

Professor of Practice Policies and Status Review—Academic Affairs Committee

Includes a motion to change the Faculty Manual description of Professors of Practice and establish three new ranks of Teaching Professors

October 6, 2014; rev. October 30, 2014; November 18, 2014; November 23, 2014; February 2015; March 2015

Sub-committee Members: Natasha Cooper, Sandra Lane, Ian MacInnes, Amanda Nicholson, Robert A. Rubinstein

Request to the Academic Affairs Committee

The Senate Committee on Academic Affairs (AAC) was asked at its 9 December 2011 meeting to review the policies and status of Professors of Practice (PoPs) at Syracuse University. The minutes of the committee meeting reflect the following proposal by Kal Alston, then senior vice president for human capital development:

... the AAC [should] assume the project of reviewing rules across schools and colleges for regular [full time] non-tenure track faculty appointments, often referenced as Professors of Practice (PoP). When Debbie Freund was Provost, many [schools and colleges] began bringing in professionals to bring practical wisdom into the classroom, and sometimes for research. This practice has been growing and in recent years, there has been a growing number of non-tenure track faculty with varying parameters and descriptions depending on the [school/college]. Currently, at the University level, there are no defined standard terms or rules and for the most part, no desire to create a one-size-fits-all set of parameters to be used by all schools and colleges. However, the Provost feels this practice should be described in the Faculty Manual with clearly defined parameters to the extent possible.

Alston proposed the AAC form a sub-committee to look at existing descriptions in each school/college and draft language for the Manual.

Background

During the Spring 2012 semester, the entire Academic Affairs Committee discussed the proposed review. Committee members were provided with policies from schools/colleges where policies existed. During the 2012-2013 academic year, the Committee met with several deans and/or representatives of schools and colleges.

Subsequent to these interviews, Sandra Lane, then chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, presented a draft outline format for an analysis of PoPs at Syracuse University. This was discussed and amended by the entire committee. The committee tasked Sandra Lane and Natasha Cooper with conducting the preliminary review of PoP materials on behalf of the committee.

In January 2014, Ian MacInnes assumed the chair of the Academic Affairs Committee. He subsequently asked Robert Rubinstein, chair of the Senate Committee on Appointment and Promotions, to join with Sandra Lane, Natasha Cooper, and himself in preparing the preliminary report. Two professors of practice, Amanda Nicholson and Dave Molta, agreed to provide feedback.

In February-March 2015, the AAC committee reviewed and revised the initial draft of the report, and drafted a motion relevant to the content.

Data Sources

We consulted four sources of data to inform this report:

- A. University-level documents relating to the use of the Professor of Practice
- B. Interviews with representatives of several Schools and Colleges
- C. Existing PoP policy documents from Syracuse University Schools and Colleges that had such policies
- D. Practices at other universities

The Academic Affairs Committee was interested in obtaining quantitative information about PoPs. For instance, the committee wished to know the number of PoPs hired as targets of opportunity, within 5 years of completing terminal degrees in their field, and contractual terms, among other things. We could identify no centralized source for these data, and interviews proved inconclusive. One of our recommendations below reflects the need for better record keeping and data management by the University regarding PoPs.

Key Findings

The *Syracuse University Faculty Manual* available from the Office of the Provost describes the Professor of Practice position, under heading 2.1 Faculty and Academic Staff (<http://provost.syr.edu/faculty-support/faculty-manual/2-1-faculty-and-academic-staff/>) as:

Professor of Practice

Professors of Practice are distinguished professional practitioners whose presence on campus and in the classroom connect the University community to valuable expertise and professional publics. These appointments are intended as flexible, non-tenured, and non-service accruing positions. Professors of Practice are full-time University employees with a maximum of .75FTE allocated to faculty duties and the remaining FTE allocated to administrative, creative, or professional activities that add value to the University's educational enterprise.

