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NASA Procedural Requirements

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COMPLIANCE IS MANDATORY

Appointment of Personnel To/From NASA

Responsible Office: Office of Human Capital Management

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Preface

P.1 Purpose

a. NASA shall plan for, acquire, develop, and retain a high-performing, flexible workforce to achieve its mission. This NPR establishes the responsibilities, procedures, and guidelines for appointments and details of the following:

(1) Individuals in positions as, but not limited to, permanent, career, career conditional, term, indefinite, and temporary employees but excluding individuals appointed to Senior Executive Service (SES), Senior Level (SL), or Scientific and Technical (ST) positions.

(2) Experts and consultants.

(3) Individuals on temporary assignments between Federal agencies and State, local, and Indian tribal governments, institutions of higher education, and other eligible organizations.

(4) Foreign nationals.

(5) Civilian employees from other Federal agencies and departments to NASA and from NASA to other Federal agencies and departments.

b. This NPR provides Agency direction, which should be used in conjunction with the referenced statutory and regulatory requirements. Center Human Resources Offices should be consulted for further information and guidance.

P.2 Applicability

a. This NPR is applicable to NASA Headquarters and NASA Centers, including Component Facilities. In consonance with the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended (5 U.S.C. Appendix), nothing herein shall be construed as limiting the Inspector General's authority.

P.3 Authority

a. 5 U.S.C. Part II, Chapter 11; Part III, Subparts A and B.

b. 5 U.S.C. § 552a, Public information; agency rules, opinions, orders, records, and proceedings.

c. 5 U.S.C. § 2103, The Excepted Service.

d. 5 U.S.C. § 3109, Employment of Experts and Consultants; Temporary or Intermittent.

e. 5 U.S.C. § 3341, Details within Executive or Military Departments.

f. 5 U.S.C. § 3343, Details to International Organizations.

g. 5 U.S.C. §§ 9806, 9808, 9810 (Public Law 108-201, NASA Flexibility Act of 2004).

h. 31 U.S.C. § 1535, Agency Agreements.

i. 42 U.S.C. § 2473, The National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, as amended.

j. Office of Personnel Management (OPM)/NASA Delegated Examining Agreement.

P.4 Applicable Documents

- a. 5 U.S.C. § 3132, Definitions and Exclusions.
- b. 5 U.S.C. § 3371, Definitions.
- c. 5 U.S.C. § 3372, General Provisions.
- d. 5 U.S.C. § 3373, Assignment of Employees to State or Local Governments.
- e. 5 U.S.C. § 3374, Assignment of Employees from State or Local Governments.
- f. 5 U.S.C. § 3375, Travel Expenses.
- g. 5 U.S.C. § 3376, Regulations.
- h. 5 U.S.C. § 5723, Travel and Transportation Expenses of New Appointees and Student Trainees.
- i. 5 U.S.C. § 7201, Antidiscrimination in Employment.
- j. 5 U.S.C. § 7511, Definitions; Application.
- k. 42 U.S.C. § 2473 (c)(1), The National Aeronautics and Space Act, as amended.
- l. Executive Order 11935 (1976), Citizenship Requirements for Federal Employment.
- m. 5 C.F.R. § 213, Excepted Service.
- n. 5 C.F.R. § 302, Employment in the Excepted Service.
- o. 5 C.F.R. § 304, Expert and Consultant Appointments.
- p. 5 C.F.R. § 307, Veterans Recruitment Appointments.
- q. 5 C.F.R. § 315, Career and Career-Conditional Employment.
- r. 5 C.F.R. § 316, Temporary and Term Employment.
- s. 5 C.F.R. § 332, Recruitment and Selection through Competitive Examination.
- t. 5 C.F.R. § 334, Temporary Assignments under the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA).
- u. 5 C.F.R. § 337, Examining System.
- v. 5 C.F.R. § 720, Affirmative Employment Programs.
- w. NPD 3000.1, Management of Human Resources.
- x. NPR 1441.1, NASA Records Retention Schedules.
- y. NPR 1900.3, Ethics Program Management.
- z. NPR 3511.1, Position Management and Classification.
- aa. NPR 3792.1, Plan for a Drug-Free Workplace.
- bb. NPR 9050.5, Cash Management for Contracts.
- cc. NPR 9700.1, Travel.

dd. NASA Desk Guide on the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA).

P.5 Measurements and Verification

a. Program compliance with the requirements of this NPR shall be evaluated through the following means:

(1) The Assistant Administrator (AA) for the Office of Human Capital Management (OHCM) shall conduct periodic onsite and program reviews to ensure program compliance within the OHCM's area of responsibility.

(2) The NASA Center Human Resources Directors (HRDs) shall conduct periodic internal reviews to assess compliance with applicable statutory, regulatory, and NASA policies.

(3) Agency OHCM personnel and Center Human Resources (HR) personnel shall maintain and safeguard all records and documents in accordance with applicable regulatory and policy guidance, including NPR 1441.1, NASA Records Retention Schedules.

P.6 Cancellation

NPR 3300.1A, Appointment of Personnel to/from NASA, dated April 8, 2005.

/S/

Thomas Luedtke
Associate Administrator for
Institutions and Management

Chapter 1. Responsibility

1.1 Administrator's Authority

1.1.1 The Administrator retains the authority to:

- a. Approve details or extensions of details to the White House.
- b. Approve appointments of non-U.S. citizens, except to Student Educational Employment Program positions.
- c. Approve new IPA appointments, details, and extensions of non-U.S. citizens to NASA SES, ST, SL, and NASA Excepted Service (NEX) positions.
- d. Approve IPA assignments of NASA SES, ST, SL, and NEX employees to non-Federal entities.

Chapter 2. AST Rating Procedures

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This chapter describes qualifications and rating requirements for NASA's single Agency Aerospace Technology (AST) standard. These requirements were initially developed during the period 1959 to 1961, concurrent with a classification survey conducted by NASA to satisfy NASA's need for its own unique and discrete specializations within its mission-oriented aerospace work. NASA engaged in discussions and negotiations with OPM in arriving at the requirements described below.

2.2 Basic Education Requirements

2.2.1 Applicants for AST positions must have successfully completed a standard professional curriculum at an accredited college or university leading to a bachelor's degree with major study in an appropriate field as specified in paragraph 2.6. The term "successfully completed" means that the applicant must be within nine months of completion of his/her bachelor's degree at the time of submission of the application. However, final appointment would be subject to completion of all degree requirements prior to entrance on duty.

2.2.2 The phrase "appropriate field" refers to engineering (not engineering technology), physical science, mathematics, life sciences, computer science, or other fields of science (see paragraph 2.6). This excludes majors in the humanities or liberal arts. However, it may be appropriate to accept majors in social science, medical, or other fields if they are closely related to the duties of positions in the Life Sciences and Systems subgroup. In assessing applicants for entry-level (GS-7) positions based exclusively on education, there are limitations on the meaning of "appropriate field" for any given specialty. These limitations are described in detail in paragraph 2.6. However, in assessing an applicant for a position at the GS-9 or above level, based on experience gained after receiving a degree, any of the undergraduate majors listed in the "academic major" column of the chart, following paragraph 2.5.4, is acceptable if the applicant has at least one year of professional experience closely related to the specialty for which being rated. In such cases, prime consideration is given to the quality and level of experience.

2.2.3 An applicant who did not complete a standard professional curriculum leading to a bachelor's degree, as described above, may be determined to be eligible if he/she has obtained a graduate degree or has been admitted unconditionally to full graduate status in an appropriate field in an accredited institution, provided that at least an aggregate of one year of the applicant's study and/or professional experience has been closely related to the specialty field for which he/she is being rated. "Full graduate status" is defined as acceptance to a graduate program without a requirement to complete prerequisite courses. If prerequisite courses are required, the applicant shall submit a transcript documenting completion of the prerequisites before he/she may be considered for an AST position.

2.3 Rating and Referral Process

2.3.1 Applications for AST positions shall be evaluated independently by each NASA Center with delegated examining authority, using the established business processes of the NASA Staffing and Recruitment System (NASA StaRS). Ratings shall be assigned based on the relevance of the applicant's experience, training, and academic major.

2.3.2 Job analysis shall be conducted to identify the major duties for which the appropriate skills and competencies for the candidate search are identified and incorporated into the search plan. Appropriate Subject Matter Experts shall conduct the job analysis process in partnership with a human resources specialist.

2.3.3 In accordance with the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures, there are five recommended competencies common to AST specialties that were developed by a NASA-wide group of Subject Matter Experts:

- a. Knowledge of engineering and/or science specialty area.
- b. Ability to identify problems, research and analyze information, and apply principles to find solutions.
- c. Ability to plan and organize work.
- d. Ability to communicate orally.
- e. Ability to communicate in writing.

