

Non-Faculty Academics at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth

Dartmouth College and the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth (Geisel) recognize the important contributions made to our academic community by individuals who are not members of the faculty, but are intimately engaged in the academic (as opposed to administrative) aspects of the School. These non-faculty academics may be trainees (“postdocs”) or longer-term employees (Research Scientists/Distinguished Fellows). They may be employed by either Dartmouth College or by recognized affiliates of Geisel (e.g., D-H or the WRJ VAMC), but in all cases, the academic titles bestowed are academic titles provided through Dartmouth College.

All offers of employment by Dartmouth College for non-faculty academic titles must be reviewed and approved by the Dean of Faculty Affairs prior to an offer letter being extended. Chairs of sponsoring departments must co-sign offer letters as they have parent authority to make such hires. Signed offer letters must be provided to the Dean’s Office.

Individuals who are employees of D-H (D-HC/MHMH) or the VAMC are bound to the same standards of professionalism that Dartmouth/Geisel has for employees who hold academic titles. However, all the terms of their employment and benefits are determined by the entity that employs them.

Consistent with the 2015 decision that Dartmouth will no longer require searches for faculty positions except for individuals in the Tenure-track/Tenure Faculty Line, Geisel does not require a search for appointment to the position of Research Associate or any of the three levels of Research Scientist. Although not required, faculty members or core/service center leaders who are seeking to hire non-faculty academics are encouraged to perform searches when possible, and Geisel’s contract with [Interfolio](#) supports the use of this platform for searches for research associates/research scientists.

Appointments for Distinguished Fellows will be limited to a three-year term, which may be renewed. It is expected that in all cases individuals recommended for appointment to this non-faculty academic position will be targeted hires and thus be eligible for a waiver from a national search with respect to EO/AA policies.

A. Trainees

Postdoctoral Scholars: Postdoctoral scholars include both Research Fellows (supported by NRSA or comparable private individual fellowship awards or training grant mechanisms) and Research Associates (supported by other intra- and extramural sources). “A postdoctoral scholar is an individual who has received a doctoral (or equivalent) degree and is appointed for a limited period of time of mentored advanced training to enhance the professional skills and research independence needed to pursue his or her chosen career path. The primary purpose of a postdoctoral scholar is to engage in advanced study and training; in some cases teaching may be part of that training. Postdoctoral scholars may be expected to supervise and mentor other

trainees (e.g., graduate or undergraduate students involved in research).” (Council on Sponsored Activity, 2012). Salaries are determined by support mechanism and experience.

a. Research Associate: This title is used when appointing postdoctoral scholars. The appointee receives a specific title (Research Associate A, Research Associate B, or Research Associate C) based on the length of employment, as defined by the Office of Human Resources. As postdoctoral scholars, Research Associates are expected to have a transient employment with Dartmouth College, typically fewer than six (6) years. No further delineation of rank (e.g., Senior Research Associate) is available. In some cases, Research Associates may progress to a position as Research Scientist, Research Assistant Professor, or tenure-track professor. Appointments to the Research Associate position do not require a formal search; position descriptions are based upon the needs of the mentor with whom they train and salaries are commensurate with both community norms of the sponsoring entity and market metrics. Research Associates are not members of the Faculty.

Individuals in doctoral programs may be hired as research associates prior to actual award of their terminal degrees, but in such cases the doctoral institution (not simply the individual) must provide assurance that the candidate has completed all requirements towards the degree.

In some cases, individuals who hold non-terminal Master’s rather than doctoral or terminal Master’s, degrees may be qualified to be hired as research associates.

b. Research Fellows: As with Research Associates, Research Fellows are transient members of the Dartmouth Community. Note that the Internal Revenue Service does not consider Research Fellows to be employees since their presence at an institution is to obtain training rather than to provide services. As such, although wages are subject to Federal Income Tax (FIT), they are not subject to The Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA; Social Security and Medicare). For payroll convenience and in order to facilitate allocations of benefits, wages are to be reported on a W-2 Form.

B. Research Scientists (Analysts/Engineers)

Research Scientist (unprefixed, Senior, or Principal)

This title can be given to individuals who perform essential roles in the research enterprise of individual laboratories (i.e., under the auspices of a faculty sponsor), in institutional cores, or in providing support for broad-based institutional initiatives through roles in data analysis and assessment. Some such individuals may function as managers of individual labs, managers of core services, or analysts of institutional data that is used either internally or externally (e.g., in support of major extramural programs or as key members of institutional service centers). In most cases, such individuals will hold a doctoral or equivalent terminal degree, although in some areas of endeavor, a Master’s degree may be appropriate or even preferable. Research Scientists (unprefixed, Senior, or Principal) are not members of the Faculty; they are full-time professionals recruited to work in program areas defined by the faculty members who have oversight for their work or by the institution (e.g., for research scientists employed in cores/service centers).

