Policy on Systems Faculty Appointments
in the
SCHOOL OF COMPUTER SCIENCE
Fall 2002

I. CONCEPT and SCOPE

Among the full-time professional positions within the School of Computer Science of Carnegie-Mellon University, it is desirable to make particular provision for those that resemble research faculty positions in level of accomplishment, but are devoted to the implementation, development, or management of research. The holders of these positions shall be called, for the purposes of this policy, Systems Faculty.

The rank of systems faculty was created:

1. To provide a mechanism for recognizing the achievement of key individuals whose primary contributions may be other than original research, and therefore for whom regular or research faculty positions are not appropriate.

2. To provide a mechanism within the School of Computer Science for gauging the quality of key technical and project leaders.

3. To confer explicitly upon systems faculty the rights and responsibilities of leadership associated with regular and research faculty, including service as co-principal investigator and the co-supervision of research students where appropriate.

Unlike research faculty, who are evaluated as independent researchers, systems faculty should be evaluated primarily on their overall contributions to large research projects. The special provisions that follow implement a uniform review process that recognizes these complementary accomplishments and assures quality control across the School.

Systems faculty conduct and support research in basic and applied computer science, and advance the state of practice. The hallmark of these positions is creativity in the implementation of research ideas and problem solutions, and in the management of research programs. These positions, which range over computer science, computer architecture, communication, robotics, and related disciplines, are characterized by expertise, depth of knowledge, and sustained accomplishment in a particular specialization. Moreover, managerial positions are focal points of responsibility for formulating and achieving research goals that require the ability to lead and coordinate technical activities. All of these positions require persons of sufficiently high caliber and specific talent to justify the conferring of faculty status in order to attract and retain them, without requiring of them all the activities expected of regular faculty members.

The similar responsibility of the systems, research, and regular faculty for the quality and reputation of the University carries with it:

1. the obligation to scrutinize appointments and reappointments to systems faculty positions with the same care and with the same fundamental principles and procedures as those pertaining to the research and regular faculty (the eligibility for tenure excepted), including evaluation at the School-wide level; and

2. the conferring on the systems faculty of the same privileges and benefits as on the University's special faculty (Category B).

The systems faculty, within the meaning of this policy, consists of persons with the ranks of Systems Scientist or Systems Engineer; Senior Systems Scientist or Senior Systems Engineer; and Principal Systems Scientist or Principal Systems Engineer. For the purpose of the application of pertinent provisions of the School's Appointment and Tenure Policy, as specified below, these ranks shall be regarded as equivalent to those of Research Scientist, Senior Research Scientist, and Principal Research Scientist, respectively.
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The ranks and titles of the systems faculty are specific to that faculty, and may not be used for any other positions in the School. On the other hand, it is recognized that these designations may not be appropriate to all disciplines. In particular, similar ranks and titles in which the word "Systems" is preceded by a discipline descriptor, e.g. Robotics Systems Engineer, Senior Computer Systems Engineer, Principal Linguistic Systems Scientist, as determined by the individual departments and approved by the Dean, shall be accepted under this policy, and all reference in this policy to the ranks and titles of the systems faculty shall apply equally to such alternative designations.

II. APPOINTMENTS

All systems faculty positions shall be established in academic programs, research institutes, departments, programs, or research centers of the School of Computer Science. The making of every appointment in the systems faculty (including reappointment, with or without promotion, whether preceded by an evaluation or not), and the specification of its term and compensation require a proposal by the head of the program, institute, department, program or research center and the approval of the Dean or his designee. The proposal shall specify the manner of funding (whether from resources administered by that unit or not), and the Dean shall not approve an appointment unless he is satisfied that appropriate funding will be available during the entire term of the appointment and reasonably satisfied that it will continue to be available through the term in which the next evaluation would be required. The Dean or his designee shall also review every decision to let an appointment (other than a terminal appointment required to satisfy the provisions of this policy for timely notice) lapse at the expiration of its term.

Every appointment (including reappointment, with or without promotion) to a position in the systems faculty shall be for a term of one year (with the exception of a terminal appointment, as mentioned). All reappointments and promotions in the systems faculty are subject to the substantive and procedural provisions of this policy.

When an appointment or reappointment (with or without promotion) is made, it is the responsibility of the unit Head and the Dean to ensure that the appointee is given clear and full information in writing concerning the terms, functions, and duties of the appointment, including the applicable University and School policies. No oral commitments supplementing written information shall be made or recognized.

During the term of their appointment, holders of systems faculty positions are subject to, and protected by, the same University policies concerning academic freedom and dismissal for cause as are regular but untenured faculty members.

