

Proposal to Authorize Use of the Professor of the Practice Title

Bowers CIS

Bowers CIS requests permission to use the [Professor of the Practice](#) (PoP) title to improve its educational programs.

A. Justification

The RTE faculty in Bowers CIS have a critical role to play with respect to teaching, research, and the realization of college objectives. To recruit and retain the very best individuals for these positions, it is necessary to have at our disposal a set of titles that provide the candidate with incentives for advancement and sufficient status within their professional community.

To enhance our standing within the global CIS community, Bowers CIS requests permission to use the Professor of the Practice (PoP) title. With this authorization the college will be able to

1. Enrich the quality of education in each of our degree programs, especially at the undergraduate and masters level. It is essential that our students be exposed to knowledge that is acquired outside of academia, i.e., knowledge based on actual experience and applications.
2. Offer a broader curriculum. A PoP can offer new types of courses and teach established courses with a fresh point of view.
3. Hire the most accomplished individuals. The PoP title sends the message that the college values knowledge that is acquired outside of academia.
4. Attract new types of external funding. Interesting collaborations between the PoP faculty and the TT faculty ¹ can create new opportunities for funding.

B. Description of Position

The “fraction” of CIS-related innovation that takes place outside of academia is large and the education of a Bowers CIS student is enhanced by learning from teachers who have experience on the outside. The PoP position is a teaching position designed to address this need. Beyond classroom contributions, a PoP can offer (a) practical advice about careers, (b) effective oversight of student projects, and (c) leadership in matters that concern community outreach. A PoP with organizational skills and a vision for success in CIS-related fields has the potential to serve as the director of an MEng or MPS program. The range of expected activities must be clearly delineated at the time of (re)appointment.

¹ Here and throughout this document, “TT faculty” refers to “tenure track faculty” by which we mean the pool of all assistant, associate, and full professors.

C. Terms of Appointment

C1. Search Methodology

PoP searches must be national in scope and require a CV, a teaching statement, at least three references, and an interview talk that demonstrates expository talents. Regarding the submission of a statement of contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion, the [university guidelines](#) provided by the [Office of Faculty Diversity and Development](#) for tenure track hiring shall apply to PoP hiring.

C2. Expected Credentials

The candidate need not have a PhD, but must have extensive, relevant professional experience commensurate with the rank (assistant, associate, full) of the initial appointment. A record of accomplishment and innovation is expected. Although there might be instances where associate and assistant versions of this title are appropriate, it is difficult to reconcile those ranks with the requirement for extensive professional experience. It is therefore expected that the majority of PoP appointments will be at the full PoP level.

C3. Approval Process

Following the College of Engineering, there will be two types of PoP appointments.

Departmental PoPs are appointed by one department and are identified through a search process that mirrors the search process used for tenure-track faculty. The faculty who vote on the case are the TT faculty together with all PoP faculty having rank no lower than that associated with the appointment. The department chair communicates the result of the vote and the rationale for the appointment in a letter to the Bowers CIS dean who makes the final decision. Approval of the Cornell Tech Dean is required if the position in question is situated at Cornell Tech.

College-wide PoPs are appointed upon the recommendation of a dean-appointed ad hoc committee composed of TT and PoP faculty having rank no lower than that associated with the appointment. The ad hoc committee makes a recommendation to the Bowers CIS Dean (and the Cornell Tech Dean if appropriate) based on their evaluation of the candidate's likelihood for success in meeting the evaluation criteria for the job. The rationale for having a college-wide PoP appointment is that it is an effective way to hire individuals whose work intersects multiple units within the College. Consultation with the affected departments is expected. Administrative oversight of college-wide PoPs resides with the Associate Dean for Education.

C4. Length of Appointment

PoP appointments are between three and five years in length with no restriction on the number of renewals. Another appointment parameter that can be a negotiation between the individual and the department is whether the annual funding is for nine months or something longer.

C5. Reappointment and Promotion

The Chair, Associate Dean, or designate reviews the performance annually with the individual. Reappointments are made based on the individual's performance in relation to the pre-set evaluation criteria established for the position including excellence in teaching and advising. PoPs are expected to stay abreast of current practices in the field typically through some form of external engagement.

As mentioned above, we anticipate that most PoP appointments will be at the full level. Should there be an occasion to promote from the assistant or associate rank, then there must be an appropriately heightened record of relevant, external professional experience. This could be achieved through outside consulting, startup creation, significant public service, or other activities that contribute to the external standing and connections of the candidate. The scope of this expectation needs to be specified at the time of appointment with attention paid to university regulations that apply to outside consulting and related activities.

C6. Switching Tracks

Switching from the Lecturer track to an open nationally advertised PoP position only makes sense if the candidate has a record of external experience that is at the PoP level. Such a switch would not be entertained if it is simply to reward excellence in teaching with a professorial title. The PoP at Cornell does not equate to the teaching professor title that exists at other schools.

PoPs who have amassed a record of research, teaching, and service that is consistent with a particular tenure track rank can compete for an open position at that rank.

A TT faculty member who has an external track record at the PoP level and who agrees to forfeit tenure or the right to a tenure review is welcome to compete for an open PoP position. Such a transition is not available to a TT faculty member who has been denied a promotion to the rank of associate or full professor.

D. Percentage Limitation

At the time of hire, the number of full time PoP appointments in Bowers CIS (including faculty in the Ithaca and Cornell Tech campus) must not exceed 15 percent of the number of TT appointments in Bowers CIS. Should a new PoP appointment in any unit result in a PoP fraction that is greater than 25 percent of the Bowers CIS TT faculty in that unit, then there must be a consultation among the college department chairs and the Bowers CIS Dean. If the appointment is at Cornell Tech, then the Dean of Cornell Tech must also be consulted before such appointment can be made. The final decision on the appointment is made by the Bowers CIS Dean.

E. Rights

PoPs will have voting privileges 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. PoPs may serve on departmental and college committees as appropriate.

Regardless of rank, PoPs have [University Voting Rights](#).

A PoP is not eligible for sabbatical leave. If the dean, after consultation with the department, decides not to renew the appointment of a Professor of the Practice, the professor is entitled to the same notice of termination to which a tenured or tenure-track professor is entitled. A PoP should have the same access to grievance and appeal procedures as any other RTE faculty member.

PoPs will be eligible for the annual salary improvement program for faculty.

F. Impact

Effective use of the PoP title will broaden the CIS curriculum and create new opportunities for external engagement across the college. Those opportunities will also benefit current TT faculty and enhance our ability to recruit excellent individuals for TT positions. The insistence upon extensive non-academic experience in all PoP appointments ensures that hiring into that track will complement and not detract from the outstanding talent that we maintain in the pool of lecturers and senior lecturers.