office
5 March 2024	First reading at BFC
26 March 2024	Deadline for revisions, submission to BFC Office
2 April 2024	Second reading and vote at BFC

Background and Overview

When BL-ACA-A5 was introduced in 1980, the only category of research staff at Indiana University was Research Associate. There was a need to establish a category of faculty who are non-tenure track and are focused primarily on research. The category of research faculty is now standard throughout the United States and has long been an established part of Indiana University (see ACA-04, ACA-14, ACA-20, BL-ACA-A1).

Research faculty are currently designated as Research Scientists/Scholars. This single category is insufficient to capture the diversity of different research/creative activities and roles, including how research faculty should be evaluated for performance and promotion. This policy establishes an additional title of Research Professor. In general, this new category will encompass research faculty who primarily operate as principal investigators whose goal is to establish a recognized, original, independent program of research and/or creative activity. The title of Research Scientist can then be used for faculty who primarily serve in a support role for others' research/creative activity. This distinction is now commonplace across R1 universities in the United States.

What we are proposing

We propose the introduction of the Research Professor title and track as a second category within the existing appointment structure of non-tenure track research faculty. The purpose of establishing a Research Professor track is to distinguish the role from that of the current Research Scientist category and to provide needed flexibility across the research/creative activity landscape. The activities of some research faculty are very much in line with the idea of an independent principal investigator, i.e., they bring in grants to cover their salaries (and potentially the salaries of others) in pursuit of an internationally recognized, independent research/creative activity program. While other research faculty, such as operators of specialized instruments or laboratory/center managers, play crucial roles in the university's scholarship mission and have experience that can only be gained through long-term employment as a scientist, they generally do not pursue independent research/creative activity programs and thus should be judged with different expectations.

We provide a general description of the distinction between a Research Scientist track (scientific expertise in support of another principal investigator) and a Research Professor track (an independent scholarship program). At the campus level, the Research Professor track will primarily be interpreted as an alternate, potentially advantageous title that can be assigned to Research Scientists, with details and distinctions in responsibilities, promotion criteria, etc. between the two tracks described by guidance from VPFAA and individual school/department/unit policies. This choice of using Research Professor as an effective alternate title at the campus level is deliberate. Because the research/creative activity landscape is so diverse, description of faculty roles and responsibilities, as well as promotion guidance, should be left up to individual units, in a manner consistent with campus and university-level policies (as currently is the case with other ranks). Appointments and promotions for all ranks of

Research Scientist/Scholar and Research Professor remain a campus-level process, with rank and title recommendations at the PI, unit, and school levels approved by the VPFAA.

The following table provides an idea of what the two tracks look like. Note that the content of this table provides guidelines, not policy. The actual language of BL-ACA-A5 avoids many specifics to allow for schools and units to develop their own criteria that are consistent with what the research/creative activity landscape looks like for them.

<p>Assistant Research Scientist</p> <p>Responsibilities involve substantive contributions to the research/creative activity of others, often as part of a research center, research core, or principal investigator’s research group. Contributions to publications, grant applications, and other forms of scholarship can comprise a substantive, but not necessarily central, part of the portfolio.</p>	<p>Assistant Research Professor</p> <p>Responsibilities involve conducting an articulated, original program of research/creative activity, roughly equivalent to the scholarship qualifications for tenure-track faculty. Core responsibilities will often include leadership on published work and grant activity (although individual units should provide these details).</p>
<p>Associate Research Scientist</p> <p>Duties involve being on the path to achieving national or international recognition for their contributions to the research/creative activity of others, possibly also including their own independent research/creative activity. This can also include support of grants and collaborative publications.</p>	<p>Associate Research Professor</p> <p>Duties involve being on the path to achieving national or international recognition for their own independent research/creative activity in an articulated program of scholarship, roughly equivalent to the research/creative activity qualifications for tenure-track faculty.</p>
<p>Senior Scientist</p> <p>Duties involve significant disciplinary contributions and national or international recognition as a scholar or for essential, innovative, or outstanding contributions to independent research/creative as part of a team, roughly equivalent to the research/creative activity qualifications for tenure-track faculty, as well as demonstrated contributions to sustained extramural support.</p>	<p>Research Professor</p> <p>Duties involve significant disciplinary contributions and national or international recognition as an independent scholar, or for essential, innovative, or outstanding contributions to independent research/creative activity as part of a team, roughly equivalent to the research/creative activity qualifications for faculty with the rank of Professor and demonstrated capability of sustained extramural PI support.</p>