2.3.4 The recommended competencies common to all AST specialties may be supplemented or amended with different competencies at local option. If different competencies are used, they shall be developed using job analysis and at least one Subject Matter Expert in partnership with a human resources specialist.

2.3.5 Candidates shall be referred in accordance with responsibilities identified in the Delegated Examining Agreement with the OPM, applicable laws in Title 5, United States Code, and regulations published in the Code of Federal Regulations.

2.4. Eligibility Requirements by Grade Level

2.4.1 All applicants must meet the basic education requirements described in paragraph 2.2. For entry-level (GS-7) positions for which applicants are rated solely on the basis of education, the applicant's education must meet the academic major and coursework requirements corresponding to the position's subgroup and specialty, as defined in paragraph 2.6. Those specific major and coursework requirements are not mandatory. However, in rating applicants for positions at the GS-9 or higher level if they have at least one year of professional experience (gained after meeting the basic education requirements) that is closely related to the specialty for which being rated. In such cases, it is desirable, but not mandatory, that the applicant meet the major and coursework requirements for the AST specialty, as defined in paragraph 2.6. At these grade levels, prime consideration should be given to the quality and level of experience.

2.4.2 Applicants must possess the necessary length and quality of professional experience and/or education to qualify for the grade level he/she will accept.

2.4.2.1 Requirements for GS-7:

a. Applicants must meet the basic education requirements with the major field of study in one of the disciplines identified under "Academic Major" in the charts in paragraph 2.6, corresponding to the AST specialty/subgroup of the position for which being rated.

b. In addition to the basic education requirements, applicants must have the following:

(1) One year of appropriate professional experience that has positively demonstrated ability or aptitude to do aerospace research, development design, operations, or closely related functions in one of the NASA technological specialties.

(2) Successfully completed one full academic year of graduate study in an appropriate field at an accredited institution.

(3) Any equivalent combination of experience and graduate study. Applicants not meeting (1), (2), or (3) may qualify for a GS-7 if they meet any of the criteria outlined below.

2.4.2.2 Special provisions for GS-7:

a. Applicants may qualify at the GS-7 level if they meet any of the following criteria:

(1) Are in the upper third of their class, based on completed college work at the time of filing an application. This is the upper third of the class in the college, university, or major subdivision (e.g., school of engineering).

(2) Have an average of 2.90 or better on a 4.0 scale for either all completed college work at the time of application or have all college courses completed during the last two years of the undergraduate curriculum.

(3) Have achieved a grade average of B+ (3.5 on a 4.0 scale) or better in the major field of study where such field is fully qualifying. This is either the average of all completed college work in the major field of study at the time of application or the average of all college courses completed in the major field of study during the last two years of the undergraduate curriculum. (Senior students may be rated provisionally eligible under one of those criteria provided they had the required average in the junior year. They shall be required to submit evidence at the time of appointment that the required average was maintained during their senior year.)

(4) Have been elected to membership in one of the national honorary scholastic societies meeting the minimum requirements of the Association of College Honor Societies (other than freshman honor societies).

(5) Have completed 12 months of student trainee experience (does not include periods of leave without pay) that includes at least one work period (2 months or 320 hours) equivalent to GS-5 or at least 15 months of appropriate student trainee experience which includes one work period equivalent to the GS-4 level.

(6) For engineering positions, have successfully completed a five-year program of study (e.g., one designed to be completed in no less than five years) or at least 160 semester hours leading to a bachelor's degree in an accredited college or university.

(7) For engineering positions, if they have a professional engineering degree, up to 12 months of appropriate experience gained as a technician or technologist equivalent to the GS-5 or higher level may be credited as qualifying for the GS-7 level.

(8) Have successfully completed all requirements for two bachelor's degrees, one in an appropriate field of science or engineering.

(9) Have six months of aggregate of specialized experience or training, including three months gained after the junior year, in a subprofessional, semiprofessional, or technician status, which may have been obtained in a laboratory or elsewhere during a summer period, assisting a professor, or on active military duty. This may have been on a part-time or intermittent basis, may have been paid or unpaid, and must have been appropriate for NASA technological work.

(10) Have received honors or elective positions indicating superior leadership other than scholastic, provided the applicant's academic standing was in the upper half of the graduating class.

(11) Have established a pattern of completing courses having unusual preparatory value or direct relation to the particular aerospace specialty for which they are being considered.

(12) Have creative research aptitude or special talent for NASA scientific or engineering work, shown by evidence obtained and documented by NASA by means of certifications from college professors or officials, or standardized questionnaires, or similar techniques.

b. Criteria (1) through (7) above apply only to positions in NASA. These criteria support the provision in the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, as amended, which authorizes NASA to establish entrance grades two grades higher than other agencies for certain scientific and engineering personnel. Raters should identify in the automated case file the criteria on which GS-7 eligibility is based.

2.4.2.3 Requirements for GS-9. In addition to the basic education requirements, applicants must have at least one of the following:

- a. One year of professional experience in an appropriate field at least equivalent in difficulty and responsibility to GS-7-level work in the Federal service.
- b. Completion of all requirements for a master's or equivalent graduate degree in an appropriate field.
- c. Completion of two full academic years of graduate education in an appropriate field.
- d. An equivalent combination of experience and graduate study as discussed in (1) and (3) above.

2.4.2.4 Requirements for GS-11. In addition to the basic education requirements, applicants must have at least one of the following:

- a. One year of professional experience in an appropriate field that is at least equivalent in difficulty and responsibility to GS-9-level work in the Federal service.
- b. Completion of all requirements for a doctoral degree (Ph.D. or equivalent) in an appropriate field.
- c. Completion of three full academic years of graduate education in an appropriate field.
- d. For research positions only, completion of all requirements for a master's or equivalent graduate degree in an appropriate field.
- e. An equivalent combination of experience and graduate education as discussed in (1) and (3) above.

2.4.2.5 Requirements for GS-12 through GS-15:

a. In addition to the basic education requirements, applicants must have:

(1) One year of professional experience in an appropriate field at least equivalent in difficulty and responsibility to that of the next lower grade in the Federal service.

(2) For GS-12 research positions only, completion of all requirements for doctoral degree (Ph.D. or equivalent) in an appropriate field.

b. For all grades, qualifying experience may be either paid or volunteer experience.

c. Time spent in military service may be credited as an extension of experience gained immediately prior to entering the service, or it may be credited on its own merits, whichever is more favorable.

d. Positive evidence of highly creative or outstanding research, e.g., development of a basic principle, concept method, approach, or technique which opened the way for major advances in the field, may result in eligibility at one grade higher than that for which the applicant would normally be rated. This principle does not apply if the applicant is eligible on the basis of graduate study.

2.4.2.6 Competencies common to all AST specialties:

a. Applicants who meet the basic requirements shall be evaluated further on the basis of their possession of competencies relevant to the position.

b. There are five recommended competencies common to AST specialties:

(1) Knowledge of engineering and/or science specialty area.

(2) Ability to identify problems, research and analyze information, and apply principles to find solutions.

(3) Ability to plan and organize work.

(4) Ability to communicate orally.

(5) Ability to communicate in writing.

c. These competencies were developed by a NASA-wide group of Subject Matter Experts in accordance with the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures.

d. The recommended competencies common to all AST specialties may be supplemented or amended with different competencies at local option. If different competencies are used, they shall be developed using job analysis and at least one Subject Matter Expert.

2.5 Field of Study Applicable to AST Subgroups and Specialties

2.5.1 For entry-level GS-7 positions in which the candidate is qualifying based on education alone, the undergraduate college majors in the left column ("Academic Major") of the charts following paragraph 2.6.4 will satisfy the minimum education requirement for the corresponding AST subgroups, provided any applicable special provisions, identified in the explanatory material accompanying the chart, are met. These special provisions are described in the pages immediately following the chart.

2.5.2 In determining the appropriateness of an individual degree program to the NASA subgroups, raters shall not rely on degree titles alone, since there are no standard titling practices among colleges and universities. The degree titles shown represent the degree titles normally used. Raters, however, shall use judgment and discretion when either a particular degree title or particular degree course content does not fit the norm.

2.5.3 One degree title that needs close course content review is the bachelor's degree in computer science. A number of schools are using this title for essentially business-oriented degrees. To qualify for AST positions, the computer science curriculum must have included (or be supplemented by) 30 semester hours of course work in a combination of mathematics, statistics, and computer science that provided in-depth knowledge of the following:

a. Theoretical foundations and practical applications of computer science, including digital computer system architecture and system software organization, the representation and transformation of information structures, and the theoretical models for such representations and transformations.

b. Essential mathematical and statistical techniques. At least 15 of the 30 semester hours must be in any combination of statistics and mathematics that include differential and integral calculus. Candidates must also meet one of the special provisions or additional experience requirements for GS-7-level positions.