This Syracuse University description of the Professors of Practice is consistent with that offered by the American Association of University Professors in their *Report on Professors of Practice* (<http://www.aaup.org/report/professors-practice>), which provided a general description of incumbents in the position as being:

... principally engaged in teaching and are not expected to be significantly involved in research activities, but they can be distinguished from the large majority of other full-time non-tenure-track teaching faculty in a number of ways. They are usually appointed following a national search. Their academic performance is regularly evaluated according to criteria appropriate to their positions. The length of their renewable term appointments is typically five years rather than one year. Their salaries and benefits often approach those of probationary and tenured faculty members, although they do not match them. They may also have more opportunity to participate in departmental and institutional structures of faculty governance than is ordinarily the case with full-time faculty not on the tenure track, including the opportunity to serve as department chairs.

Through the interviews and documents, we found that there is great variation among Schools and Colleges at Syracuse University in regard to the role of Professors of Practice and the obligations and

responsibilities accorded to them. We note some of this variation below.

- Teaching load of PoPs range from 1-4 courses per semester for those who have teaching responsibilities. It appears that the most common load is 3 courses per semester.
- Administrative roles of PoPs also vary greatly. Some administer specific subprograms within a major and some chair departments or serve in administrative capacities.
- Advising responsibilities for PoPs vary from academic advising of undergraduates and supervising community internships or practicums as a main task to advising being just part of PoPs' duty.
- Written bylaws for PoPs exist for some but not all Schools and Colleges and among these, there is considerable variation concerning how PoP positions are conceptualized. Some require a Professor of Practice to have attained very senior levels of non-academic recognition in their field, while others allow the appointment of Assistant Professors of Practice. Some Schools and College have clear statements regarding the proportion of PoPs to tenure-line faculty. Others do not.
- The hiring mechanisms used for PoPs are different. For example, in some cases, an advertised national search is conducted and a faculty committee reviews and interviews the applicants, and makes a recommendation to the Dean. In other cases, a senior person becomes available to join the university and is recruited as a target of opportunity as a PoP.
- Contract requirements and length of appointment vary widely among the School and Colleges.
- PoP evaluation for annual review and reappointment varies from a group of faculty conducting a review to a Chair or Dean individually conducting reviews. We could identify no formal university-wide protocol for the evaluation of PoPs.
- PoPs do not have standard expectations for continuing professional development. Unlike tenure-line faculty for whom expectations are more-or-less formalized, expectations for PoPs are sometimes *ad hoc* in nature.
- There are questions about appropriate ranks for newly hired PoPs. PoPs seem originally to have been thought of as individuals who have extensive professional experience, expertise, and contacts in the areas for which they are hired. However, some Schools/Colleges engage PoPs with less extensive experience. The practice and need for ranking varies by college.

Recommended Goals

Professors of Practice bring important strengths to the University. The value to the University and its students of bringing accomplished professionals in various fields on to the faculty as Professors of Practice is significant.

In addition to such accomplished professionals, however, various schools use the PoP designation to hire contract faculty simply to address teaching and service needs that cannot be met by hiring tenure-line faculty with research, teaching, and service responsibilities. That need is also amply illustrated by the university's dependence on adjunct instructors to fill teaching needs. The expansion of the role of Professor of Practice to include those who have recently completed their terminal degrees and to others who might be a better fit for tenure-line or adjunct positions weakens the Professor of Practice title. The increasing number of PoP appointments at the University also threatens faculty governance by eroding the control of tenured faculty over tenure decisions, especially in settings where

PoPs supervise, evaluate, and vote on the tenure and promotion of tenure-line faculty.

Instructors hired primarily for teaching and/or administration should be incorporated into the life of the university community on a full-time, continuing basis whenever possible, and should have opportunities for professional advancement and promotion. The PoP designation, however, is not appropriate for faculty hired primarily to fill teaching or administrative needs rather than for their years of professional expertise. The PoP designation should be restricted to hires that fit the latter profile.