The intent of the policy, specifically the promotion from Associate to Full, is to emphasize reputation. It is fair to ask how an associate scientist can develop independence if they spend their career working for someone else. If a researcher has made substantial contributions to the field, and the field recognizes that the researcher has substantial responsibility for those contributions, that's the goal. From the policy's perspective, there is a path to promotion whether the researcher did that on their own or as part of a team. Different schools or units should have more detailed descriptions and criteria.

Policies at IU around Research Associates and Postdoctoral Research Fellows have to this point been largely unclear and/or absent. We have therefore updated this policy to be consistent with ACA-20, Part D. A Research Associate is a potentially long-term employee whose primary job is research, but who has not earned a terminal degree in their field. They require a cognizant supervisor who is responsible for designing their research projects and procuring funding for their position. A Postdoctoral Research Fellow is a limited-term employee (up to 5 years) who has earned a doctorate and has come to IU for scientific training. While postdoctoral fellows often have supervisors, there are programs where postdocs are independent (e.g., the Hubble Fellows program).

Why we are proposing this policy change

- As stated above, we are currently unable to distinguish the roles being performed by current non-tenure track research faculty. In our proposal, the Research Professor acts as an independent scholar and principal investigator, while the Research Scientist could cover many different roles (consistent with the breadth of research/creative activities), including being a specific expert in a facility. Such a faculty member would not necessarily be expected to establish a well-recognized independent program of scholarship.
- Granting agencies do not always understand that Research Scientists can be faculty with independent research programs. This misperception has been detrimental to some faculty's chances of bringing in grants.
- Many of our peer institutions, including Big Ten institutions and IU Indianapolis, have a Research Professor title or track that they have found supportive of faculty and positively associated with securing funded research. We are currently lagging behind. (See subsequent pages for examples of our peers' policies.)
- The current policies pose a barrier to recruitment and retention of talented research faculty. Because all research faculty fall into one track, appointing postdoctoral research associates or other limited-term employees to permanent positions is a large lift. Many of those people have been moved into the Research Associate category, which is against ACA-20, as that category is supposed to be reserved for employees with non-terminal degrees. All of this results in confusion and a general sentiment of feeling stranded with few career advancement opportunities and little job security.
- Research Associates and Postdoctoral Research Fellows were essentially only mentioned in passing in the previous version of the policy, and these roles need better definition.

(Note that this is not the primary purpose of the present policy updates, but since we're already modifying BL-ACA-A5, why not.)

How it will work

University policies (see below) refer to Scientist/Scholar positions and do not mention Research Professor as a possible Research Rank. Nevertheless, there is no inherent conflict with establishing Research Professor ranks as alternative titles to the Research Scientist ranks, and the Special Titles section of ACA-12 allows that "with the approval of the campus' academic officer, a unit may use a title that meets the special needs of the unit so long as the appointment classification is made clear." Indeed this is what the Indianapolis Faculty Council did in 2005 in establishing the Research Professor title on their campus (page 39 of the following):

https://facultycouncil.iupui.edu/FCContent/Html/Media/FCContent/committees/handbook/faculty_guide.pdf

While a complete description of appointments to the research ranks is available in the University Policy ACA-14: "Classification of Academic Appointments," it is important to note that in certain cases alternative titles may be used for the scientist/scholar ranks. For individuals serving as principal investigators and applying for external grants, it may be advantageous to have a "professorial" title. Therefore, it may be requested that the following titles be assigned:

*Assistant Scientist/Scholar = Assistant Research Professor
Associate Scientist/Scholar = Associate Research Professor
Senior Scientist/Scholar = Senior Research Professor*

We are proposing a similar approach to what IUI have done. It may be prudent for the University Faculty Council to revisit some of the university-level policies in the future.