2.5.4 Applicants being considered for an AST position at grade GS-9 or above based on experience gained after meeting the basic education requirements, must have majored in one of the academic disciplines identified on the chart (under "Academic Major") on the following pages. However, when rating an applicant on the basis of directly related experience, it is not mandatory that the applicant also meet the academic major and/or coursework requirements corresponding to the specific AST subgroup/specialty when qualifying on the basis of directly related experience. In these cases, prime consideration should be given to the quality and level of experience.

EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR AST SUBGROUPS and SPECIALTIES

ACADEMIC MAJOR	Space Sciences	Earth Sciences	Life Sciences & Systems	Fluid & Flight Mech	Materials & Struct	Propulsion & Power	Flight Systems	Measurement & Inst Sys	Data Sys & Analysis	Facilities	Operations	Mgt
	701-XX	702-XX	709-XX	710-XX	715-XX	720-XX	725-XX	730-XX	735-XX	740-XX	745-XX	730-XX
Aeronautical Eng Aeronautics Aerospace Eng Architecture	X	Xa Xa Xa	See specific req'mts	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X	Xbc Xbc Xbc	X X X	X X X	X X X
Astronautical Eng Astronautics Astronomy Astrophysics	X X Xa Xa	Xa Xa Xa Xa	See specific req'mts	X X Xa X	X X	Xb X	X X	X X Xa X	Xbc Xbc Xbc Xbc	X Xa	X Xa	X X Xab X
Biomedical Eng Ceramic Eng Ceramics Chemical Eng		Xa Xa Xa Xa	See specific req'mts		Xa Xa X		X Xa Xa Xa	Xa Xa Xa X	Xbc Xbc Xbc Xbc	Xa X X X	Xa X X X	X X X X
Chemistry Civil Eng *Computer Science Computer Eng		Xa Xa Xa Xa	See specific req'mts	Xa Xa	X Xb Xb Xb	X	Xa Xa Xa	Xa Xa Xa	Xbc Xbc Xbc X	X Xa Xa	X Xa Xa	X X Xab Xab
Earth & Planetary Sci Electrical Eng Electronic Eng	X X X	Xa Xa Xa	See specific req'mts	Xc X		Xa Xa	Xa Xa	Xb X	Xbc Xbc Xbc	X X	X X	Xab X X
Geology Geophysics Industrial Eng Materials Eng	Xa Xa	Xa Xa Xa	See specific req'mts		Xb X		Xb X		Xbc Xbc Xbc Xbc	Xa X X	Xa X X	Xab X X X

ACADEMIC MAJOR	Space Sciences 701-XX	Earth Sciences 702-XX	Life Sciences & Systems 709-XX	Fluid & Flight Mech 710-XX	Materials & Struct 715-XX	Propulsion & Power 720-XX	Flight Systems 725-XX	Measurement & Inst Sys 730-XX	Data Sys & Analysis 735-XX	Facilities 740-XX	Operations 745-XX	Mgt 770-XX
Materials Science Math, Applied Math, Pure Mechanics, Applied	Xa Xa	Xa Xa Xa Xa	See specific req'mts	Xb Xa X	X Xd Xd X	Xa Xb X	X Xa Xa X	X Xa Xa X	Xbc Xc Xac Xbc	Xa Xa Xa X	Xa Xa Xa X	Xb Xa Xa X
Mechanics, Eng Mechanical Eng Metallurgical Eng Metallurgy		Xa Xa Xa Xa	See specific req'mts	X X	X X Xc Xc	X X	X X X X	X X	Xbc Xbc Xbc Xbc	X X X Xa	X X X Xa	X X X Xb
Meteorology Nuclear Eng Nuclear Eng Physics	Xa	Xa Xa Xa	See specific req'mts	X X	Xd X	X X	X X X	X X X	Xbc Xbc Xbc	X X X	X X X	X X X
Oceanography Optical Eng	Xa X	Xa Xa	See specific req'mts					Xa X	Xbc Xbc	X	X	Xab X
Physics Physics, Applied Physics, Eng	Xa Xa X	Xa Xa Xa	See specific req'mts	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X	Xbc Xbc Xbc	Xa Xa Xa	Xa Xa Xa	X X X
Space Science Structural Eng	X	Xa Xa	See specific req'mts		X		X		Xbc Xbc	X	X	Xab X
Welding Eng			See specific req'mts		X		X		Xbc	X	X	Xb
Other Appropriate Physical Science or Engineering Field	Xa	Xa	See specific req'mts	Xa, b, or c	Xa,b,c,or d	Xa or b	Xa	Xab	Xbc	Xa	Xa	Xab

Description of footnotes a, b, c, and d are found in paragraph 2.6.

2.6 Specific Education Requirements For AST Subgroups and Specialties

2.6.1 In rating applicants for GS-7-level positions, based on education alone, the undergraduate college majors in the left column ("Academic Major") of the chart following paragraph 2.6.4. are qualifying if marked with an "X" in the subgroup column. For example, a degree in aerospace engineering meets the education requirements for a position classified in the Space Sciences (701-XX) subgroup.

2.6.2 If the letter "X" is joined with a second letter ("a," "b," "c," or "d"), then additional coursework is required to meet the education requirements. The specific requirements are defined under the AST subgroup discussions below. For example, a degree in astronomy meets the education requirements for a position classified in the Space Sciences (701-XX) subgroup only if the curriculum includes or is supplemented by one physics or engineering lab in: electronics, optics, materials, vibration, high-vacuum theory, heat transfer, or a comparable field relating to aerospace instrumentation.

2.6.3 If the letter "X" is joined with multiple second letters (e.g., "Xab" or "Xbc"), the major must be supplemented by the additional coursework requirements described in both paragraphs corresponding to those letters. In other words, interpret "ab" as "a and b" not "a or b."

2.6.4 Do not rely exclusively on the chart in rating applicants for AST positions: it is important that you first read through the special subgroup explanatory notes.

2.6.5 Space Sciences (701-XX)

Majors annotated with "Xa" are qualifying if the curriculum includes or is supplemented by one physics or engineering lab in: electronics, optics, materials, vibration, high-vacuum theory, heat transfer, or comparable field relating to aerospace instrumentation.

2.6.6 Earth Sciences (702-XX)

2.6.6.1 Majors annotated with "Xa" are qualifying if the curriculum includes or is supplemented by six semester hours or the equivalent in appropriate life sciences or other natural science courses and includes, or is supplemented by, at least two courses that would provide knowledge of such subjects (as appropriate to the vacancy) as described in the following table:

Subjects

Advanced data analysis methodology

Geography

Aerospace instrumentation	Geology
Aeronomy	Geodynamics
Agriculture	Geophysics
Agronomy	Hydrology
Atmospheric physics	In situ sensing techniques
Atmospheric chemistry	Land use management
Astronomy	Marine resources
Biology	Mathematics
Computer programming	Meteorology
Computer simulation	Numerical analysis
Earth resources	Oceanography
Earth sciences	Optical and radar scanners
Electromagnetic radiation	Optics
Engineering	Radiative transfer
Forestry	Remote sensing techniques
Forestry and agriculture	Spectroscopy
Geodesy	Statistics

2.6.7 Life Sciences and Systems (709-XX)

2.6.7.1 Candidates must meet either of the following appropriate college majors and supplemental coursework requirements:

a. Major study in biology (botany, zoology, biophysics, radiation biology, biochemistry, microbiology, physiology, toxicology) or in behavioral science (experimental, physiological, or clinical psychology); or other field of life sciences appropriate for one of these specialties, including or supplemented by at least 20 semester hours of physical science or engineering (undergraduate or graduate); or experience sufficient to provide a basis for understanding, use, and interpretation of the highly specialized ground-based or in flight measurement, environmental control, vehicle control, and other equipment required for crewed or organism-bearing aerospace flights and voyages.

b. Major study in engineering or physical science appropriate for one of these specialties, including or supplemented by, at least 20 semester hours of physiology; experimental or physiological psychology; or other appropriate life sciences; or experience in biotechnology, human factors engineering, or other appropriate life sciences field.

2.6.8 Fluid and Flight Mechanics (710-XX)

a. Majors annotated with "Xa" are qualifying if the curriculum includes or is supplemented by 12 semester hours (or the equivalent) of appropriate physical science or engineering courses.

b. Majors annotated with "Xb" are qualifying if the curriculum includes or is supplemented by nine semester hours (or the equivalent) of physics, thermodynamics, fluid dynamics, or gas dynamics.

c. A major in electrical engineering is not qualifying if the major is in production, transmission, and use of large-scale industrial power.