Nationally, as well as at Dartmouth, Research Scientists/Engineers/Analysts are receiving enhanced recognition for their contributions to academic research, and mechanisms such as [R50 awards](#) through the National Cancer Institute (NCI) at NIH were implemented in 2016 to support career development of Research Specialists in [lab-based](#) or [core-based](#) programs.

As noted in these program announcements, “The Research Specialist Award (Lab Scientist) is intended to provide salary support for a sustained period of time and encourage the development of a stable career for exceptional researchers who want to pursue particular research activities within the context of a research program, but not be independent investigators. These scientists, such as researchers within a research program, are vital to sustaining the biomedical research enterprise. The award is intended for laboratory research-oriented investigators with significant, relevant experience, who have shown clear evidence of productivity and research excellence in the field of their training, and would like to support a particular research activity (e.g., a research program), with the goal of making significant contributions to behavioral, biomedical (basic or clinical), computational, bioimaging or bioengineering research that is relevant to the NCI mission. The proposed new research support is intended to provide salaries and sufficient autonomy so that individuals are not solely dependent on NCI-funded grants held by others for career continuity.

While the text above is specific for the NCI-based funding mechanisms, the focus of the announcement is broadly applicable to many other arenas in which Research Scientists contribute.

I. Expectations for Research Scientists:

Research Scientist are expected to fulfill key roles in advancing discovery at Geisel. As such, they are expected to be engaged in the design, conduct, and analysis of research. Their engagement in the research enterprise may span from at the bench experimentation to administrative oversight of operational cores. This is the fundamental core expectation of the Research Scientist. Beyond this expectation to make a significant contribution to the advancement of excellence in research at Geisel, there are no other required expectations for appointment in this position. While this is the fundamental requirement for the position, Geisel recognizes that the contributions of our Research Scientists, while not required, extend far beyond this foundational commitment. As such, the criteria outline below set out expectations by which Research Scientists may be expected to contribute in their individual positions and through which they may be recognized for advancement.

Although critical contributors to our research enterprise, Research Scientists at Geisel are neither required nor expected to pursue *independent* research. As such, Geisel does not make a commitment to Research Scientists with respect to subvention or independent laboratory facilities. The faculty and/or faculty directors of centers/cores are ultimately responsible for the direction and quality of the research activity of Research Scientists whom they oversee.

Research Scientists are not required to have a reputation for their work outside of the institution for advancement. Specifically, Research Scientists who have significant impact by promoting the goals/missions of the institution (e.g., augmenting the services provided by a core), may be recognized by promotion to Senior or even Principal Research Scientist. Although not required, as

noted below, external reputation may be a critical component of advancement to senior or principal rank.

II. Areas of Endeavor for Research Scientists

Whether lab-based or core-based, Research Scientists may be recognized for advancement by excelling in five broad areas:

1. Administration and Operations
2. Leadership
3. Research Productivity and Dissemination
4. Training/Instruction

There is clearly overlap in some of these areas (i.e., a Research Scientists who excels in promoting the implementation of work of a core may also excel at leading personnel who are part of that core and in managing their activities, and, in doing so, augment the core's ability to secure contracts and the output of scientific work (publications, talks etc.). Thus research scientists may contribute broadly across these 5 major groups, but contributions may be weighted based on their expected responsibilities.

1. Administration and Operations

Research Scientists, whether in individual laboratories or in cores/centers, may be expected to have substantive administrative responsibilities, inclusive of personnel and financial management) as well as responsibilities for implementation of services and operations of facilities. Such individual responsibilities may include:

- Provision of state-of-the-art capabilities, responsibility for equipment infrastructure
- Ability to provide a central service upon which individual laboratories can rely in lieu of setting up their own operations,
- Responsibility for financial operations
- Responsibility for personnel management
- Client accessibility (i.e., hours of operation, turn-around times, range of applications addressed),
- Quality control (i.e., reproducibility of measures, ability to meet output specifications),
- Cost effectiveness (i.e., within market prices).