Specifically, we propose two policy revisions:

1. Revise BL-ACA-A1 to include Assistant Research Professor, Associate Research Professor, and Research Professor as allowable titles.
2. Revise BL-ACA-A5 to delineate two separate research faculty tracks (Scientist vs Research Professor) to account for the different roles and responsibilities that research faculty may have.

These will be voted on separately.

Should these policy changes pass, the following steps will need to be taken:

- Units that use research appointments should use the general guidelines in BL-ACA-A5 to establish their own distinctions between Research Scientist and Research Professor tracks, including roles, responsibilities, duties, appointment procedures, criteria for promotion, and voting rights. They will also need to establish a policy governing if and how research faculty can move laterally from one track to another.

- Current research faculty will need to discuss with their unit heads, potentially in consultation with VPFAA or OVPR, which track and title they wish to have, consistent with their expected job description and duties.

Note that, independent of these policy changes, VPFAA issued guidance in October 2023 to help units bring Research Associates and Postdoctoral Scholars into compliance with ACA-20, including the option of appointing qualified Research Associates to Research Scientist positions through an internal, rather than campus-level, process (i.e., not needing to go through the campus Tenure & Promotion committee). Guidance is attached to this document.

Relevant policies and specific actions in this proposal

- ACA-14 (<https://policies.iu.edu/policies/aca-14-classification-academic-appointments/index.html>). Because this is a university policy, there are no proposed modifications. Policy Statement B.5 lists available titles as Senior Scientist (or Senior Scholar), Associate Scientist (or Associate Scholar) and Assistant Scientist (or Assistant Scholar). The addition of the Research Professor title is justified in the Special Titles section of ACA-12, which the IUI faculty council used to establish the Research Professor title in 2005. Specific language from the IUI faculty guide is provided above. As such, there is no anticipated conflict with ACA-14 as a result of these proposed policy changes.
- ACA-20 (<https://policies.iu.edu/policies/aca-20-regulation-research-appointments/index.html>). Because this is a university policy, there are no proposed modifications. This policy refers to the Research Scientist appointment *category*, not job titles. The phrasing of this policy uses the description “typically,” leaving some campus-level flexibility as to specific roles and responsibilities of individual appointments. As such, there is no anticipated conflict with ACA-20 as a result of these proposed policy changes.
- BL-ACA-A1 (<https://vpfaa.indiana.edu/policies/bl-aca-a1-academic-appointments/index.html>). The Policy Statement on *Classification of Academic Appointments*, Section B.5 repeats ACA-14 Policy Statement B.5. We propose adding a modification to this section that allows for the new titles Assistant Research Professor, Associate Research Professor, and Research Professor to be used. Specific text can be found on the titles available for research faculty next page.
- BL-ACA-A5 (<https://vpfaa.indiana.edu/policies/bl-aca-a5-research-ranks/index.html>). Most of the proposed policy revisions are contained in BL-ACA-A5. As such, we have provided a more detailed description of the proposed changes to this policy and a redlined version. (See separate documents.)
- B16-2024 (will be updated after it passes BFC; <https://bfc.indiana.edu/meetings/2023-2024/circulars/B16-2024-IU-Bloomington-Principles-and-Policies-on-Tenure-and-Promotion.pdf>). This policy governs tenure and promotion on the Bloomington campus. There are no conflicts, and this new policy will provide much needed clarity as to what “research and creative activity” mean.

- Various websites and administrative policy documents controlled by VPFAA will need to be modified, but this does not constitute a change in legislative policy. They are included here for completeness.

https://vpfaa.indiana.edu/doc/NTT%20Promotion%20Guidelines_6.1.21.pdf

<https://vpfaa.indiana.edu/faculty-resources/tenure-promotion/non-tenure-track/index.html>

Some of our peers' policies

OSU

Research Assistant Prof./Research Assoc Prof./Research Prof. (names changed 2022)
 Advise/Supervise grad students [w/grad school approval]
 PI on grants
 Fixed term (1-5 years)
 Reappointment year to year; contract renewal determined at end of penultimate year
 Externally funded (expectation)
 No tenure
 No more than 20% of # of TT faculty in a unit. (unless majority vote otherwise)
 Requires Doctorate
 No Teaching
 Hiring/Promotion established by unit.
 Cannot vote on other faculty promotion.
 Can transfer from TT to Research/Cannot transfer from Research to TT (but may apply to open position)