2.6.9 Materials and Structures (715-XX)

a. Majors annotated with "Xa" are qualifying if they include or are supplemented by 12 semester hours (or the equivalent) in refractory ceramics, cermets, or protective coatings.

b. Majors annotated with "Xb" are qualifying if they include or are supplemented by 12 semester hours (or the equivalent) in strength of materials, structures, thermodynamics, and/or basic static and dynamics.

c. Majors annotated with "Xc" are qualifying if they include or are supplemented by 12 semester hours (or the equivalent) in physical or adaptive metallurgy, high-temperature metals and alloys, or cermets.

d. Majors annotated with "Xd" are qualifying if they include or are supplemented by nine semester hours (or the equivalent) in physics, structures, materials, or other appropriate courses.

2.6.10 Propulsion and Power (720-XX)

- a. Majors annotated with "Xa" are qualifying if they include or are supplemented by one course in thermodynamics, nuclear physics, rocket propulsion fundamentals, gas dynamics, or modern or molecular physics.
- b. Majors annotated with "Xb" are qualifying if they include or are supplemented by nine semester hours (or the equivalent) in physics, thermodynamics, chemistry, or closely related fields.

2.6.11 Flight Systems (725-XX)

- a. Majors annotated by "Xa" are qualifying if they include or are supplemented by nine semester hours (or the equivalent) in machine design, mechanics, hydraulics, dynamics, thermodynamics, mechanical design, or mechanical measurement.
- b. The following education requirements apply to Reliability and Quality Assurance (725-04), Reliability (725-05), Flight Systems Safety (725-11), Quality Assurance (725-22), and Safety and Mission Assurance (725-40).

(1) Qualifying major: A bachelor's degree with a major in any of the following disciplines is qualifying: aeronautical engineering, aerospace engineering, applied mechanics, astronautical engineering, biomedical engineering, ceramic engineering, chemical engineering, civil engineering, computer engineering, electrical or electronic engineering, engineering mechanics, engineering physics, industrial engineering, manufacturing engineering, materials engineering, mechanical engineering, metallurgical engineering, nuclear engineering, nuclear engineering physics, systems engineering, systems and control engineering, structural engineering, or welding engineering. Also, the disciplines of quality engineering, reliability engineering, and safety engineering are qualifying if the graduate's engineering program is accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology.

(2) Qualifying major with specific coursework: A bachelor's degree with a major in any of the following disciplines is qualifying provided it includes or is supplemented by 18 semester hours (or equivalent) in the courses listed below with 15 of those semester hours in the asterisked subjects: aeronautics, applied mathematics, applied physics, astronautics, ceramics, chemistry, computer science, fire protection engineering, materials science, metallurgy, oceanography, physics, or safety science. Also, the disciplines of quality engineering, reliability engineering, and safety engineering are qualifying (in conjunction with the specified coursework in the following table) if the graduate's engineering program is accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology.

Coursework

Aeronautics	*Mechanics/Mechanics of materials
Antennas and propagation	*Occupational safety/Industrial safety
Chemistry	*Physics
Communication theory	Quality assurance/Quality engineering
*Computer science	Reliability
Digital design	Risk management
*Dynamics	Safety engineering
*Electrical engineering fundamentals	*Statics
*Electromagnetic theory	*Statistics
*Electronics	*Strength of materials
Fire protection	*Structures
*Fluids	*Systems safety
*Human factors/Human engineering	*Systems engineering
*Manufacturing engineering	*Thermodynamics
*Materials	

In determining whether coursework is qualifying, raters should ensure that the coursework reflects a breadth of knowledge rather than being concentrated in one discipline and is not in the specific field in which the degree was obtained; e.g., courses in physics may not be used to qualify an individual who majored in physics.

2.6.12 Measurement and Instrumentation Systems (730-00)

- a. Majors annotated by "Xa" are qualifying if they include or are supplemented by two courses in solid state physics, materials, optics, statics and dynamics, electricity and electronics, electron optics, kinetic theory of gases, electromagnetic propagation or radiation, semiconductors, vibration, information theory, or heat transfer.
- b. A major in electrical engineering is qualifying, unless it is in production, transmission, and use of large-scale industrial electrical power.

2.6.13 Data Systems and Analysis (735-00)

- a. Majors annotated with "a" after the "X" must include or be supplemented by 12 semester hours (or the equivalent) in appropriate physical science or engineering courses (not required for data analysis or computer research and development positions).
- b. Majors annotated with "b" after the "X" must include or be supplemented by 6 semester hours (or the equivalent) in mathematics beyond basic calculus (i.e., any mathematics course in which basic calculus is listed as a prerequisite).
- c. Majors annotated with "c" after the "X" must include or be supplemented by at least two of the courses listed in the table below for the indicated specialties:

Data Analysis (735-05) and Computer Research and Development (735-16)

Courses

Compiler construction	Mathematical statistics (if six semester hour course)
Computer graphics	Numerical methods/numerical analysis
Computer architecture	Operating systems
Computer networks	Programming languages
Data base management	Software engineering
Data structures	Theory of equations
Differential equations	Theory of computation
Linear algebra	

Data Systems (735-02), Software Systems (735-03), Data Systems Analysis (735-06), Data Hardware Systems (735-13), and Theoretical Simulation Techniques (735-16).

Courses

Communication theory	Electronics
Computer organization	Logic design
Control systems	Optics (for simulation)
Electricity and magnetism	Solid state physics (for transistors and tapes)
Electrical networks	

2.6.14 Facilities (740-XX)

- a. Majors annotated with "Xa" are qualifying if they include or are supplemented by 12 semester hours (or the equivalent) in appropriate physical science or engineering courses.
- b. The education requirements for the Facilities Systems Safety (740-03) specialty are:
- (1) Qualifying major: A bachelor's degree with a major in any of the following disciplines is qualifying: aeronautical engineering,

aerospace engineering, applied mechanics, astronautical engineering, biomedical engineering, ceramic engineering, chemical engineering, civil engineering, computer engineering, electrical or electronic engineering, engineering mechanics, engineering physics, industrial engineering, manufacturing engineering, materials engineering, mechanical engineering, metallurgical engineering, nuclear engineering, nuclear engineering physics, systems engineering, systems and control engineering, structural engineering, or welding engineering. Also, the disciplines of quality engineering, reliability engineering, and safety engineering are qualifying if the graduate's engineering program is accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology.

(2) Qualifying major with specific coursework: A bachelor's degree (with a major in any of the following disciplines) is qualifying provided it includes or is supplemented by 18 semester hours (or equivalent) in the courses listed in the table below. Fifteen of those semester hours must be in the following asterisked subjects: aeronautics, applied mathematics, applied physics, astronautics, ceramics, chemistry, computer science, environmental engineering, fire protection engineering, materials science, metallurgy, oceanography, physics, and safety science. Also, the disciplines of quality engineering, reliability engineering, and safety engineering are qualifying (in conjunction with the specified coursework) if the graduate's engineering program is accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology.

Coursework

Aeronautics	*Mechanics/mechanics of materials
Antennas and propagation	*Occupational safety/Industrial safety
Chemistry	*Physics
Communication theory	Quality assurance/Quality engineering
*Computer science	Reliability
Digital design	Risk management
*Dynamics	Safety engineering
*Electrical engineering fundamentals	*Statics
*Electromagnetic theory	*Statistics
*Electronics	*Strength of materials
Fire protection	*Structures
*Fluids	*Systems safety
*Human factors/human engineering	*Systems engineering
*Manufacturing engineering	*Thermodynamics
*Materials	

In determining whether coursework is qualifying, raters should ensure that the coursework reflects a breadth of knowledge rather than being concentrated in one discipline and is not in the specific field in which the degree was obtained; e.g., courses in physics may not be used to qualify an individual who majored in physics.

2.6.15 Operations (745-XX)

a. Majors annotated with "Xa" are qualifying if they include or are supplemented by 12 semester hours (or the equivalent) in appropriate physical science or engineering courses.

b. For Research Pilot (745-10) positions GS-9 through GS-15, appropriate college majors include any of the majors listed in this paragraph or under Life Sciences and Systems. In addition to the basic education requirements, candidates must have a current Federal Aviation Administration commercial pilot's license with an instrument rating or a pilot and instrument rating from the armed services. One, or a combination, of the following criteria must also be met:

2.6.15.1 Requirements for GS-9:

a. A minimum of 900 hours of pilot-in-command (or first pilot) flight time that includes at least 500 hours in jet aircraft having at least 3,000 pounds of thrust per engine.

b. One year of research piloting experience.