2. Leadership

Research Scientists may responsibilities not only for the management and operational output of other individuals within a lab or core, but also may:

- Advance the professional development of those individuals,

- Ensure knowledge of appropriate levels of professionalism and expectations for scientific rigor and holding others in the core accountable to those standards,
- Contribute to strategic planning and effective decision-making of their units,
- Work with the Lab Director/Unit Director in planning appropriate learning opportunities for others in the lab/core,
- Work with the Lab Director/Unit Director in implementing appropriate mechanisms to address lapses in professionalism or other operational inefficiencies,
- Have significant responsibilities as consultants to both internal (Dartmouth) and external clients,
- Make significant contributions through membership and leadership positions in professional societies (at regional and national/international levels),
- May be expected to facilitate/advance the scientific enterprise of individual faculty members or institutional proposals by providing letters of support.
- Have responsibilities for bringing novel technologies/approaches to the lab/core than augment research output and productivity.

3. Research Productivity and Dissemination:

- Research Scientists may participate as Pi, mPI, or co-I on grants/contracts supported by both extramural sponsors and internal mechanisms. Senior and Principal Research Scientists may submit proposals as PI/mPI or co-I under the same conditions as do faculty members. Unprefixed Research Scientists may be provided PI eligibility based upon review and permission granted by the Dean's Office (see document [Criteria for Investigator Eligibility](#) on the Geisel Faculty Handbook Page).
- Consistent with their roles as key members of a research team, Research Scientists are expected to contribute to and be recognized for their work by authorship in scholarly works according to Guidelines proposed by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors ([ICMJE](#)). It is the obligation of faculty members who have oversight and responsibility for Research Scientists to ensure that Research Scientists are both appropriately engaged in and recognized for their work in terms of scholarly work,
- Research Scientists may be expected to contribute to (and be recognized for) innovation and advances in terms of technological approaches and/or, for those who are engaged in cores/service centers, in terms of optimization of business practices of their services.
- Research Scientists, especially those in cores/service centers, may have significant responsibilities with respect to public relations/marketing for services provided,
- Research Scientists may play recognized roles in Science Communication through literature provided by cores/service centers, and also through public venues such as Science Cafes and OpEd pieces,
- Research Scientists may give seminars or presentations at other institutions, industry partners or society meetings.

4. Training/Instruction:

Research Scientists are not expected, nor are they permitted do formal teaching in courses that are part of degree-granting programs unless, upon review and approval by the Dean, they have a specific fractional FTE that is assigned for a faculty position. Restrictions on teaching are to ensure that Research Scientists are in compliance with the source(s) of their support, which, in nearly all cases will be extramurally funded research grants or contracts on which they are provided support.

Although formal didactic teaching is not an expectation for Research Scientists, teaching is recognized as a prominent part of their responsibilities, and, as such, may be recognized with respect to academic advancement when it occurs under the following considerations/conditions (see below). In such cases, teaching is consistent with the mission of the funding that supports the core/service center and the Research Scientist her/himself.

- Research Scientist may be expected to provide active instruction to a wide range of undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral students, as well as other staff and on occasion, faculty members, in the context of the experiments/studies that they perform,
- Research Scientists may be expected to provide didactic instruction to faculty, staff and/or students as part of the responsibilities associated with a core or a service center of the institution. Such instruction may be one-on-one or may be part of a formal presentation (set of presentations) that are consistent with the missions/goals of the core/service center,
- Research Scientists are permitted to participate in a formal course at a *de minimis* level (e.g., give a single lecture),
- Research Scientists may be expected to work with/coach faculty members in order to optimize funding strategies.

III. Academic Advancement and Promotion of Research Scientists

Accomplishments and contributions to Geisel are recognized for Research Scientists by promotion to two advanced positions: Senior Research Scientist and Principal Research Scientist.

As with academic advancement for faculty, there is not a check-box set of requirements for academic advancement in the Research Scientist Track. Rather, individuals can be recognized by promotion to Senior Research Scientist and, subsequently to Principal Research Scientist, by demonstrating an upward trajectory of accomplishments for combinations of the criteria noted above. For advancement, it should be demonstrated that:

- a. The contributions of the individual research scientists are consistent with the goals/missions of the unit in which he she works (lab, service center, core, Geisel),
- b. The accomplishments can be demonstrated by documentable means to support those missions (for example, but not limited to: increased number of peer-reviewed publications, ability to secure extramural support as PI, mPI or co-I; increased success of a service center