PURDUE

Proposal Writing, Project Supervision, Teaching/Instruction [but no classroom teaching except in special circumstances]

Assistant/Associate/[Full] Research Professor

Expectation: External funding, but at least 5% must be from "alternative support" (including internal). Worth quoting in full here: "Research Faculty positions, including associated salaries, supplemental payments and fringe benefits, must be primarily supported by extramural or non-general funds. However, certain research-related effort (e.g., proposal writing, graduate student advisory committees, and other activities not related to the objectives of funded research projects) cannot be compensated by sponsored program funds. Therefore, subject to the availability of funds, a small proportion of Research Faculty effort may be supported by alternative sources, including internal, unrestricted university funds (e.g., general funds). The amount of this alternative support is at the appointing unit's discretion, but must be at least 5% of the total annual compensation of each Research Faculty position. Sources of salary support must be detailed in the offer letter."

Insurance/Retirement/Parental Leave/Tuition Remission

Bridge funding available (up to 12 months) after significant external funding.

Eligible for mentoring/committee service/internal funds & awards.

Eligible for Distinguished/Named Professorships

WISCONSIN

Assistant/Associate/[Full] Research Professor

[SEPARATE from Scientist and Researcher tracks, which do not require independence.]

"expected to focus on research, including leadership of the scientific and technical aspects, pursuit of intramural and/or extramural funding, and compliance with all financial, ethical, and administrative aspects of the research."

>50% of activities must be Research (essentially supported by external funding)

No teaching, but occasional teaching activities can't exceed 50% effort.

No service expectation save related to research.

PI/co-PI Expectations.

Interesting status: WARF (Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation) can lead to "Permanent PI status" (presumably a kind of tenure?).

Initial appt. includes a Mentoring/Oversight committee; at Assoc. level and above, switches to Executive committee.

Require a written research space plan.

Units cover startup + 5% (for grant writing)

Promotion: no "up or out" requirement

UMD

Research Professor/R. Scientist/R. Scholar/R. Engineer: Assistant/Associate/[Full]

Assistant: 1-3 years renewable.

Associate: 1-5 years renewable

[Full]: 5-year contracts, renewable as early as year 3.

Michigan

Research Scientist Track [mostly working in a lab]/Research Professor Track [PI-worthy/independent]

[Also Research Investigator as a kind of "Pre-rank" to Assistant Research Scientist.

Criteria: Scholarship, Independence, Teaching, Service

Research Scientist track: Developing Independence, no expectations of teaching, no expectation of service until highest level.

Research Professor Track: Growing scholarly reputation; Independent by second rank; also teaching and service responsibilities kick in.

Penn State

Researcher (MA required)

Assistant/Associate/[Full] Research Professor

Promotion: grouped with other NTT lines

Hire at Asst., must have 5 years before promotion consideration; "no fixed time" for promotion to third rank.

Interesting provision for contract lengths (added 2021): "Unit leaders have the flexibility, and are encouraged, to offer the longest contract term that circumstances warrant at all ranks.

Faculty members who are promoted shall be considered for a multi-year contract. Those promoted to the third rank shall be considered for the longest length of contract available to non-tenure-line faculty. If a multi-year contract is not granted, then factors that shaped this decision shall be communicated to the faculty member at the time when a new contract is offered."

Northwestern

Separate policies for "Research Staff," "Research Faculty," and "Post doc" Appointments.

Tracks:

Research Scientist-Professor (Asst./Assoc /[[Full]]): haven't yet found on Northwestern site.

Research Professor (Asst./Assoc/Full)

Expected to seek external funding; can be PI

No governance

No "regular teaching responsibilities" (teaching assignments should be rare, and require a separate appt., with % effort reduced accordingly)

Professional (not temporary, honorary, or emeritus)

"must be supported by non-appropriated funds at salary levels reasonably equivalent to regular faculty"

Senior Research Investigator (1-3 year terms): Essentially a provision for a research-only "step-down" from TT.