2.6.15.2 Requirements for GS-11:

- a. A minimum of 1,000 hours of pilot-in-command (or first pilot) flight time that includes at least 500 hours in jet aircraft having at least 3,000 pounds of thrust per engine; or
- b. One year of research piloting experience which must have been equivalent to grade GS-9.

2.6.15.3 Requirements for GS-12/15:

- a. A minimum of 1,500 hours of pilot-in-command (or first pilot) flight time that included at least 500 hours in jet aircraft having at least 3,000 pounds of thrust per engine; plus one year of research piloting experience equivalent to the next lower grade in the Federal service; or one year of research piloting experience equivalent to the next lower grade.
- b. For positions whose principal duties involve research and development of experimental rotorcraft, pilot-in-command (or first pilot) flight time in aircraft powered by engines having a total of 1,000 horsepower or more in lieu of flight time in jet aircraft may be substituted at all grades.

2.6.16 Management (770-00).(Positions in this specialty shall typically be filled at the GS-12 through GS-15 levels.):

- a. Majors annotated by "a" after the "X" must include or be supplemented by 12 semester hours (or the equivalent) in appropriate physical science or engineering courses.
- b. Majors annotated by "b" after the "X" must include or be supplemented by mathematics through, and including, the integral calculus level.

Note: In filling positions in the AST, Life Sciences Program Management specialty, the qualification requirements are those shown under NASA Classification Code (NCC) 709, Life Sciences and Systems.

Chapter 3: Distinguished Scholar Appointing Authority

3.1 Responsibility

3.1.1 The Human Resources Director at each NASA Center is responsible for implementing the Distinguished Scholar appointing authority as prescribed in this chapter.

3.2 Introduction

3.2.1 This chapter describes the hiring parameters and qualification requirements for individuals appointed under the Distinguished Scholar appointing authority. The object of this authority is to place less emphasis on work experience and provide an external hiring vehicle that gives more weight to the academic performance of recent graduates.

3.3 Coverage

3.3.1 This authority may be used to fill scientific and professional positions covered by the Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Professional and Scientific Positions.

3.3.2 This authority may be used to fill positions at grades GS-7 through GS-12. Positions having a full performance level grade higher than GS-12 may be filled under this authority, provided that the grade at which the individual is initially hired does not exceed GS-12.

3.3.3 This authority is only valid for making career or career-conditional appointments in the competitive service.

3.4 Eligibility

3.4.1 Candidates must meet the required academic achievement standards at the time of graduation.

3.4.2 All grade point averages (GPAs) must be expressed in terms of a 4.0 scale. If a candidate's GPA is based on a grading scale of other than 4.0, the GPA shall be converted to a 4.0 grading scale to determine eligibility.

3.4.3 Eligibility Requirements by Grade Level:

3.4.3.1 GS-7 Level: Must have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher and a GPA of 3.5 or higher for courses in the field of study required for the position.

3.4.3.2 GS-9 Level: Must have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher in graduate coursework in the field of study required for the position.

3.4.3.3 GS-11 Level: Must have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher in graduate coursework in the field of study required for the position.

3.4.3.4 GS-12 Level (Research Positions Only): Must have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher in graduate coursework in the field of study required for the position.

3.5 Qualification Requirements

3.5.1 Candidates must meet the appropriate qualification standard (the AST qualification standard, if appropriate) and have received the qualifying degree from an accredited university within two years of the effective date of the appointment.

3.6 Selection Priority

3.6.1 Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP) eligibles receive selection priority.

3.6.2 Veteran preference applies to Distinguished Scholar hiring actions.

3.6.3 In order to receive consideration, veteran preference eligibles and ICTAP eligibles must meet both the Distinguished Scholar eligibility and qualification requirements.

3.7 Recruitment and Rating

3.7.1.1 Vacancy announcements for Distinguished Scholar appointments shall be advertised on USAJOBS.

3.7.1.2 NASA StaRS shall be used to evaluate and refer candidates.

3.7.2 Recruitment

3.7.2.1 Vacancy announcements shall include a standard statement identifying the position(s) as being filled using Distinguished Scholar provisions.

3.7.2.2 As deemed appropriate, managers may simultaneously advertise and consider candidates from other hiring sources.

3.7.3 Rating Candidates

3.7.3.1 Candidates who meet the minimum qualification requirements need not be further evaluated. If no further evaluation is done, qualified veterans have absolute preference (in the absence of ICTAP candidates).

3.7.3.2 If candidates are further evaluated using a category rating process, qualified veterans have absolute preference within the appropriate category.

3.8 Reporting Requirements

3.8.1 All Distinguished Scholar appointments are to be documented in accordance with the format prescribed by the Agency Office of Human Capital Management (OHCM). Information is to be provided to OHCM, not less than annually, to ensure compliance with annual Congressional reporting requirements.

3.8.2 Each Center shall, at a minimum, maintain data on the total number of Distinguished Scholar appointments and, of those, the number of appointments made to address a critical need.

3.8.3 Centers may maintain additional information as needed.

Chapter 4. Employment of Experts and Consultants

4.1 Responsibility

4.1.1 Center Directors are authorized to certify appointments and extensions of appointments of experts and consultants. This authority may be redelegated in accordance with NPD 3000.1, Management of Human Resources.

4.1.2 Center Human Resources Directors shall establish controls to ensure that notification is provided to the Center HR office whenever an expert or consultant employed on an intermittent basis approaches the 130-day limit in a service year.

4.2 Introduction

4.2.1 The policies in this chapter apply to the appointment of experts and consultants as Federal employees and do not apply to the procurement of services by contracts under Federal procurement laws.

4.2.2 This authority shall be used to obtain specialized opinions not available within NASA or another agency; outside points of view to avoid too limited judgment on critical issues; advice on developments in industry, academic, and foundation research; opinions of noted national and international authorities; advisory participation of members of the general public, especially scientists and engineers, in the development of NASA programs; and assistance in the evaluation of highly technical and complex contract proposals. The use of this authority shall be kept to an essential minimum.

4.3 Restrictions

4.3.1 Consulting services shall not:

- a. Be used under any circumstances to aid in influencing or enacting legislation.
- b. Be arranged in such a way that gives preferential treatment to former Federal employees.
- c. Be arranged using cooperative agreements as the legal instruments for the consulting service arrangement.

4.4 Employment Conditions

4.4.1 An expert or consultant serving under a temporary appointment may have a full-time work schedule, which means a regular requirement to work a 40-hour workweek (or 80 hours per pay period), or a part-time work schedule, which means working on a prearranged schedule requiring fewer hours or days of work than those of full-time employees. They may also serve in intermittent appointments, without a regularly scheduled tour of duty.

4.4.2 In determining rates of compensation for an expert or consultant, consideration shall be given to such factors as the importance, difficulty, or urgency of the subject matter, market research on

salaries for similar work (for comparison purposes), and the organizational level at which he/she might be assumed to be operating within NASA.

4.4.3 Generally, the statutory prohibitions on conflicts of interest apply. However, a consultant or expert who is expected to work no more than 130 days in any period of 365 consecutive days may qualify for treatment as a Special Government Employee. Such employees are subject to most, but not all, of the prohibitions that apply to regular employees. Individuals should consult with the Designated Agency Ethics Official or his/her designee regarding whether the employee qualifies as a Special Government Employee.

4.4.4 If a security clearance is required, there is some flexibility in initiating investigations on prominent persons who have performed frequent services for the Government. However, NASA Center Security Officers should be consulted to determine if previously submitted security forms are adequate.

4.5 Documenting Employment

4.5.1 NASA Form 452, Request for Services of Consultant or Expert, shall be used to request the appointment of all experts and consultants to NASA. The original shall be retained in the official personnel folder.

4.5.1.1 Since the description of actual duties to be performed is critical in determining whether an expert/consultant employment situation exists, particular care must be taken to ensure that Item 5 of NASA Form 452 clearly indicates:

- a. The duties to be performed.
- b. Whether the employee's services are advisory (consultant) or operating (expert) in nature.
- c. The specific knowledge, skills, and expertise required.

4.5.1.2 To ensure adequate documentation of the expert/consultant status of the appointee, Item 6 of NASA Form 452 shall specifically cite the basis for determination that the special qualifications detailed in Item 5 of NASA Form 452 have been met.

4.5.2 An appropriate administrative record shall be made of actual days on which an expert or consultant performs duty, containing a brief description of actual service performed on each occasion of work. The record shall be maintained by an official in the office where the expert or consultant renders service. Records and reports maintained by advisory committees may be used to satisfy this requirement for advisory committee members.

4.5.3 Persons appointed as experts or consultants shall be required to complete a Statement of Financial Interest prior to employment as required by NPR 1900.3, Ethics Program Management.

