The University of Iowa **MEMO**

March 12, 2002

TO: Jon Whitmore, Provost
FROM: Research Faculty Track Committee
Allyn Mark (Chair), Medicine
Elizabeth Almaier, Education
Trudy Burns, Public Health
Michael Duffel, Pharmacy
Jacob Odegaard, Engineering
Wayne Polyzou, Liberal Arts and Sciences
Christopher Squier, Dentistry
Toni Tripp-Reimer, Nursing
Lee Anna Clark, Associate Provost for Faculty
Provost's Office Liaison to the Committee
RE: Research Faculty Track Committee Report

The Research Faculty Track Committee hereby forwards you its report recommending the development of a research-faculty track at the University of Iowa. As you know, the committee has been studying the issue for some time. Specifically, it has reviewed the status of such a track at peer institutions, primarily those in the CIC; has received input from multiple on-campus sources, including both faculty and administrators; and has engaged in many hours of discussion in preparing the attached report. Whereas not all committee members agree with every particular of the document, there is consensus that it is time to forward its recommendation to you for your and, if you so deem, campus-wide consideration.

Study of other institutions revealed wide variation in the existence and form of research-faculty tracks. It is safe to say that no uniform "template" for a research-faculty track exists among universities in the United States. Consequently, the report describes a particular view of a research-faculty track developed by the committee, using UI's clinical-faculty track as a conceptual model. At the same time, the committee recognizes that actually to implement such a track, many details would need to be specified further than in the attached report. The committee felt that its recommendation to you at this time should be broadly conceptual, with the important concrete details delineated through a subsequent iterative process involving campus-wide faculty discussion. For example, if initial discussions by various faculty bodies indicated faculty support for a research-faculty track *in principle*, then a small group of faculty—perhaps appointed jointly by you and the Faculty Senate President—could draft a policy, with all the necessary details, for the Faculty Council and Senate to consider in particular.

If you so desire, the committee would be pleased to meet with you to discuss any aspects of the report, or the future of a research-faculty track at the University of Iowa, about which you had questions or concerns. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to study this important and interesting issue.

Advisory Committee for Development of a Research Faculty Track

Introduction and Background

On May 5th 1999, Provost Jon Whitmore appointed an Advisory Committee for Development of a Research Faculty Track and charged them *to review the appropriateness of the development of a non-tenure research faculty track at The University of Iowa*. He requested that the Committee seek information about the current availability of such a track at peer institutions as well as explore the desirability of creating such a track at The University of Iowa. He asked that the Committee interact with a diverse body of faculty and administrators from across the university in structuring a recommendation to the Office of the Provost.

The Committee consisted of Allyn Mark, Roy J. Carver Professor of Medicine and Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Programs, College of Medicine (Chair); Elizabeth Altmaier, Professor, Psychology and Quantitative Foundations, College of Education; Michael Duffel, Professor and Assistant Dean, College of Pharmacy; Jacob Odgaard, Professor and Associate Dean, College of Engineering; Wayne Polyzou, Professor, Physics and Astronomy, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Michael Saks, Professor, College of Law; Christopher Squier, Professor and Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, College of Dentistry; and Toni Tripp Reimer, Professor and Associate Dean, College of Nursing. Lee Anna Clark, Associate Provost for Faculty, was appointed ex-officio to represent the Office of the Provost. Professor Saks left the University in 2000 and was replaced by Trudy Burns, Professor, Biostatistics, College of Public Health.

The Committee subsequently scheduled a series of meetings to hear presentations from Dean Robert Kelch (College of Medicine), Professor V.C. Patel, Director of IIHR-Hydroscience and Engineering representing Dean Barry Butler (College of Engineering), and Dean Linda Maxson (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences). Documents that also were considered by the Committee included:

- A proposal for a Research Professor Track put forward in 1996 by Drs. Gerene Denning and Lynn Stoll, Research Scientists in the College of Medicine

- Criteria and Procedures for Research Engineer Appointments, Evaluations and Promotions in the College of Engineering from Professor V. C. Patel
- A position paper entitled Research Scientist Issues: Summary of Problem, presented to the Associate Deans for Research in 1998 by the Staff Council
- A statement on Research Faculty presented to a meeting of the Research Council and Graduate Council in May, 1997, by Leslie Sims, Dean of the Graduate College
- A position paper on full-time non-tenure research track faculty positions at The University of Iowa submitted by Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure of the University of Iowa Chapter of the American Association of University Professors in May, 2000.

Practices at other universities

Inquiries were made by Provost Whitmore and Associate Provost Clark as to the practices at a variety of other universities, including all of the CIC institutions (see Table). Although many of our peer institutions do have research faculty, there is little uniformity in defining a research faculty track. With a few notable exceptions (e.g., Michigan), most do not provide for full participation in faculty governance, although participation in departmental or collegiate governance is typically a local option.

Proposal for a non-tenure research track

Rationale

There is increasing diversity and complexity in the mission of the modern comprehensive research university and, increasingly, scholarly progress is occurring at the borders of established disciplines. This is particularly striking in the biomedical, engineering and physical sciences, where new disciplines such as informatics bridge traditional disciplines. In these fields, the fulfillment of our mission and our success and national prominence require increasing diversity of our faculty not only in terms of disciplinary adherence but also of faculty roles.