IUI/IUPUI [Use the convenient drop-down menu to compare appointment classifications]:

<https://academicaffairs.iupui.edu/Faculty-Affairs/Faculty-Classification>

Michigan State University (last revised Feb 2012): <https://hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/faculty-academic-staff/research-faculty.html>

Northwestern University: <https://researchhradmin.northwestern.edu/research-appointments/> (covers Staff, Faculty, and Postdoc appointments; see menu in lefthand column).

The Ohio State University (Titles Revised Feb 2022). See end of document, 3335-7-30 through 3335-7-40: <https://trustees.osu.edu/bylaws-and-rules/3335-7>

Penn State (2019/2021): <https://policy.psu.edu/policies/ac21#F>

Purdue University (REVISED July 1, 2023): <https://www.purdue.edu/policies/human-resources/vif8.html>

University of Iowa (last revised 2015): <https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty#10.10> See also: <https://provost.uiowa.edu/human-resources-administration/faculty-hr-administration/faculty-appointment#research-track-non-tenure-track>

University of Maryland (last revised c. 2015?):

<https://faculty.umd.edu/main/appointments/faculty-titles#assistant-research-faculty-ranks> For more details, see B.4, B.5, and B.6 here: <https://policies.umd.edu/faculty/university-of-maryland-policy-and-procedures-on-appointment-promotion-and-tenure-of-faculty>

University of Michigan (Research Scientists/Research Professors; last revised August 2022): <https://hr.umich.edu/working-u-m/my-employment/academic-human-resources/faculty-appointments/academic-appointments-definitions-key-contacts-resources> (see also: Policies:

<https://provost.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Research-Sci-Prof-appts-promotions.pdf>)

University of Minnesota (see Category 2a, 2b): <https://policy.umn.edu/hr/teaching-appa>

University of Nebraska Lincoln (Possibly revised in 2021):

<https://executivevc.unl.edu/faculty/searches-appointments/appointments-templates> (more detailed documents are available to those in the UNL system).

University of Wisconsin-Madison (Research Professor rank; Revised Jan 2020):

https://provost.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/181/2022/05/0120-Campus-Guidelines_Acad-Staff-Research-Professor-Titles.pdf.pdf. (Contrast with Scientist and Researcher ranks).

Other PEER INSTITUTIONS:

UCLA: Professional Research Series (updated 2013): <https://apo.ucla.edu/policies-forms/the-call/professional-research-series/professional-research-series>

University of Oregon (2007): <https://policies.uoregon.edu/content/faculty-non-tenure-track-faculty-nttf> and <https://policies.uoregon.edu/vol-2-academics-instruction-research/ch-2-appointments-promotion-tenure/academic-classification-and>

(Officers of Research [Pre-Terminal Degree]/Research Associate [Terminal Degree in Lab]/Research Professor [Independent]). “A Research Professor will have qualifications and research expectations equal to or exceeding those for a tenure-track/tenured professor at the same rank in related fields.”

Guidance on Research Associates and Postdocs (from VPFAA)

Research Associates and Postdocs: NEW GUIDANCE [Issued October 2023]

1. Within one year, make current Research Associate/Postdoc positions consistent with ACA-20, including:
 - a. Ensure that Research Associates with terminal degrees have the opportunity to move to Postdoctoral or Assistant Research Scientist appointments if qualified.
 - b. Determine a staff-based career pathway for Research Associates with terminal degrees in cases where a move to Postdoc or Assistant Research Scientist may not be preferred or appropriate.
 - c. In cases where appointees are “between” Postdoctoral and Assistant Research Scientist appointments, or have timed out on Postdoc years, determine a non-Research Associate alternative from existing options (Possible: Visiting Assistant Research Scientist) to be consistent with ACA-20.
 - d. Units should plan all further hiring of Research Associates and Postdoctoral scholars in a manner consistent with ACA-20.

2. Postdoctoral positions continue to maintain a five-year maximum term under the principle that they are training positions, and consistent with practices at peer institutions and NIH/National Academies. While a sixth year is possible in exceptional circumstances (with VPFAA approval), the preferred route is to appoint as an Assistant Research Scientist (see 1c, above), or as a Visiting Assistant Research Scientist (up to three years, consistent with an NIH-style 5-year/8-year postdoc model).

