# Non-Faculty Researcher & Post Doc Definitions

The Carnegie Foundation determines its rankings based on data provided by the National Science Foundation through its Survey of Graduate Students and Post-doctorates in Science and Engineering (GSS). The glossary for the GSS defines nonfaculty research staff with doctorates as “all doctorate-holding researchers who (a) are not considered either postdoctoral researchers or members of the faculty and (b) are involved principally in science and engineering or health.” At the University of Memphis, this information has been self-reported by the departments in the past. In order to ensure accuracy and consistency, the University of Memphis should have consistent guidelines for identifying and classifying employees as non-Faculty Researchers.

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| The Office of Institutional Research reviewed guidelines and policies from seven peer institutions for whom published information could be found online. Key findings from these published guidelines include:1. There are differences in practice on whether institutions count non-tenure-track faculty researchers (Research Associate Professors and Research Assistant Professors) in their NFR count. **Four institutions count them, two do not count them, and one is not clear.**
2. For the most part, they **explicitly exclude personnel who are research support**.
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Given these findings, the following guidelines should be used for identifying non-Faculty Researchers at the University of Memphis.

1. **What is the definition of a non-Faculty Researcher at the University of Memphis?**

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| Non-faculty researchers are non-tenure track, doctorate-holding researchers whose primary function is not instruction. If an employee could qualify as a principal investigator or co-principal investigator on a grant and the employee is not a member of the tenure-track instructional faculty, then the employee is a non-faculty researcher. Non-faculty researchers do not teach more than a 1-1 load.  |

1. **Should non-tenure-track Research Associate Professors and Research Assistant Professors count as Non-Faculty-Researchers?**

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| Given the above definition and the precedent set by the University of South Florida, the University of Arizona, Purdue, and University of Nevada Las Vegas, non-tenure track Research Associate Professors and Research Assistant Professors should be counted as non-faculty researchers. |

1. **What Staff Position Titles should count as non-Faculty Researchers?**

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| Examples of staff positions where the primary responsibility is conducting research are: |
| Chief Software Arch Rsch Ctr | Research Associate I |
| Coord Molecular Science Lab | Research Associate II |
| Coord Physiology Lab | Research Equipment Tech II |
| Data Science Software Eng | Research Scientist |
| Lead Research and Data Analyst | Research Specialist |
| Materials Science Lab Manager | Research Technician I |
| Research and Data Analyst | Softw Eng Mgr |
| Sr Research Equipment Tech | Research Associate Professor |
| Research Assistant Professor |  |

1. **What about staff researchers who are in Temp Positions?**

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| Researchers who are in Temporary Positions will be identified at the time of hire by Human Resources, according to the job duties specified in the employee contract. |

1. **Should all employees working in a research center or a center of excellence (excluding pre-award/post-award admin staff) be considered research staff?**

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| Working in a research center or a center of excellence does not automatically classify a staff-member as a researcher. The staff member’s primary duties must include conducting research, excluding pre-award/post-award support. |

GSS Non-Faculty Research Decision Tree

Tenure Track?

No

Yes

Is Research Prof?

No

Yes

FD

AD

Temps

FA/F9

Research Position?

Yes

No

Eclass

Required Teaching Load > 1/1?

Could qualify as PI?

No

Yes

Yes

No

No

Yes

Employee Has Doctorate?

Process and Next Steps

1. Human Resources will use the IPEDS\_Primary\_Function field in Banner on the PEAEMPL screen to code existing employees as non-Faculty Researchers.
2. HR will incorporate this identification into the new hire process for staff.
3. HR will use the National Student Clearinghouse Degree Verify service to ensure that all employee degrees are updated in Banner.
4. Institutional Research will provide a list of employees coded as Non-Faculty Researchers to the departments late each Fall for review. Departments can provide input on missing/incorrect information, which will then be recorded in Banner.