The current situation leads us to recommend the following actions:

1. Have the university maintain records concerning the recruitment, hiring, terms of employment, responsibilities, expectations, and evaluation of Professors of Practice, as well as other kinds of faculty, and to make this information available to the University Senate annually.
2. Label faculty positions consistently across the university in ways that distinguish faculty lines with research expectations from faculty hired primarily for teaching and service, and both from faculty hired for their years of non-academic professional experience (Professors of Practice). Therefore, the committee will bring to the Senate, in Fall 2015, motions to place into the Faculty Manual language defining the nature of appointments to the rank of Professor of Practice and the new faculty ranks of Teaching Professor, Associate Teaching Professor, and Assistant Teaching Professor (see below).
3. In recognition of the need for non-tenure-track teaching faculty demonstrated by the varied uses of the PoP designation as well as the many adjuncts positions at the university, we recommend that colleges and schools replace, wherever possible, multiple continuing Part Time Instructor (adjunct) positions with full-time Teaching Professors hired primarily for teaching and service (see below for language proposed for the Faculty Handbook regarding new faculty ranks of Teaching Professor, Associate Teaching Professor, and Assistant Teaching Professor).
4. In the case of new appointments, hiring and promotion of each kind of faculty position, including expectations for training, experience, terminal degrees, and performance, will conform to the Faculty Handbook's definitions and descriptions of various faculty titles and duties. Colleges, schools, and departments should consider on a case-by-case basis and in consultation with the individuals involved whether to convert existing Professor of Practice appointments to Teaching Professor appointments.
5. The university must establish and maintain faculty oversight of decisions to hire and promote faculty members of all kinds.
6. The university must require that searches to hire one kind of professor (e.g., tenure-track professor with research and teaching responsibilities) cannot be changed to another kind of professor (e.g., a Prof. of Practice or a purely teaching professor) without redoing the search.

In addition to these six recommendations, we move that the *Syracuse University Faculty Manual* be changed to incorporate the following descriptions of Professors of Practice and of the new ranks of Teaching Professors, Associate Teaching Professors, and Assistant Teaching Professors. These descriptions shall then govern all future appointments with those titles.

We realize that the below additions to the Faculty Manual constitute major changes in how Syracuse University defines faculty status and ranks. We therefore intend to announce and distribute the motion to make these additions to the Faculty Manual when we present our report on the status review of Professors of Practice at the April Senate meeting. **We will not, however, bring the motion forward for Senate approval until the fall semester**, to allow considerable time for discussion among

faculty and administrators. We expect such debate to be wide ranging and to include, among other things,

1. whether department chairs and other senior administrative positions may be drawn from the ranks of full-time non-tenure-line faculty, and
2. whether Professors of Practice should also be differentiated into three ranks with the opportunity for promotion through the ranks.

The Academic Affairs Committee will take this input into account in formulating a final version of this motion to put before the Senate in the fall semester, 2015.

Title and Description Professor of Practice

The title of Professor of the Practice is available only for long term, non-tenure-track faculty who are accomplished and highly experienced individuals in a relevant field of professional practice and who can provide effective, practice oriented instruction in areas that supplement the core pedagogical instruction provided by the tenured and tenure track faculty. While Professors of Practice may, depending on specific requirements of the college or school, have some additional research, service, or outreach obligations, teaching will be their primary responsibility. They are expected to participate in routine service to their departments, schools or colleges, and the university. The title may not be used for positions whose responsibilities largely replicate those of tenure-track faculty or Teaching Professors.

Professional materials related to employment at Syracuse University should identify Professors of Practice by full academic title. Full titles should be used on university websites, on SU business cards, and in other fora for which their employment at Syracuse University in a faculty role is relevant (e.g., published letters, editorials, and articles and speeches).

Professors of Practice are expected to teach in the classroom or laboratory, to meet with students during scheduled office hours; to prepare and grade assignments and examinations; to contribute to the design, syllabi, and organization of departmental course offerings; and to know applications and development of pedagogy in their field.