3. Units seeking to appoint Postdocs or Research Associates to Research Scientist ranks should develop and maintain internal appointment procedures that recognize a candidate’s qualifications, ensure fiscal viability, affirm the values of faculty governance, and are consistent with campus and university policy.
 - a. These procedures should be included in each unit’s governance documents, with appropriate administrative approvals (including from VPFAA).
 - b. Appointments to Assistant Research Scientist do not need to follow a campus promotion process.

4. Units seeking to change the job title or status of international scholars should consult with the Office of International Services as part of the appointment process.

Responses to specific questions/comments

Are we diluting tenure-track faculty by having all of these different categories of faculty?

This question came up a lot. What does “Professor” mean when there is a Research Professor, a Teaching Professor, etc.

This is probably best reserved for a much larger conversation, i.e., what does it mean to be faculty? That’s a great conversation to have, but that’s way beyond the remit of this current policy. The point is that research faculty are here, and they have been here. It’s important to help them do their jobs as best as possible until their jobs change.

Providing minimum termination periods for the three ranks

We elected not to include minimum terms, as this strongly depends upon the availability of bridge funding, which will require larger efforts. We have included language about best practices, i.e., providing as much notice as possible.

Providing a maximum %FTE devoted to teaching, as some of our peers do

We elected not to comment on this because specifying would remove flexibility. Ben’s own opinion is that if a research faculty member is meeting their and the University’s research goals while teaching classes, then there isn’t really a problem.

There are some policy ambiguities regarding service and whether that “counts” for promotion.

ACA-33 mentions research and service, but campus policies typically mention only research (and service in support of research can be counted). We opt not to mention this in BL-ACA-A5 to give people flexibility and to protect research faculty. For example, if we say “research faculty are only evaluated on research” but they are assigned service responsibilities, they run the risk of either counteracting their unit’s needs/directives (should they refuse service) or spending a lot of their time doing things they can’t report for promotion (should they accept service). This is the sort of conversation that is better worked out on an individual basis.

Should there be a career ladder (multiple ranks) for research associates?

From the standpoint of respecting our colleagues and making sure they’re happy here, absolutely yes. In practice, this is complicated. University policy only allows for one research associate rank, so this is out of our remit and will require some additional attention. In the meantime, we have added language expressing support for research associates’ ability to advance in their careers here.

Does this policy apply to the arts and humanities as well?

While the vast majority of research faculty are in the sciences, there are a few in the arts & humanities, and a policy is supposed to cover everyone. We have endeavored to make the language in the policy broad to apply to all research faculty, noting that this is why it's important for individual units to come up with their own policies, as the scholarship enterprise looks very different across IU.

What about letters of recommendation for research faculty?

This policy remains quiet on that aspect, and indeed that should not be specified at a campus level. Presumably the Research Professor track would rely more on external letters, and the Research Scientist track would rely more on internal letters. We recommend that schools or units make sure their policies are clear on this.

Should BL-ACA-A5 include language about who gets to use which title and who decides?

We have opted to leave this up to the individual units, as that will depend upon what each unit decides the roles and responsibilities of the two tracks are. Final approval of the position rests with VPFAA, so we do not envision substantial risk of misclassification or misuse of titles.

It seems as though Research Tenure primarily applies to the natural sciences or, more specifically, fields with sufficient extramural funding to retain people.

Yeah, this is a problem. We value the social sciences, arts, and humanities at IU, but those are not nearly as well funded fields, which poses a significant problem for retention. We think that is outside of the remit of BL-ACA-A5, but retention is a broader issue that needs to be addressed.

There are too many proposed categories of research faculty. Tenure track only has three, and it's as simple as that.

We agree it's a lot. But in some ways, this reflects the breadth of what research looks like. The currently policy has five categories (three scientists, postdocs, and research associates), and it's already proving to be not enough, in that some faculty are being judged based on criteria that should not apply to them.

Can people switch between categories or go between tenure track and research faculty?

People can go between the Research Scientist and Research Professor tracks without a campus process. That will likely involve a discussion between the faculty member and their unit head (and if applicable the project director), with final approval by VPFAA. This works because they are technically the same faculty category under BL-ACA-A1.

