Faculty Ranks

Employees of the Oregon University System are faculty, (academic or professional), and classified (support staff). OSU has adopted "Guidelines for Academic Appointments" that specify how faculty ranks are assigned. Copies are available from the Office of Academic Affairs.

Professorial Rank. Professorial ranks (Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor) are reserved for faculty whose responsibilities and positions carry the expectation of scholarly accomplishments. Expectations for each rank are given in the Promotion and Tenure Guidelines (Chapter 8). Faculty with professorial rank include:

a. Regular faculty (paid all or in part by state accounts).

b. Senior Research faculty (fixed-term faculty paid entirely or primarily from research grants or contracts). Titles for these faculty are listed either as Professor (Senior Research) or Senior Research Professor; Associate Professor (Senior Research) or Research Associate Professor; and Assistant Professor (Senior Research) or Research Assistant Professor.

c. Courtesy faculty — faculty not paid by OSU accounts, but who contribute to the mission of the University through teaching, research, or service.

d. Visiting faculty — visitors on leave from other institutions of higher education or the private sector and paid by OSU accounts.

e. Adjunct faculty — the term adjunct is used when a department chooses to recognize the contribution of an OSU faculty member who is employed by another unit within the University.

Professional Position Titles without Rank. Faculty in academic support, administrative support, and student support units are assigned professional titles when, in the view of the unit administrator and the appropriate vice provost, a professional position title most adequately describes the responsibilities of the position and qualifications of the individuals holding those positions.

Research Associate. The rank of Research Associate requires the highest degree appropriate to the field in which the research is being conducted. Research Associates are generally not principal investigators. Two uses of this rank are made at Oregon State University:

a. for career doctoral-level researchers, and
b. for postdoctoral trainees.

Instructor and Senior Instructor. These ranks are used for faculty with primary responsibilities in instruction, advising and other assigned duties as delineated in the position description, and have a focus on a specialized assignment within an academic program. Such positions do not carry a substantial expectation for scholarly accomplishments. Faculty members with the rank of Instructor may be on fixed-term or tenure-track appointments. Promotion to the rank of Senior Instructor may be made with or without indefinite tenure. Only those instructors
hired on or converted to tenure track appointments may be promoted to Senior Instructor with tenure.

Faculty Research Assistant and Senior Faculty Research Assistant. These ranks are used for key support faculty members engaged in research. The positions require bachelor’s degrees but not the doctoral degree or