At the University of Iowa this change in the national research environment has stimulated existing—and led to the establishment of new—interdisciplinary research programs, centers and institutes that overlap traditional disciplines. These emerging areas do not always have congruence with traditional disciplines and departments in their

formal didactic educational roles and teaching needs. Rather, the teaching focus, if any, of research staff in these areas is on instruction and supervision in the research environment. As research instructors, such individuals often carry out certain activities traditionally performed by faculty; however, because they are not involved substantially in didactic teaching, appointment in the tenure track is not appropriate. With the continuing potential and expectation for expansion of the University's research mission and stature, and the accompanying need for research instruction and supervision, it is important to provide a more appropriate status than presently exists for certain staff involved in this developing research and research education enterprise.

Many, though not all, scientists who are non-faculty P&S employees (e.g., Research Scientists in the College of Medicine and other health science colleges or Research Engineers in the College of Engineering) are independent research scientists. However, their appointment as research scientists or engineers, rather than as faculty, may be impediment to their obtaining independent extramurally funded research grants when review groups and study sections favor principal investigators with faculty titles and penalize those who are appointed in a staff capacity, in part because of a perceived lack of commitment to staff on the part of the University. These independent scientists are critical to the increasingly diverse and complex missions of several colleges in the university. They offer important contributions to research, participate in graduate education and enhance the reputation of the University. A research faculty track will be an important mechanism to recruit, retain and reward these independent scientists.

In summary, the rationale for a research faculty track includes: (1) the contribution of such faculty to the increasingly diverse, complex and competitive environment in which the modern research university exists; (2) the need for research scientists whose mission is primarily research and teaching in a research environment without a substantial role in formal didactic teaching; and (3) the need to recognize, recruit, retain, and reward independent research scientists in an academic environment. For all these reasons we propose the establishment of a Research Faculty Track at the University of Iowa for individuals whose principal mission would be research, and teaching in a research environment.

In their presentations to the Committee, the Deans of the Colleges of Medicine and of Engineering spoke in favor of a Research Faculty Track. Moreover, representations

from Research Scientists at the University indicate the presence of a number of valued individuals who are engaged in substantial, externally funded, research activities who would benefit from a structured research faculty track to facilitate independent research and teaching in a research setting with appropriate provision for promotion.

As occurred when the clinical track was established, all colleges would have the opportunity to develop a collegiate research-track faculty policy consistent with the University policy; however, appointments to this track are expected to occur primarily in the health sciences and Engineering. The total number of faculty to be appointed to this track is expected to be small.

Definition and characteristics

The non-tenure research faculty track at The University of Iowa would be defined so as to be largely consistent with that of the existing clinical track:

Research faculty would have positions through which they contribute to the research mission of the University, and hold faculty rank at the level of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor. Research faculty would not be eligible for tenure. They would have the right to serve on departmental, collegiate and university committees and to participate in the faculty governance process as defined by individual colleges and the Faculty Senate. They would be subject to the provisions of the Faculty Dispute Procedures, with appropriate revisions made to section III.29.9, which concerns clinical-track faculty, so as to incorporate research-track faculty as well.

Research faculty would devote most of their time to independent, externally supported research and would be expected to submit and obtain research grants as principal investigator. Teaching is an essential function of all faculty and in the case of research-track faculty would occur predominantly in the form of supervising and advising graduate students and postdoctoral students in research and in serving on graduate degree committees. Such activities will require recognition of research-track faculty by the Graduate College. The use of research faculty largely to perform service or administrative activities with little or no research involvement would be inconsistent with this policy.

<u>Appointments and Promotions</u>

The scholarly and research expectations and standards for faculty appointment and promotion in the research track would be similar and parallel to the scholarly and

research expectations of faculty in the tenure track. Faculty in the research track would be expected to demonstrate involvement and competence in teaching in an informal research environment, but would not be substantially engaged in formal didactic teaching.

Initial appointments for research faculty would be one to three years. After three years, or prior to that if a promotion is contemplated, a full-scale, departmental-collegiate review would be undertaken. This review would take into account the faculty member's demonstrated effectiveness in research and research supervision. It also would include an evaluation of the departmental, collegiate, and University research mission and the likely role of the faculty member in the future in achieving those goals. To assure unified decision-making at this point, full central administration review of the departmental-collegiate recommendation would be required. It is not anticipated that all existing Research Scientists and Research Engineers would be qualified or would seek appointment on the research track. Rather, the track would be targeted to those functioning as independent researchers.

After a positive review, research faculty would receive terms of appointment dependent on the rank. Assistant professors, associate professors, and professors would receive three- to five-year appointments. Faculty would be reviewed on a schedule commensurate with their appointments according to written standards of competence and performance defined by their unit. A decision not to renew an appointment of a research faculty member would be for failure to meet written standards of competence and performance established by the unit and the University, or for changed economic circumstances, including failure of the faculty member to obtain research funding, or program needs such that the position itself is terminated. Non-renewal for changed economic circumstances or program needs only would occur at the conclusion of an appointment, and must carry appropriate notice (cf. UI Operations Manual III-12.2).

Conclusion

The introduction of a research track at the University of Iowa would strengthen the research and research instruction capacity of the university, particularly in engineering and the biomedical sciences; would increase opportunities for recruitment and career advancement for a number of research scientists and engineers; and would further diversify the faculty in a way that will enhance the mission of the University.