The campus process kicks in when one is trying to switch between categories of faculty, i.e., between tenure track and research faculty. People who wish to make such a switch are in essence applying for a new job, and the process is the same as for anyone else who is applying for a new job.

If a Research Associate earns a terminal degree, they are technically out of policy and must be converted over to the position of an Assistant Research Scientist (or equivalent, depending on duties). This will follow the guidance provided by VPFAA (see previous section).

Why is the research associate category even in this policy?

Research associates are at IU and have been so for a long time. There are not a lot of policies that mention them, and they are research ranks, so we thought it was appropriate to at least say something about them.

Summary of Changes to BL-ACA-A1

The main change is to Section B.5, which currently reads

5. Research Appointments

Research appointees are those researchers who typically hold the terminal degree and postdoctorate experience (or its equivalent) and who are employed by Indiana University for research and service responsibilities.

Titles: Senior Scientist (or Senior Scholar), Associate Scientist (or Associate Scholar) and Assistant Scientist (or Assistant Scholar)

Proposed revised text to Section B.5

5. Research Appointments

Research appointees are those scholars who typically hold the terminal degree and postdoctorate experience (or its equivalent) and who are employed by Indiana University for research and service responsibilities.

Titles: Senior Scientist, Senior Scholar, or Research Professor; Associate Scientist, Associate Scholar, or Associate Research Professor; and Assistant Scientist, Assistant Scholar, or Assistant Research Professor.

The remaining changes are to make the language consistent with these changes or to remove descriptions that are outdated and duplicative with BL-ACA-A5.

Summary of Changes to BL-ACA-A5

Overall objectives of the revisions:

- Update the policy (written in 1980) to reflect current practice.
- Harmonize language and ensure that there are no conflicts with other policies, especially ACA-20.
- Update descriptions of Research Associates and Postdoctoral Fellows.
- Offload some of the description to other policies (e.g., we don't need to describe benefits for research faculty here because benefits for academic appointments are described in other policies).
- Removing gendered pronouns.
- Making sure the policy includes provisions for research ranks whose primary scholarship is creative activity.

Changed section	Summary of changes
Background/ Justification (II.A)	This part was about 45 years old, and dates to a time when the title "Research Associate" was the title for most research faculty appointments. It provided justification for establishing research ranks and referred to specific issues that are no longer relevant for establishing the background for this policy. We have removed a lot of the original text. We updated this section to be more of a long-standing description of the need for research faculty.
Qualifications for Rank (II.B)	The descriptions for the Research Scientist track are roughly the same. We have added descriptions for the Research Professor track, as well as definitions for Research Associate and Postdoctoral Fellow. Descriptions for the latter two are consistent with and expand upon the definitions in ACA-20.
Appointment and Promotion (II.C)	Adjusted to be better aligned with the other changes, as well as added some specifics because appointment and promotion of research faculty have some unique aspects.
Personnel Policies (II.D)	<p>Much of this was overly prescriptive and should be removed from this policy, as it's covered in other policies:</p> <p>Benefits (HR-04-30, HR-04-40, ACA-47)</p> <p>Promotions (ACA-38)</p> <p>Eligibility to serve on councils (ACA-04, ACA-05)</p> <p>The fact that research faculty are indeed faculty (ACA-04, ACA-05, BL-ACA-A1)</p> <p>Review and Mediation (ACA-17)</p> <p>There was also no acknowledgment that people hired on extramural funding might have multiple projects and that there needs to be a primary responsible party for making personnel decisions. This has been updated.</p>

	<p>Replaced reference to “affirmative action” with “established procedures” in light of recent Supreme Court case.</p>
<p>Research Project Tenure (II.E)</p>	<p>This is largely unchanged other than some reorganization. In the research ranks working group there was some discussion about longer term contracts for research faculty. However, there was no resolution to that discussion because a longer contract would depend upon available funding, funder rules (e.g., NSF does not allow more than two months of salary), etc. In principle this could be solved with a robust program for bridge funding, but that would require numerous other conversations that we felt would be better for another time. Keeping the language around Research Project Tenure allows for flexibility until those discussions can take place.</p>