

III-16  
**SPECIALIST SERIES**  
(Revised 2/24)

**I. Definition**

The Specialist series is used for academic appointees who engage in specialized research, professional activity, and University and/or public service, and who do not have any teaching responsibilities. See APM 330 for System Wide policy on Specialists. Represented employees in this series are governed by the applicable Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Article 26 of the MOU provides guidance specific to the Specialist series.

**II. Ranks and Steps**

- A. Jr. Specialist I-II
- B. Assistant Specialist I - III
- C. Associate Specialist I - IV
- D. Specialist I - IX

**III. Appointment and Advancement Criteria**

Appointees to the Specialist series are expected to use their professional expertise to make scientific and scholarly contributions to the research enterprise of the University and to achieve recognition in the professional and scientific community. Specialists may participate in University and/or public service depending upon funding source and the duties of the position.

The following qualifications are general guidelines for each rank:

**Junior Specialist:** Appointees should possess a baccalaureate degree (or equivalent degree) or have equivalent research experience. Appointees at this level enable research as part of a team

**Assistant Specialist:** Appointees should possess expertise consistent with four to six years of training and/or experience in the relevant specialization. Appropriate qualifications would include possession of a master's degree (or equivalent degree) in a relevant discipline, or possession of a relevant baccalaureate degree (or equivalent degree) plus have three or more years of research experience. Appointees at this level enable research as part of a team and may provide some independent input into the planning and execution of the research.

**Associate Specialist:** Appointees should possess a master's degree (or equivalent degree) or have five to ten years of experience demonstrating expertise in the relevant specialization. Appointees normally provide considerable independent input into the planning and execution of the research, have a record of academic accomplishments, including contributions to published research in the field, and a demonstrated record of University and/or public service.

**Specialist:** Appointees should possess a terminal degree (or equivalent degree) or have ten or more years of experience demonstrating expertise in the relevant specialization. Appointees normally provide considerable independent input into the planning and execution of the research, have a significant record of academic accomplishments, including contributions to published research in the field, and a demonstrated record of University and/or public service.

Specialists appointed into the series prior to July 1, 2015 are not subject to the degree and experience requirements listed above.

In judging a candidate for appointment or promotion to a position in this series, the following criteria are provided as guidelines and may be used flexibly where deemed necessary.

1. Performance in research in the defined area of expertise and specialization.
2. Professional competence and activity.
3. University and public service

#### **IV. Term of Appointment**

- A. Represented Junior Specialists may not be appointed at this rank for more than three years. There are no other limits on service at any other level in this series.
- B. Appointments or reappointments are to be made based on the service limitations indicated in Red Binder III-1 and, for represented employees, in the MOU.

#### **V. Compensation**

- A. Individuals appointed to this series are compensated on the salary scales established for the Specialist Series on a fiscal year (11 month) basis.

Without salary appointments in this series will occur rarely and will require evidence of external funding. Individuals who hold a primary affiliation with and are funded by another academic institution or outside agency may more appropriately be appointed as Research Associate or Research Fellow (Red Binder III-20.)

- B. Off-scale salaries are allowed within the same limits and policies as ladder faculty off-scale salaries. (Red Binder I-8)
- C. Salaries are subject to range adjustment.
- D. Each source that provides compensation for service in this series must permit research.

#### **VI. Requests for Appointment and Advancement**

##### Appointment

Appointment cases are to be submitted via AP Folio and using the checklist of documents to be submitted by the Chair for appointments (Red Binder III-7). Particular attention should be paid to assuring the department provides justification for the level of appointment and analytical evaluation of the candidate and his or her accomplishments.

##### Reappointment

Reappointments are to be submitted via the reappointment and modification module of AP Folio.

##### The following applies to Junior Specialists only:

Junior Specialists are normally appointed for a term not to exceed one year. Reappointment of up to one additional year is possible where warranted. An additional third year may be requested by exception, but under no circumstances may a Junior Specialist be appointed in the rank more than three years.

Junior Specialists do not undergo merit reviews. Automatic movement to Junior Specialist Step II will occur after one year at step I. Normal advancement will occur after one year at step II for promotion to Assistant Specialist.

