

Memorandum

TO: Joe Burns & Mike Fontaine, Office of Dean of the Faculty

FROM: Gretchen Ritter, College of Arts & Sciences

RE: College of Arts & Sciences vote on Professor of Practice legislation

December 10, 2015

Enclosed is the proposal of the College of Arts & Sciences to adopt the use of the academic title Professor of the Practice. The motion to adopt this proposal passed a vote by the tenured and tenure-track faculty this month by a vote of 297 in favor, 44 opposed, and 9 abstentions. The 85% positive votes represent 55% of the total number of such faculty eligible to vote (540).

You will note that we conducted only a vote of the tenured/tenure track faculty rather than the additional vote of the “non-tenure-track faculty” mentioned in the enabling legislation. As explained below, this is due to the atypical nature of the introduction of this new title in the College of Arts and Sciences. In determining the voting issue, Dean Gretchen Ritter consulted extensively with the office of the Dean of the Faculty and the office of the John Siliciano, the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, who played a primary role in drafting the essentially identical voting procedures for the Clinical Professor, Research Professor and Professor of Practice titles. Our actions are based on their input (we have included the email exchanges related to this issue for your information).

The enabling legislation for the adoption of Clinical, Research and Professor of Practice titles indicates that the purpose of the new professorial titles was primarily intended to provide an existing group of non-tenure-track faculty with the kind of standard professorial designation used by our peers. This has been the case in all of the units that have adopted these titles. Under such circumstances, it was obviously necessary to provide those groups of faculty with a say in the adoption of a new title that would replace their current titles.

In our case, however, there is *no existing group of individuals* within the College of Arts & Sciences whom we envision re-titling as Professors of the Practice. Rather, the College’s pursuit of a new Professor of the Practice title is based on the College’s interest in recruiting a small new class of faculty – not currently existing in the college - whose backgrounds are not primarily academic, but who rather have distinguished themselves in professions outside the academy and can thus add a dimension of practical experience to the classroom. This is particularly important in ensuring that our students have sufficiently robust and competitive backgrounds as they enter their careers.

Given that we do not have such faculty, there is no logical group to vote on the proposal. We do not consider those currently holding Lecturer or Senior Lecturer titles to be an appropriate voting group under the enabling legislation, as these positions are for faculty with a significantly different mission and background from those the College would recruit as Professors of Practice, and they would not as a general matter be eligible for appointment into the new title.

We ask that you share the proposal, vote results and accompanying information with the CAPP committee for their review.

May 2015
College of Arts and Sciences Proposal
Use of the Academic Title of Professor of the Practice

Justification:

The College of Arts and Sciences is proposing the addition of the title of *Professor of the Practice* to be held by a limited number of distinguished and highly experienced individuals in artistic or professional fields (e.g., creative writing, acting, music, public service, investigative journalism or media innovation, scientific or international or corporate or non-profit leadership, etc.) who are focused primarily on the teaching mission. The title of *Professor of the Practice* is well-established among many of Cornell's peer institutions, including MIT, Harvard, and Carnegie Mellon. The title is potentially relevant in dual career hiring in order to be competitive with our peers in hiring the best faculty. *Professors of the Practice* would provide our students with a deeper understanding of the practical application of particular fields of study and help promote the integration of academic scholarship with practical experience. The appointment of these individuals would also provide opportunities for students and faculty to interact with and to benefit from the experiences of distinguished practitioners and professionals who now want to spend some time teaching, drawing upon their notable experience.

Description of Position:

The position *Professor of the Practice* would be available for a limited and defined group of short- to long-term, non-tenure-track positions. This is primarily a teaching position with a full-time teaching load corresponding to four to six courses per year. Individual teaching loads will be determined based on the type of courses taught and other responsibilities that might be assigned by the department, such as student advising, curriculum development and program oversight. While faculty of this rank may have additional research or service responsibilities, teaching will be their primary responsibility at Cornell. The title may not be used for positions whose responsibilities largely replicate those of tenure-track faculty. Similarly, the title is not meant for positions whose responsibilities and eligibility qualifications largely replicate those now employed as Lecturers and Senior Lecturers. While the primary responsibilities of both Lecturers and Professors of the Practice will be teaching, appointees to the latter title are expected to have distinguished themselves outside the academy.

Terms of Appointment

Use of the new title would be optional for departments and would only be used to address pedagogical or dual career needs if and when departments found it helpful. A national search is required; waiver of a search must follow current protocols for tenure-track positions. A terminal degree in the field or commensurate experience is required. The term of appointment is three years, and the term is renewable indefinitely. Appointment and re-appointments to this title must be approved by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Professors of the Practice will be eligible for the annual salary improvement program for faculty. They may apply for advertised tenure-track positions, but may not move to an unadvertised tenure-track position that does not include a national/international search. Non-renewal of an appointment as a Professor of the Practice will require a one-year notice of non-renewal. Faculty holding this title are not eligible for study leave or sabbatical leave. This group of

faculty are required to submit an annual report per departmental and college guidelines, and they are required to complete the University's Conflict of Interest reporting.

Percentage Limitations

The percentage of positions bearing this title may not exceed 10% of the college's existing tenure-track faculty positions; and no more than 25% of a department's faculty may hold such titles. Given that their use is optional, it is possible that these titles will never comprise percentages this high.

Voting and Other Rights

Professors of the Practice will be non-voting members of the department/college faculty except in matters that are directly related to their roles with the department/college – such as curriculum and pedagogy. The dean shall have the responsibility of identifying those issues that are related to their roles with the college and the department chair shall have that responsibility within the department. In the department, those appointed to this professorial title shall participate fully in hiring decisions of other of their rank or in lower rank in these titles. Professors of the Practice may serve on college committees as appropriate.

Impact Statement

No tenure-track lines will be eliminated or converted to hire faculty as Professors of the Practice. However, departments may opt to temporarily hire a Professor of the Practice on a budgeted tenure-track line to address dual career considerations. In general, appointments to this title will be supported on endowment funds or "soft" money. Similarly, except by appointment of the holder to a new position bearing one of these titles, or by resignation of the holder, no non-tenure-track faculty position may be eliminated solely as a result of creating such a new position for a function comparable to that filled by the old position.

There is not a promotion sequence from other non-tenure-track academic titles to Professor of the Practice; however, current holders of non-tenure-track positions in the college may apply for positions advertised at this title when their professional accomplishments and recognition outside the academy make them eligible. Finally, as one would expect when a new title is introduced, the college will remain flexible in responding to departments who identify other instances in which the use of this title and the criteria to justify it would be appropriate. It is possible, for example, that distinguished records in pedagogy and related publications which have gained recognition outside the university would qualify some individuals for appointments as Professors of the Practice.