The dean is responsible for determining appropriate qualifications for professors of practice, which may vary by subfield or department. Appointments of Professors of Practice are for periods of no more than five years and are renewable.

Professors of practices are valued members of the University Faculty. They are expected to take an active role in the governance of their college or school faculty, though colleges, schools and departments may limit their scope of actions. Professors of Practice should not, however, vote or otherwise supervise the hiring, evaluation, and tenure and promotion of tenure-track faculty. Professors of Practice should participate fully in those decisions that are directly related to their roles within the college or school and within the department. The dean or director has the responsibility of identifying those issues that are related to their roles within the college or school, and the department chair has that responsibility within the department. Within the department, Professors of Practice shall participate fully in hiring decisions of other Professors of Practice.

The Professor of Practice title shall not be used either a) to fill purely teaching faculty positions that do not require a long record of accomplishments in a non-academic profession; b) as a substitute

for tenured appointments or appointments that would normally lead to tenure; or c) as a means of circumventing the commitments and obligations associated with tenure appointments. Persons holding Professor of Practice appointments may apply for tenure-track or teaching faculty positions only as part of a regular, affirmative action search or the issuance of an administrative waiver.

Persons appointed as a Professor of Practice will not be granted tenure or be eligible for research leave, but they may be eligible for professional development leave.

A one-semester notice of termination must be provided to Professors of Practice who have had at least two but not more than three years of continuous service, and a two-semester notice must be provided to those having completed three or more years of continuous service (excluding summers). Such notice should be in writing to the individual and specifically note that it is serving as notice of non-renewal or early termination, should such actions be necessary.

Title and Descriptions: Teaching Professor; Associate Teaching Professor; Assistant Teaching Professor

The title of (Assistant, Associate) Teaching Professor implies academic qualifications and terminal degrees in the relevant field of instruction. Teaching Professors are expected to teach in the classroom or laboratory; to meet with students during scheduled office hours; to prepare and grade assignments and examinations; to contribute to the design, syllabi, and organization of departmental course offerings; and to know applications and development of pedagogy in the field. Teaching Professors are not expected to conduct research. They may carry administrative duties that include activities such as developing independent or team-taught courses, producing teaching methodologies and materials, and training other faculty in instructional methods and design. They are expected to participate in routine service to their departments, schools or colleges, and the university.

Professional materials related to employment at Syracuse University should identify Teaching Professors by full academic title. Full titles should be used on university websites, on SU business cards, and in other fora for which their employment at Syracuse University in a faculty role is relevant (e.g., published letters, editorials, and articles and speeches).

Promotion to Associate Teaching Professor is based on evidence of excellence in teaching and pedagogy, and may include the record of service to the department, school, college, or university, as appropriate. Teaching excellence may be shown through classroom teaching, contributions to the design, syllabi, and organization of departmental course offerings, and applications or development of pedagogy in the field. Contributions to pedagogical advances will vary from field to field, and may be demonstrated by, but not limited to, developing independent or team-taught courses, creating teaching materials and methodologies, training and supervising other lecturers, or holding administrative or supervisory responsibilities for course offerings. Promotion to Teaching Professor is based on continued excellence in teaching and pedagogy as well as leadership in teaching administration. The dean is responsible for determining appropriate qualifications for each rank, which may vary by subfield or department.

Assistant and Associate Teaching Professors may normally request promotion after at least three years of service in rank. Teaching Professors and Associate Teaching Professors may be hired at rank if they have appropriate qualifications and teaching experience. Appointments of Teaching Professors and Associate Teaching Professors are for periods of no more than five years and are

renewable. Appointments of Assistant Teaching Professors are for periods of not more than three years and are renewable.