Reappointment and promotion in the systems faculty are governed by the contributions the candidate has made or may be expected to make to the University's excellence, as well as by the maintenance of the funded research program under which the appointment was made or its replacement by an appropriate substitute program. All decisions on promotion, as well as the decisions on reappointment described below, shall therefore be preceded by a full and thorough evaluation, to be carried out according to the criteria and procedures specified in this policy. A decision to promote may be made at any time during a term of appointment, and the consequent appointment at the higher rank shall supersede the current term.

A decision on a reappointment in the same rank shall necessarily be based on an evaluation, as referred to above, whenever the reappointment would first extend the term beyond

(a) in the rank of Systems Scientist/Engineer, three years from an original appointment or from the reappointment in this rank following the latest evaluation; or
(b) in the rank of Senior Systems Scientist/Engineer, three years from original appointment or promotion to this rank, or six years from the reappointment in this rank following the latest evaluation; or
(c) in the rank of Principal Systems Scientist/Engineer, three years from original appointment, or six years from promotion to this rank or from the reappointment to this rank following the latest evaluation.

In addition, within the first three years of an original appointment to the systems faculty an early evaluation for promotion may be ordered by a majority vote of the review committee; such an evaluation must be held no sooner than three months after the vote of the committee.
Timely notice shall be given of every decision not to reappoint a member of the systems faculty or to let an appointment (other than a terminal appointment) lapse. Notice is timely if given six months before the expiration of the term of appointment. In order to comply with this provision, it may be necessary or desirable to extend a term by an additional appointment of up to one year, designated as a terminal appointment, the decision not to reappoint or to let the appointment lapse notwithstanding.

III. EVALUATION

A. Introduction

Evaluation for appointment, reappointment, and promotion in the systems faculty is aimed at determining the contributions the candidate has made and may be expected to make to the School's excellence. All involved should recognize that the final decision resulting from the evaluation is partly subjective. Each affirmative decision is an indication to the individual that the faculty and the administration feel that the candidate's overall accomplishments to that point have been outstanding. Each appointment, reappointment, or promotion does not, however, guarantee future reappointments or promotions. In addition, those qualified for advancement may be denied reappointment or promotion because of the unavailability of suitable funding or, following evaluation, because their talents and interests do not sufficiently fulfill the needs and promote the goals and priorities of the School.

B. Criteria

The criteria for evaluation lie primarily in the category of research implementation, development, and management. The specific designation of activities that relate to these general criteria may vary among different organizational units within the School.

Research implementation, development, and management are those activities which lead to the production of demonstrable and operational systems; to increased problem-solving capabilities, including such activities as design, analysis and interpretation; to substantively enhanced performance and function of existing technology; or to the extension of the state of practice in disciplines related to computer science. Promotion is based upon the quantity, the performance, and the technical significance of such accomplishments over time.

Systems faculty members may also carry on professional activities that should be considered for evaluation: e.g., professional practice, teaching, consulting, public service, service in technical and professional societies and associations, and editorial work on professional journals. Insofar as such activities either contribute to or are an extension of research or research support activities, they should be considered as applicable.

In addition to all of the above, it is expected that every systems faculty member, just as every faculty member, will contribute to the campus community by, for example, serving on committees or participating in campus activities.

A candidate for initial appointment or promotion to the rank of Principal Systems Scientist/Engineer should be thoroughly established in his or her specialization. The candidate should be an outstanding and widely recognized contributor with a national or international reputation. Evaluation for reappointment at this rank should confirm continued growth in technical leadership and reputation. An evaluation for reappointment in the rank of Senior Systems Scientist/Engineer should show that the specialized technical leadership and reputation required for the rank of Principal Systems Scientist/Engineer are at least firmly in the process of becoming established. A candidate for initial appointment or promotion to the rank of Senior Systems Scientist/Engineer should have a record indicating a clear promise of extraordinary accomplishment or technical leadership that in due time will be sufficiently established to merit promotion to the rank of Principal Systems Scientist/Engineer.

IV. PROCEDURES AND OTHER PROVISIONS

All provisions of the Appointment and Tenure Policy of Carnegie Mellon University shall be applicable mutatis mutandis to the systems faculty with the exception of those that refer to the granting of tenure, those that describe criteria for evaluation, and any others that conflict with the provisions of the present policy. In case of conflict, the
provisions of the present policy shall prevail.

Systems faculty candidates for reappointment or promotion, original appointment to the rank of Systems Scientist/Engineer from other positions within the School, and original appointments to the rank of Senior or Principal Systems Scientist/Engineer, will be evaluated at the unit level by a committee consisting of senior members of the regular faculty and principal ranking members of the research and systems faculties, and at the college level by the SCS Review Committee. Other initial appointments shall be made in a manner consistent with that for the regular faculty and within the characteristics of the systems faculty.

The University Committee on Special Faculty Appointments shall conduct a triennial review of all positions to which systems faculty appointments are made, for the sole purpose of ensuring that the functions of these positions satisfy, or continue to satisfy, the requirements justifying their discharge by means of special faculty appointments.