##### Advancement: Merit and Promotion

Advancement cases are to be submitted via AP Folio and using the checklist of documents to be submitted by the chair for research reviews (Red Binder III-9). All advancement actions are based on the individual's achievements. Normal advancement will occur after two years at step at the Assistant and Associate level and after three years at the Full Specialist level, steps I-IX, and after four years at step IX and within Above Scale. Any advancement requested prior to that time will be considered an acceleration and must be justified as such. Merits are based on the academic record since the time of last review while promotions are based on the career academic record. Advancement to Above Scale status involves an overall career review and requires work of sustained and continued excellence with national or international recognition, outstanding professional achievement, and highly meritorious service. See Red Binder I-43 for further

guidance regarding Above Scale status.

All merits and promotions will be effective July 1. Completed cases must be submitted to the Academic Personnel Office by **April 1**, preceding the effective date. Cases received after the due date will be returned to the Department and will not be processed. A missed deadline may not be used as justification for retroactivity in a future review.

Requests for deferral of non-mandatory reviews must be submitted by the deadline established by the department. Appointees in the Specialist series must undergo a performance review at least once every five years, including an evaluation of the record in all review areas. This review may not be deferred. If the candidate does not turn in materials by the departmental due date, the department will conduct the review based on the materials available in the department as of the due date

### **Chair/Director Letters of Recommendation**

The Chair/Director's letter of recommendation for appointment or advancement should include an evaluation of the candidate's work and an evaluation of the candidate's contributions to the group effort, if relevant. In addition to the foregoing, recommendations for promotion must provide documentation of the scientific, technical, or otherwise creative contributions of the candidate (as contrasted to contributions to a group effort). Each unit should establish set procedures for evaluation of Specialist series appointments and advancements and development of the letter of recommendation. While review done solely by the Director or PI is acceptable, a fuller review, including input from other equal or higher ranking individuals in the unit is preferable.

### **Bio-Bibliography**

It is the responsibility of each Specialist to maintain an up to date bio-bibliography (bio-bib). The bio-bib should contain information ending at the campus cut-off date of January 31, or the date established by the candidate's department if an earlier date has been established. Information that falls beyond that date will not be considered in the review. Bio-bibs must follow the bio-bib template available in the Forms section of the Academic Personnel web-site, and the instructions in Red Binder I-27 excluding the Teaching section.

### **External Evaluation**

While extramural letters of evaluation are not required for appointment, promotion, or advancement to Above Scale in the Specialist series they may, in some cases, be helpful in evaluating the candidate's record. When letters are solicited, the sample letter for solicitation of extramural evaluators (Red Binder I-49) is to be used, with the following wording inserted as appropriate:

\_\_\_\_\_ is being considered for (an appointment/promotion to) Associate Specialist/Specialist in the (department/unit). Appointment (or Promotion) to Associate Specialist/Specialist within the UC system requires evaluation in the areas of: 1) specialized research, 2) professional competence and activity, 3) university and public service. [Sample wording for evaluation request: e.g., I would greatly appreciate your evaluation of \_\_\_\_\_'s work.]

For promotion cases add: In assessing the academic record of the candidate, please keep in mind the significant disruptions the University experienced as a result of COVID-19. In March of 2020, just as the Winter Quarter was ending, the UCSB campus was closed and our faculty rapidly transitioned to remote work. All campus research facilities including labs and libraries were closed; travel was halted; access to external facilities and archives ceased; and opportunities for professional engagement and visibility were restricted.

At the same time, many employees had to provide fulltime childcare or dependent care, as our local daycares and other facilities closed. Some had to work and teach in home environments that presented significant technical and logistical obstacles.

It is our expectation that these unprecedented circumstances be taken into consideration in the evaluation of \_\_\_\_\_'s contributions since Winter 2020. Although our standards for quality and excellence have not changed, we wish to be realistic about the constraints that employees experienced during this difficult time, and the impacts and consequences of these limitations on research, even after a return to more normal activities

Reviewing agencies reserve the right to request that letters be solicited in any appointment or advancement case if it is determined that more information is necessary to support the proposed action.

**VII. Approval Authority**

Action

Authority

All actions

Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Personnel