Promotion from Assistant to Associate and from Associate to Teaching Professor should be subject to oversight by a committee formed by the department chair or college dean. These committees should include at least one Teaching Professor, in addition to tenured members of the relevant department(s). The recommendation of the committee and department faculty will be transmitted by the department chair to the Dean of the School or College, with his or her own recommendation. The final decision on promotion occurs at the School or College. Candidates for promotion have the right to review all materials related to their promotion and to meet with the committee and the department chair as part of the review process. Promotion is neither necessary nor sufficient for contract renewal.

Teaching Professors of all ranks are valued members of the University Faculty. They are expected to take an active role in the governance of their college or school faculty, though colleges, schools and departments may define their scope of actions more narrowly. Teaching Professors should not, however, vote or otherwise supervise the hiring, evaluation, and tenure and promotion of tenure-track faculty. Teaching Professors should participate fully in those decisions that are directly related to their roles within the college or school and within the department. The dean or director has the responsibility of identifying those issues that are related to their roles within the college or school, and the department chair has that responsibility within the department. Within the department or equivalent unit, Teaching Professors shall participate fully in hiring decisions of other Teaching Professors.

The Teaching Professor title of any rank shall not be used either a) to fill faculty positions that require a long record of accomplishments in a non-academic profession and are more appropriately designated as a Professor of Practice position; b) as a substitute for tenured appointments or appointments that would normally lead to tenure; or c) as a means of circumventing the commitments and obligations associated with tenure appointments.

Persons holding Teaching Professor appointments may apply for tenure-track or instructional faculty positions only as part of a regular, affirmative action search or the issuance of an administrative waiver.

Persons appointed to a Teaching Professor title will not be granted tenure or be eligible for research leave, but they may be eligible for professional development leave.

A one-semester notice of termination must be provided to Teaching Professors who have had at least two but not more than three years of continuous service, and a two-semester notice must be provided to those having completed three or more years of continuous service (excluding summers). Such notice should be in writing to the individual and specifically note that it is serving as notice of non-renewal or early termination, should such actions be necessary.

Policies, Guidelines or Related Materials for Other Institutions

Boston College, Policies and Procedures, Faculty Handbook:

<http://www.bc.edu/publications/fachbk/policies.html>; section on Adjunct and Non-tenure-track Faculty: <http://www.bc.edu/publications/fachbk/policies/adjunct.html>

Boston University, Office of the Provost, Faculty Handbook, Classification of Ranks and Titles:

<http://www.bu.edu/handbook/appointments-and-promotions/classification-of-ranks-and-titles/>

Brandeis University/Contract Faculty Guidelines:

http://www.brandeis.edu/provost/guidelines/pdf/Contract_faculty_guidelines_approved_113009.pdf

Cornell University – Faculty Handbook 2010: <http://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/handbook/toc.html>

Cornell University – Faculty Handbook 2010/2.0 Academic Appointments, Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion: <http://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/handbook/Chapter%202.pdf>

Duke University, Provost's Office of Academic Affairs, Summary of Academic Titles:

<http://www.facultyaffairs.provost.duke.edu/titles.html>

George Washington University Faculty Handbook:

<http://provost.gwu.edu/sites/provost.gwu.edu/files/downloads/faculty-handbook.pdf>

Northeastern University Faculty Handbook and University Policies; see section on Academic Organization: <http://www.northeastern.edu/facultyhandbook/handbook/index.html>

Texas A and M University Guidelines to Faculty Titles:

<http://dof.tamu.edu/sites/default/files/hiring/Guidelines%20to%20Faculty%20Titles%20%28Modified%205-6-13%29.pdf>

Shamos, Michael I. Handbook of Academic Titles, 2002,

<http://euro.ecom.cmu.edu/titles/titlebook.htm>

University of Connecticut, Faculty Titles Dictionary, Temporary Non-Tenure Track Positions:

http://www.hr.uconn.edu/employment_services/facdictn.html

University of Rochester Faculty Handbook:

http://www.rochester.edu/provost/assets/PDFs/Faculty_Manual.pdf; pages 21-31