NON-TENURE TRACK RESEARCH FACULTY

1. Rank, Title and Status

Research faculty members are appointed to the professorial rank (Assistant Professor, Associate Professor or Professor) commensurate with their experience and credentials. All research faculty appointments are non-tenure track, and may not be converted to tenure-track status. Appointments reside at the department (or equivalent “unit”) level.

2. Source and Level of Compensation

Federal regulations recognize that in an academic setting faculty members engage in a range of research, teaching and service activities, and fulfill other administrative obligations to the university. A research faculty member’s primary effort is dedicated to research and such appointments should be supported almost exclusively with externally funded research agreements. The percentage of effort charged to those agreements will be based on the maximum effort allowed by the granting agency. Typically research faculty may charge up to 95% of their effort on research. The level of compensation and effort will be determined jointly by the dean and the unit head, and shall be consistent with applicable guidelines/limits of the funding organization and/or the specific grant/contract/award. Normally, research faculty salaries should be commensurate with salaries of tenure-track and tenured faculty of comparable rank in their discipline. Research faculty appointments may be renewed only if external funding continues.

3. Appointment and Term

Research faculty appointments are made by the dean based on recommendations from the unit faculty and subject to the review of the Senior Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Education. Every research faculty appointment/renewal must have the potential to further the university’s research mission and advance the unit’s and the university’s current research goals. Research faculty must have earned a doctorate in the field in which they seek appointment or possess the equivalent terminal degree in their discipline. Initial Northeastern research faculty appointments at any level are made for a period of up to a maximum of three years or commensurate with the duration of the funding period, whichever is shorter. No research faculty appointment, reappointment or promotion carries a guarantee of future re-appointments or promotions. All appointments are also contingent upon maintaining the appropriate visa status and work authorization.

4. Responsibilities

Research faculty are not eligible for sabbatical, but may, with the approval of the Senior Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Education, take a leave of absence of up to one year, if the leave is unpaid. Research faculty may participate in consulting activities only outside the University’s regular working hours.

1 Approved by the Faculty Senate on 17 September 2015 and by the Board of Trustees on 27 March 2015.
5. Reappointment

Research faculty appointments are renewable, contingent upon several factors in the sole discretion of the university, including satisfactory performance, unit and university need, and continued external funding. Upon the recommendations of the unit head and with the approval of the dean, renewals of research faculty appointments at the Associate Professor or Professor level may be made for a period of up to three years, concurrent with the current expected duration of outside funding. Research faculty appointments may not be used to extend the probationary period of a tenure-track faculty member. All reappointments are also contingent upon maintaining the appropriate visa status and work authorization.

6. Provisional Funding/Leave of Absence

A research faculty member expecting new or renewed funding may seek a leave of absence, available for three months (and renewable for up to one year or two successive submissions of the grant proposal/renewal). These leaves are subject to approval of the dean and the Senior Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Education. Research faculty may self-fund (through overhead return or other non-University sources) a contingency account to provide limited support on a monthly basis for no more than one year during lapses in external funding.

7. Annual Evaluation and Merit Adjustments

Research faculty will be evaluated annually according to the same procedures utilized for tenured and tenure-track faculty in the unit. However, the evaluation of research faculty shall be based only on an evaluation of their scholarship; it shall not be based on teaching and/or service. Evaluators will examine the research faculty member’s ability to secure/sustain external funding, and assess his/her potential for continued independence, autonomy and excellence in research. Annual evaluations will be an important factor in evaluating whether a research faculty member will be considered for reappointment. Any merit salary adjustments based on favorable annual evaluations must be provided by external funds.