- in terms of augmented clients and increased revenue; increased success of sponsored programs of faculty members for whom the Research Scientist has provided key services),
- c. The Research Scientist has made substantive *progression* according to relevant criteria. For example (but not limited to),
- with respect to administration and management, they take on greater operational or financial oversight,
 - with respect to research productivity, they have taken on a greater number of roles as key personnel on grants; that they have a greater number of peer-reviewed papers; that through their efforts, a core or unit has been successful in increasing the numbers of contracts/clients,
 - with respect to leadership, the number of individuals reporting to them has increased; that they have taken on greater responsibilities for planning the direction of operations of the core or of the lab; that they have taken on leadership positions in regional or national societies relevant to their field;
 - with respect to training, they have shown increased responsibilities for instructing either other lab/core employees or faculty students in the design/interpretation of experiments/data—a metric such as this may also be linked to research productivity of those whom they have trained (e.g., faculty members have increased grant/contract success even if the Research Scientist is not themselves key personnel on that award).

As opposed to faculty lines, there is no standard timing for promotion in the Research Scientist position, nor is there any requirement to advance (i.e., no “up or out”). Advancement for Research Scientists will be predicated solely upon assessment that the responsibilities of the individual and their accomplishments with respect to those responsibilities have grown/been recognized so as to warrant academic advancement.

Senior Research Scientist: Individuals being promoted to or appointed as Senior Research Scientists are expected to have as part of their initial expectations (for employment or as part of their promotion) to have achieved an advanced level of responsibility in terms academic productivity, resource management, financial oversight, and personnel management. In short, Research Scientists (unprefixed) are expected, as individuals, to provide well-qualified scientific expertise that advances the research missions at Geisel. Senior Research Scientist should exceed this expectation in that their activities should have a positive impact on a broader research team or on the overall activities of a core or a service center. In their role as Senior Research Scientist, they are expected to have responsibilities (and to excel in those responsibilities) for more than themselves, as made evident by professional standing in their fields, publications, external activity, and/or professional service, supervisory duties, fiscal oversight and accomplishments, personnel management, and innovation.

Principal Research: Promotion (or appointment) to Principal Research Scientist can follow demonstration of professional leadership and productivity. Principal Research Scientists are expected to have recognized leadership responsibilities. Such responsibilities may be relevant to a single laboratory (e.g., the Principal Research Scientist co-directs the research enterprise within the

lab and, is recognized for such by being named a PI or co-PI on funded proposals, as well as having a record of substantive contribution on peer-reviewed scholarship) or as having a major leadership role in a core/service center (as made evident by personnel, training, and fiscal responsibilities).

Promotion Process:

Promotion requests (from either unprefix to senior or senior to principal ranks) will originate with a request from the Chair of the Research Scientists sponsoring department (Director of TDI is the equivalent of a Chair) or of the director of centers with the capability to appoint non-faculty academics (e.g., the Norris Cotton Cancer Center).

The Chair will submit the following materials to the Dean of Faculty Affairs:

- a. The Chair's letter of support for the candidate, which should summarize the candidate's professional obligations and the accomplishments that warrant consideration for advancement,
- b. A current CV for the candidate that provide relevant information on training, past and current academic titles, bibliography of peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed scholarship, past and present funding, activities related to the responsibilities noted for the different levels of Research Scientists, teaching, if applicable, and a personal statement (*CV template forthcoming*).
- c. As with members of the faculty, candidates being considered for promotion/appointment as Senior/Principal Research Scientist are encouraged to use the personal statement section of the Geisel CV template to define the impact of their work in their field such that an informed academician outside of the candidate's specific area would be able to assess their accomplishments.
- d. Three letters of reference
 - One letter should come from the individual for whom the candidate is a direct report (and be identified as such, e.g., PI on grants that provide support to the candidate). If the candidate reports directly to the Chair or Director of a Center, an additional letter of recommendation should be provided from an individual who holds a faculty rank or a non-faculty academic rank that is more advanced than the current rank of the candidate.
 - Other letters should come from individuals either at Dartmouth or external to Dartmouth who can assess the accomplishments of the candidate. Such letters may be provided by individuals who collaborate with the candidate through large institutional or cross-institutional programs (e.g., program project grants, core grants, IDEA grants. Letter may not be provided by individuals who have a conflict of interest as defined by
 1. Individuals who provide direct support to the candidate through grants on which the Research Scientist is identified as PI, mPI or co-I at greater than 10% effort,
 2. Individuals who have personal or financial relationships with the candidate that would constitute an actual or a perceived conflict of interest.

If there are questions on whether or not a referee is eligible to provide a letter of support for the candidate (Research Scientist), the candidate themselves, their supervisor or their chair should contact the Dean of Faculty Affairs. They are also encouraged to do so early in the process of putting together the portfolio for the promotion and to let the Dean's Office know if there are difficulties in identifying individuals who have the expertise to review the candidate but who are not in conflict so that the Dean's Office can assist in making accommodations if they can be made.

