



Research Article

# The Rights and the Duties of Emeritus Professors within the University

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## Abstract

The appointment of Professor Emeritus reflects both institutional opportunity and the individual's exceptional professional standing. Emeriti are nominated by their excellence in teaching, research and public engagement. They should be allowed to continue to work, to continue to give input and ideas to Institutional structures as University and Departments.

**Key Words:** Professors emeriti, Excellency in teaching, excellency in Research

The putative, but relevant rights of an Emeritus Professor to continue to work within their Universities is given a priori when they receive the title of Emeritus. The premise of this award is that Emeritus Professors undoubtedly retain the qualifications they held during their previous role as Full Professors, particularly in teaching, highly qualified research, and public engagement. Indeed, their Department had directly taken benefit from their competencies. Their contributions, indeed, have already strengthened the reputation and cultural prestige of both the Department and the University, otherwise they should not have been awarded as Emeritus (which is different from the title of Honorary). Their achievements ultimately justified the granting as the Professor Emeritus title, most of the time given by the same institution where they would continue to work. In summary, the appointment of Professor Emeritus reflects both institutional opportunity and the individual's exceptional professional standing.

Based on such premise, in this brief intervention I will outline the key activities Emeritus Professors may carry out within the University, whether in their home Departments or other institutions open to their collaboration. These include teaching, research, and public engagement activities that may complement regular Department activities.

- In my view, Emeritus Professors may participate in teaching activities, except regular degree courses (whether mandatory or elective), unless temporary faculty shortages require their involvement also in regular degree courses. On the other hand, their expertise is particularly valuable in PhD programs, specialty training schools, master's courses, seminars, internship courses, particularly in Medical School, and specialized topics at the Department's discretion. These contributions can enrich the Department's teaching mission without duplicating the responsibilities of permanent faculty.
- Emeritus professors should also be able to apply, as any P.I. does, to research grant from national and international funding agencies, in order to being able to continue conducting research, particularly theoretical or individual research that can be pursued alongside teaching in a properly equipped departmental office or laboratory with access to computer, telephone, printer, and institutional email. Experimental research that requires access to departmental materials, instruments, or a modest but adequate laboratory space may also be undertaken, provided it does not interfere with the activities of other faculty members. In fact, as it has been said, such research represents an added value to the Department. Funding should either be secured by the Emeritus Professor with his/

her grants or specifically allocated to the Department for this purpose, thereby ensuring it does not compete or create difficulties to the Department's ongoing research.

Furthermore, it is entirely appropriate that the Department provide standard fringe benefits (such as parking permits and access to canteen facilities etc.) under the same conditions as other faculty members.

To conclude, Emeritus Professors represent a significant asset to their Department, enhancing its reputation and strengthening the University's teaching, research, and public engagement missions.

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