4.6 Internal Review During Employment.

4.6.1 Center Human Resources Directors shall conduct quarterly reviews of all expert and consultant appointments. Each review shall be appropriately documented, signed by the Human Resources Director, and submitted to the Center Director by October 1 of each year. In addition to the requirements established by OPM, the following data for each expert and consultant shall be included:

- a. Name.

- b. Company or institution by whom employed.
- c. NASA organization to which assigned.
- d. The name of the NASA official requesting consultant services.
- e. Dates worked.
- f. Salary paid.
- g. Travel expenses.
- h. A summary of expert or consultant services rendered.

4.6.2 The report shall be made available, as needed, for review by OPM and/or the Agency Office of Human Capital Management.

4.6.3 Experts and consultants who have worked for ten days or less during a fiscal year quarter are excluded from the review.

Chapter 5. Appointment of Foreign Nationals

5.1 Responsibility

5.1.1 Requests to appoint foreign nationals shall be forwarded to the Administrator through the Assistant Administrator for the Office of Human Capital Management.

5.1.2 The Administrator's approval is required before initiating paperwork to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) of the Department of Homeland Security (formerly the Immigration and Naturalization Service).

5.2 Introduction

5.2.1 NASA may appoint foreign nationals having special qualifications in the fields of aeronautical and space research as determined by the Administrator to be necessary and in the public interest.

5.3 Qualification Requirements

5.3.1 For permanent or nonpermanent employment, foreign nationals must, at a minimum, meet all other qualification standards for the position being filled. For employment as an expert or consultant, foreign nationals must possess qualifications that exceed those prescribed for comparable work in the competitive service or be otherwise eminently qualified for the specific position.

5.4 Appointment Procedures

5.4.1 For permanent employment. Any request for approval to appoint a foreign national must contain a brief description of the duties of the position and full justification for the proposed employment, including the following:

5.4.1.1 The functional and organizational titles of the position, as well as grade level or rate of compensation.

5.4.1.2 The organizational and geographical locations of the position.

5.4.1.3 A description of the prospective appointee's special skills and qualifications.

5.4.1.4 The resident status and type of visa of the foreign national (and spouse and children, if applicable) as established by the appropriate USCIS Office.

5.4.1.5 A completed resume (signed by the applicant).

5.4.1.6 A position description.

5.4.2 For nonpermanent employment. Any request for approval to appoint a foreign national shall contain a brief description of the duties of the position and full justification for the proposed employment, including the following:

5.4.2.1 The functional and organizational titles of the position, as well as grade level or rate of compensation.

5.4.2.2 The organizational and geographical locations of the position.

5.4.2.3 A description of the prospective appointee's qualifications (special qualifications, if appointment is to an expert or consultant position).

5.4.2.4 The resident status and type of visa of the foreign national (and spouse and children, if applicable) as established by the appropriate USCIS Office.

5.4.2.5 A completed resume (signed by the applicant).

5.4.2.6 If appropriate, NASA Form 452, Request for Services of Consultant or Expert, which shall include a description of duties.

5.4.3 Documentation to meet special security requirements. All requests for approval to appoint foreign nationals shall also include the following:

5.4.3.1 A statement signed and dated by the foreign national applicant indicating whether he/she has formally declared intent to become a U.S. citizen and, if not, his/her intent to become a citizen if employed by NASA (this is not required of foreign nationals considered for nonpermanent employment except in those positions requiring access to classified information); and whether the foreign national or spouse has any relatives residing in Designated Countries, as determined by the U.S. export control regulations, and, if so, the name, relationship, age, address, occupation, and description of the nature and extent of contact with each such relative. A Designated Country is any country that meets any one or more of the following criteria: country with which the U.S. has no diplomatic relations; country determined by the Department of State to support terrorism; country under sanction or embargo by the U.S.; country of missile technology concern. For the most up-to-date information pertaining to the Designated Country list, contact the Center Export Control Administrator for further guidance.

5.4.3.2 A Memorandum for Record from the Center's Security Officer reflecting the level of access to classified information, as established by the appropriate supervisory official, which shall be required by foreign nationals in performance of duties or a statement that the foreign national shall be assigned to duties which do not involve access to classified information, and that such access can be effectively precluded. The memorandum shall also indicate that the required security documentation has been reviewed, is adequate and complete, and that there are no apparent factors which would preclude granting access.

5.4.3.3 Visa Reclassification. Foreign nationals offered employment must be legally admitted to the U.S. for permanent residence or otherwise authorized by the USCIS to be employed. Foreign nationals who do not need a valid Alien Registration Receipt Card (green card), Form I-551, may be sponsored for visa reclassification by NASA. The requesting Center shall forward (after the Administrator's approval) USCIS Form I-140, Immigrant Petition for Alien Worker, and required documentation to the USCIS Service Center with jurisdiction over the location where the foreign national will be employed.

5.4.3.4 Waiver of Residence Abroad Requirements (two-year foreign residence requirements). If it is necessary to obtain this waiver for a foreign national in the United States on the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program, the Center shall follow the policies and procedures in NPD 1371.G, Waivers of the Residence Abroad Requirement for Employees of NASA Contractors and Grantees, and NPR 1371.1, Requests for Waivers of the Residence Abroad Requirements for Exchange Visitors Sponsored by NASA Contractors and Grantees.

5.4.3.5 Submission of Request. After approval and signature of the Center Director, the request for approval to appoint a foreign national and all supporting documentation shall be sent through the appropriate Headquarters executive, the Assistant Administrator for the Office of Human Capital

Management, the Assistant Administrator for the Office of External Relations, and the General Counsel, NASA Headquarters, for approval by the Administrator.

5.4.3.6 Transportation. When the transportation of the appointee and dependents and shipment of household goods to the first duty station are authorized under 5 U.S.C. 5723, the appointee shall execute NASA Form 420, Service Agreement - First Duty Station Appointment.

5.4.3.7 Change in Citizenship. The Center shall provide a written notice to the foreign national, on or before the date of appointment, indicating the foreign national's responsibility to notify the Center HR office immediately of any changes in visa or citizenship status. The written notice shall inform the foreign national that he/she must submit the naturalization data to the Center HR office within ten days after the foreign national becomes a U.S. citizen. Upon notification of a change in citizenship status, the Center shall:

- a. Initiate action to convert the employee from an excepted to a competitive appointment.
- b. Submit to the Assistant Administrator for Human Capital Management (within ten days) the foreign national's naturalization certificate number, the effective date, and the name and location of the court. This information shall also be provided to the Center's Security Officer.

Chapter 6. Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) Assignments

6.1 Responsibility

6.1.1 The Center's Financial Management Officer and the Headquarters Office of Budget Management and Systems Support are responsible for ensuring that financial safeguards, in accordance with NPR 9050.5, Cash Management for Contracts and NPR 9700.1, Travel, are included in the terms of all agreements.

6.1.2 Centers are responsible for providing information and data to meet reporting requirements in accordance with Agency procedures and Federal regulations.

6.1.3 Centers shall ensure that any IPA assignment to a position/set of duties that meets the NASA-specific criteria contained in NPR 3792.1, Plan for a Drug-Free Workplace, as a Testing Designated Position (TDP) shall be designated as such and so stated in the IPA agreement. The individual assigned to the duties shall be so notified and shall acknowledge, in writing, that the set of duties to which he/she is being assigned is subject to random drug testing.

6.1.4 Centers shall ensure that legal counsel reviews IPA assignment agreements before the effective date.

6.2 Introduction

6.2.1 NASA shall use this mobility program when the assignment serves a sound public purpose of mutual benefit to the Government, or organizations involved, and the employee. IPA assignments are not to be used for the sole purpose of employee training.

6.3 Length of Assignments

6.3.1 Centers may establish an initial assignment period for up to two years. The initial assignment may be extended for up to an additional four years, not to exceed a total of six continuous years for the entire assignment period. Successive assignments with breaks of 60 calendar days or less are regarded as continuous service. Breaks of 61 calendar days or more are not intended to be used as a means for indefinite assignments.

6.4 Approvals

6.4.1 Unless otherwise delegated, the Administrator retains authority to approve new IPA appointments, details, and extensions, including IPA details of non-U.S. citizens to NASA SES, ST, SL, and NEX positions. The Administrator also retains authority to approve IPA assignments of NASA SES, ST, SL, and NEX employees to non-Federal entities.

6.4.2 The authority to approve new IPA appointments, details, and extensions to NASA General Schedule (GS) positions is delegated to Center Directors. (Any reference to Center Directors for the purpose of this chapter also includes the Executive Director for Headquarters Operations and the Executive Director, NASA Shared Services Center.) Center Directors are also authorized to approve

IPA assignments of GS employees to non-Federal entities.