The Dean of Faculty Affairs will assemble an ad hoc committee comprising

1. The Dean of faculty Affairs.
2. Two faculty members at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor who are
 - i. Not in the home department of the Research Scientist candidate;
 - ii. Have applicable expertise relevant to the Research Scientist candidate;
 - iii. Have no other conventional conflicts of interest with the Research Scientist candidate.
3. If possible, a Research Scientist at a Senior or Principal level for consideration of promotion to Senior and Principal level for consideration of promotion to Principal, who meet the same criteria as set forth above for faculty members.

Criteria for advancement are not strictly defined in order to accommodate accomplishments across a wide range of disciplines and roles in which research scientists may be involved. However, all individuals being put forward for promotion/appointment to Senior or Principal Research Scientist should be able to document impact in their given field that extends beyond their own research group. The mix of accomplishments may vary; impact may be measured in terms of scholarship (e.g., peer-reviewed publications, presentations at regional, national and international meetings), success in garnering extramural support (e.g., role as key personnel; role in writing and/or project planning for major research proposals), intellectual property development (e.g., device development, patents), or engagement (e.g., policy guidelines; assessments that actively alter program mission, goals and performance). Candidates may be engaged in teaching (as defined above, unless they have set aside FTE for formal teaching) or clinical care, although neither is required.

C. Distinguished Fellows (of Sponsoring Department, Center, Institute).

This title may be awarded to a *highly* limited number of individuals who have exceptional national/international stature in their given field of endeavor, but do not meet criteria for a faculty rank. Distinguished Fellows are not members of the Faculty. The decision to recommend the title of Distinguished Fellow rests with the appropriate Dean and must be approved by the appropriate mechanism for the employing school and by the Provost.

It is expected that such individuals will be supported from extramural funds. Appointments for Distinguished Fellows will be limited to a three-year term, which may be renewed. It is expected

that these individuals will, in nearly all cases, be targeted hires and thus be eligible for a waiver from a national search with respect to EO/AA policies. However, any individual hired as a Distinguished Fellow who does not meet waiver criteria must be identified by a national search and hired following standard Dartmouth College search protocols. Distinguished Fellows must be employed by Dartmouth College while they hold this title. Distinguished Fellows may be named in association with an Institute or Center that itself does not have the ability to make academic appointments, but such individuals must also have an affiliation with an academic department. In such cases, the Center may bear the financial responsibility for the hire, as well as the administrative responsibility for executing the search and day-to-day support for the academic endeavors of the Distinguished Fellow. However, the Department will have responsibility for other administrative processes pertinent to such employees, such as payroll authorization smart forms, visa processing, and reappointments.

D. Expectations for Support for Compensation

Support for both compensation (salary and benefits) as well as funds to support programmatic activities for Research Fellows, Research Associates, Research Scientists, and Distinguished Fellows is expected to derive from extramural sources or from central funds designated to support core institutional services/service centers. NFAs may be supported from reserve accounts or program development funds (PDFs) of faculty members. As noted above, in limited cases, Research Scientists/Distinguished Fellows may have a designated FTE supported by central or programmatic funds for teaching responsibilities. In such cases, these non-faculty academics will be provided with a faculty title (Lecturer) for that fractional FTE for the contract of the academic teaching commitment. In no case will non-faculty academics receive ongoing central support for subvention outside of these areas.

Research Scientists are considered long-term employees, it is expected that they will receive annual evaluations, which would be submitted by the faculty sponsor or supervising core/center director to the department Chair and the relevant Dean.

E. Benefits:

Non-faculty academics employed by Dartmouth College will be considered members of the Staff with respect to benefits provided by Dartmouth College with the following exceptions:

- a. Hiring process does not go through DORR, and annual staff evaluations are not required for non-faculty academics.
- b. Individuals who moved to these positions from other positions at Dartmouth and who previously held benefits currently afforded only to faculty can have these benefits grand-fathered (e.g., 7% benefit credit).

c. Research Associates, Research Scientists, and Distinguished Fellows are afforded family leave according to the [Geisel Policies on Family Leave for Faculty](#).

d. The Dean, at his/her discretion, may set annual salary increases to follow pools set for faculty.

Non-faculty academics who are employed by affiliates of Geisel (D-H, the WRJ VAMC) should consult their own Human Resources Offices for information on benefits.

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