6.5 Funding

6.5.1 Cost-Sharing

6.5.1.1 Cost-sharing arrangements are negotiable between the participating organizations and shall be based on the extent to which the participating organizations benefit from the assignment. NASA and the participating organization shall determine the percentage of allowable costs which each shall pay.

6.5.1.2 It is NASA's policy that the non-Federal entity shall pay at least ten percent of the cost of the assignment. Extensions, modifications of current agreements, and new agreements shall provide that the non-Federal entity will pay at least ten percent of the cost of the assignment. Exceptions may be granted only in rare situations. In such cases, the non-Federal entity shall provide to the NASA organization funding the assignment a written justification for a cost-sharing arrangement of less than ten percent. The assignment may proceed only after the NASA organization funding the assignment concurs on the justification and the NASA official authorized to approve IPA agreements approves it. The written justification shall address the following:

- a. The major benefit to be gained by NASA and/or the non-Federal entity through this assignment.
- b. Why NASA's need and/or the non-Federal entity's need cannot be met in another manner (e.g., IPA assignee from another non-Federal entity that can pay ten percent or more of the cost).
- c. Why it would be detrimental to NASA and/or the non-Federal entity if the assignment is terminated or not approved.

6.5.1.3 A copy of the approved justification must be forwarded along with the IPA agreement to the Office of Human Capital Management.

6.5.2 Indirect and Administrative Costs

6.5.2.1 NASA shall no longer reimburse non-Federal entities for indirect/administrative costs associated with IPA assignments. Extensions and modifications of current agreements that include reimbursement of indirect/administrative costs shall be reviewed by the NASA organization funding the assignment. The funding organization shall determine whether to continue paying these costs or renegotiate the agreement. New agreements shall not include provisions for reimbursing a non-Federal entity's indirect and/or administrative costs.

6.5.2.2 Prohibited indirect or administrative costs include, but are not limited to, charges for preparing and maintaining payroll records, developing reports on the IPA agreement, negotiating the agreement, tuition credits, cellular phones services, office space, furnishings, supplies, purchase of computer software, staff support and computer time, stipends, and other miscellaneous costs. If a Center wishes to reimburse a participating organization for costs not covered by the IPA agreement, procurement officials shall be contacted to determine whether a contract would be appropriate.

6.6 Travel

6.6.1 Travel While on Assignment

6.6.1.1 IPA detailees shall adhere to the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) and NPR 9700.1, Travel.

6.6.1.2 An IPA detailee on assignment to NASA who is authorized to travel is required to use

NASA's electronic travel authorization and travel voucher system for all official travel. IPA detailees who are eligible will be issued a government travel charge card for use in conjunction with official travel.

6.6.1.3 Centers shall retain the documentation supporting the cost comparison conducted to determine whether to pay a per diem allowance or limited relocation expenses.

6.6.2 Per Diem

6.6.2.1 An IPA assignee may receive a per diem allowance; however, family members are excluded. A per diem allowance is only authorized for a maximum period of two years.

6.7 Distribution of Approved Agreement

6.7.1 A copy of each approved agreement and any amendments/modifications to an existing agreement shall be provided to the following:

- a. The Center's Financial Management Officer and for Headquarters, the Office of Budget Management and Systems Support, Budget Management Division.
- b. The Director, Workforce Management and Development Division in the Office of Human Capital Management.

Chapter 7. Employment in the Excepted Service

7.1 Trial Period

7.1.1 Any person appointed to a continuing excepted position without time limitation and without authority for future noncompetitive conversion to competitive appointment (e.g., attorney, foreign national) is required to serve a trial period of one year. This applies not only to the first such appointment but to any subsequent new appointment to this type of excepted position.

7.1.1.1 Each employee shall be evaluated during the trial period prior to the completion of the tenth month of such period.

7.1.1.2 Termination action should be initiated in cases where the employee's work performance or conduct fails to demonstrate fitness or qualifications for continued employment. The employee shall be notified in writing as to why he/she is being terminated and the effective date of the action.

7.1.1.3 In all cases of initial appointments to this type of excepted position, the SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action, covering such an appointment shall contain, under "Remarks," the following: "This appointment is subject to the satisfactory completion of a one-year trial period and recommendation for continued employment at the end of such trial period."

7.1.2 Any person appointed to an excepted position with authority for future noncompetitive conversion to a competitive appointment (e.g., Presidential Management Fellow, Federal Career Intern) is required to meet the conditions of the excepted appointing authority. For example, Presidential Management Fellows and similar appointees shall remain under an excepted-conditional appointment until they meet the requirements for noncompetitive conversion to career (or career-conditional) appointment, without the requirement for a one-year trial period. The requirements stated in the appointing authority provide a period of conditional employment (generally two or more years), which must be completed prior to conversion to a career or career-conditional appointment. This service may be credited toward completion of the probationary period requirement in the competitive service.

7.1.2.1 If conversion is from a nonprofessional position (e.g. student career experience appointee in an engineering technician position) to a professional position (e.g., a professional AST position), service in the nonprofessional position shall not be credited toward completion of the probationary period for the professional position.

7.1.2.2 Each employee shall be evaluated at least two months prior to the projected conversion date.

7.1.3 No trial period is required for appointment to an excepted position with time limitation and without authority for future noncompetitive conversion to competitive appointment (e.g., experts and consultants, college faculty or college graduate students, student temporary employment program appointees). These authorities generally may not be extended beyond a given date or period of time.

Chapter 8. Interagency Detail of Civilian Employees

8.1 Responsibility

8.1.1 The detail or extension of details of NASA employees to the White House requires the approval of the Administrator.

8.1.2 The detail or extension of details of NASA employees to Congressional committees or Congressional staffs requires the approval of the Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs.

8.1.3 The detail or extension of details to international organizations shall be coordinated with the Office of External Relations.

8.1.4 The nonreimbursable interagency detail of employees requires the approval of the appropriate appointing authorities, in coordination with the responsible officials of other agencies and departments (e.g., the Human Resources and Security Offices).

8.2 Introduction

8.2.1 The detailing of civilian personnel, whether reimbursable or nonreimbursable, from other Federal agencies and departments to NASA and from NASA to other Federal agencies and departments is to be mutually beneficial to the organizations involved and should be kept to an essential minimum and within the shortest practicable time limits.

8.2.2 All actions taken under these authorities are subject to review by the Agency Office of Human Capital Management.

8.3 Procedures

8.3.1 The gaining agency or department shall perform the following:

a. Prepare the request and obtain approval. The request shall contain the following information about the detail:

- (1) The employee's name.
- (2) Title.
- (3) Grade and salary.
- (4) Location of current and proposed assignment.
- (5) Reimbursement or nonreimbursement information.
- (6) Required security clearance information.
- (7) Need for the detail.
- (8) A statement of work to be performed or a position description.

(9) Duration (beginning and ending dates) of the detail.

- b. Notify the appropriate security officer of arrival and departure of the detailee.
- c. If reimbursable, process a purchase request to transfer funds upon completion of a satisfactory detail.
- d. Provide any required travel orders (unless otherwise provided for in the agreement).
- e. Submit time and attendance reports to the losing agency or department.

8.3.2 The losing agency or department shall:

- a. Agree to the request.
- b. Document the assignment (if over 30 days) in the detailed employee's official personnel folder.
- c. Maintain time and attendance reports, and pay the detailed employee.
- d. Maintain appropriate contact with the detailed employee.

8.4 Reporting Requirement

8.4.1 Regardless of whether the detail is reimbursable or nonreimbursable, the employee is counted in the Monthly Report of Full-Time Equivalent/Work Year Civilian Employment

(SF-113G) of the losing agency or department. This is not negotiable in interagency agreements.

8.4.2 Center Human Resources Offices shall maintain records on incoming and outgoing details for a period of two years beyond the ending date of the detail. The information shall include:

- a. Name of detailee.
- b. Organization to which detailed (if a NASA employee) or organization from which detailed (if a non-NASA employee).
- c. Period of detail.
- d. Whether or not the detail was reimbursable.

9.1 Responsibility

9.1.1 The Human Resources Director at each NASA Center is responsible for implementing the term appointment and conversion authorities outlined in the NASA Flexibility Act of 2004 (enacted February 24, 2004), as prescribed in this chapter.

9.2 Introduction

9.2.1 The policies in this chapter apply to the term appointment and conversion flexibilities under the NASA Flexibility Act of 2004.

9.3 Definitions

9.3.1 Term Appointment - A nonpermanent appointment made for up to a maximum of six years. Reasons for making a term appointment include, but are not limited to, project work, extraordinary workload, scheduled abolishment, reorganization, contracting out of the function, uncertainty of future funding, or the need to maintain permanent positions for placement of employees who would otherwise be displaced from other parts of the organization.

9.3.2 Same Geographic Location - For purposes of this provision, this term is defined to mean the same Center (as that in which the employee is currently working), or any component facility serviced by the same HR office.

9.3.3 Current Continuous Service - A period of time, beginning at the present and extending back through all periods of term employment in the competitive service not separated by a break of three or more days. The service need not have been performed solely at NASA and may have occurred in one or more Federal agencies.

9.3.4 Critical Need - Competency area in which the Agency is, or will be, at risk, as identified in the NASA workforce plan prescribed by the NASA Flexibility Act of 2004.

9.4 Exclusions

9.4.1 This authority may not be used in connection with a political appointee who holds a position that has been excepted from the competitive service by reason of its confidential, policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating character (Schedule C position); or a position in the Senior Executive Service as a noncareer appointee as such term is defined in 5 U.S.C. § 3132(a).

9.5 Making or Extending Term Appointments for up to Six Years

9.5.1 Announcements for term positions shall, as a matter of standard practice, state that the position has the potential to be extended for up to a maximum of six years, even if the initial appointment period is for a shorter period.

9.5.2 Based on the preceding, a term appointment may then be extended for up to six years on a noncompetitive basis.

9.6 Advertising Vacant Positions

9.6.1 Term Positions

9.6.1.1 In the absence of compelling reasons not to do so, all vacancy announcements to fill term positions shall state that individuals selected under this announcement will be eligible for conversion to permanent appointment under the provisions of the NASA Flexibility Act of 2004.

9.6.1.2 If management determines that it is not appropriate for the vacancy announcement to offer a conversion opportunity, the responsible human resources specialist shall document the case file as to the reasons for that decision.

9.6.2 Permanent Positions

9.6.2.1 Announcements for permanent positions may include a statement that term employees who meet the requisite eligibility criteria may compete under competitive placement procedures and, if selected, be converted to permanent appointment.

9.7 Basic Requirements for All Conversions of Term Employees

9.7.1 The employee was selected for the term position under Title 5 competitive procedures, and the announcement stated that the individual(s) selected may be eligible for conversion to permanent appointment.

9.7.2 The individual has at least two years of continuous service under a term appointment in the competitive service.

9.7.3 The individual's performance is fully successful or better. Formal performance documentation for the entire two-year period is required to support this determination.

9.8 Requirements for Noncompetitive Conversion

9.8.1 An employee who meets all of the preceding criteria is eligible for noncompetitive conversion to a permanent appointment to a position that:

- a. Is in the same geographic location as the term position currently held.
- b. Is in the same occupational series as the term position currently held.
- c. Has no greater promotion potential than the term position currently held.

9.8.2 No term employee has an entitlement to a noncompetitive conversion. Even if an eligible employee is available and interested, management may still elect to require competition, selecting the candidate best qualified for the position.

9.9 Requirements for Competitive Conversion

9.9.1 Term employees who meet the basic eligibility requirements, but who do not meet all of the requirements for noncompetitive conversion, may be considered under competitive placement procedures.

9.9.2 When management does not wish to make a noncompetitive selection, employees eligible for

noncompetitive action may apply and be considered under competitive procedures. The announcement shall state that it is open to term employees with conversion eligibility under the NASA Flexibility Act of 2004.

9.10 Referring Term Employees for Selection Consideration Under Competitive Placement Procedures

9.10.1 Term employees may apply to any competitive announcement open to term employees with conversion eligibility under the NASA Flexibility Act of 2004.

9.10.2 Qualified term employees shall be referred and considered equally with other candidates.

9.10.3 Term employees who apply based on their eligibility for conversion shall be presumed to be correctly identified. No further validation of eligibility, e.g., level of performance, shall be required prior to referral.

9.10.4 Term employees who are eligible for noncompetitive conversion shall be referred on the list of candidates eligible for noncompetitive selection.

9.11 Advising Employees

9.11.1 All new term employees should be informed regarding NASA's term authorities when they are appointed.

9.12 Reporting Requirements

9.12.1 All conversions of term appointments under these provisions are to be in accordance with the format prescribed by the Agency Office of Human Capital Management. Information is to be provided to Headquarters as requested, but not less than annually at such dates specified, to ensure compliance with annual Congressional reporting requirements.

9.12.2 Each Center shall, at a minimum, maintain data on the total number of term appointments converted to permanent and, of those, the number of appointments made to address a critical need.

9.12.3 Centers may maintain additional information as they deem useful and appropriate.

Chapter 10. Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP) Guidelines

10.1 Responsibility

10.1.1 The Assistant Administrator for OHCM shall be responsible for:

- a. Developing the program and procedures for Agencywide implementation.
- b. Preparing the Agency's annual report for submission to the OPM.
- c. Encouraging FEORP activities in the Agency through training, information, and coordinated recruitment activities.

10.1.2 The Center Human Resources Directors shall be responsible for:

- a. Developing and implementing plans to reduce underrepresentation in the Center's workforce.
- b. Designating a FEORP Coordinator who shall serve as a liaison on all aspects of the program.
- c. Consulting with EEO Officials on FEORP plans and accomplishments.

10.2 Introduction

10.2.1 FEORP plans are targeted recruitment programs based on a determination of underrepresentation of minorities and/or women in the various occupational categories, both nationally and in specific geographic locations. Each NASA Center is required to establish a recruitment program for minorities and women in a manner that seeks to eliminate underrepresentation in the various categories of civil service employment, pursuant to regulations prescribed by OPM as required by 5 U.S.C. § 7201(c) and outlined in 5 C.F.R. § 720.

10.3 Program Reporting

10.3.1 Center plans shall include annual specific determinations of underrepresentation for each group and shall be supported by quantifiable indices by which progress toward eliminating underrepresentation can be measured in the various categories of civil service employment.

10.3.2 The OHCM shall forward a copy of the consolidated report to the Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity for inclusion of the information in its Annual Model EEO Agency Accomplishment Report to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

10.4 Assessment of Underrepresentation

10.4.1 A determination will be made of underrepresentation for all groups, and the indices used for determining underrepresentation will be documented.

10.4.2 In calculating indices of representation, the NASA Center shall use currently defined NASA Supplemental Classification System (NSCS) classification codes. The NSCS provides schematic tables that include NSCS classification codes, NASA titles, and OPM series and grade levels which

can be matched to civilian labor force data.

10.4.3 All indices calculated for NSCS groups 200, 600, 700, and 900 shall use national labor force data unless the local labor force data is greater. All indices calculated for the NSCS groups 100, 300, and 500 shall use local civilian labor force data unless the national data is greater. OPM has granted an exception to using national data for grades GS-4 and below.

10.4.4 For purposes of determining underrepresentation, the local area is the Metropolitan Statistical Area, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget, within which the Center is located.

10.4.5 A number of simplifying steps may be used by NASA Centers to calculate indices of representation. For example, Dryden Flight Research Center and Stennis Space Center may use grade groupings for all NSCS classification codes. Because of the size of these Centers, there will be no need to calculate indices for individual grades.

10.4.6 Centers, including Headquarters, need to calculate an index for a particular NSCS classification code only if the number of employees exceeds 100. For example, Langley Research Center calculates only for NSCS groups 300, 500, 600, and 700, while Headquarters calculates for 500, 600, and 700.

10.4.7 Underrepresentation exists if the percentage of the race/national origin and gender groups for NSCS positions is less than the corresponding Relevant Civilian Labor Force (RCLF). The current RCLF data (at the time of issuance of this NPR) is available at the U.S. Census Bureau Web site at <http://www.census.gov/eo2000/>. Centers are responsible for ensuring usage of the latest available RCLF data.

10.5 Reporting Requirement

10.5.1 The annual reporting format shall be determined by OPM and the Agency OHCM and forwarded to each NASA Center for completion.

Appendix A. Acronyms

AA	Assistant Administrator
AST	Aerospace Technology
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
FEORP	Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program
FTR	Federal Travel Regulations
GPA	Grade Point Average
GS	General Schedule
HCM	Human Capital Management
HR	Human Resources
HRD	Human Resources Director
ICTAP	Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program
IPA	Intergovernmental Personnel Act
NEX	NASA Excepted
NPD	NASA Policy Directive
NPR	NASA Procedural Requirements
NSCS	NASA Supplemental Classification System
OHCM	Office of Human Capital Management
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
RCLF	Relevant Civilian Labor Force
SES	Senior Executive Service
SF	Standard Form
SL	Senior Level
ST	Scientific and Technical
StaRS	Staffing and Recruitment System
TDP	Testing Designated Position
USC	United States Code
USCIS	United States Citizenship and Immigration Services
USIA	United States Information Agency