

## Proposal for Establishing a Teaching Professor Title at Cornell University

Dean De Rosa asked the Committee on Academic Freedom and Professional Status of the Faculty (CAPSF) for input on the proposed teaching professor title.<sup>1</sup>

Given the Senate's previous endorsement of the RTE professorial titles, we believe that the Senate will be receptive to a Teaching Professor title and having this title would make the situation more equitable across RTE faculty with non-professorial titles, particularly with the recent implementation of Professor of Practice, Clinical Professor and Research Professor titles. We felt that the current proposal lacked solid data supporting the contentions that: 1) Lack of a Teaching Professor title makes us less competitive (given that only 10 institutions offer this title), and 2) "The Lecturer titles suggest to students, parents, and donors that many courses are not being taught by "real" faculty" (quote taken directly from the document<sup>1</sup>). In addition, several peer institutions such as Harvard, Brown, Columbia, Georgia Tech, MIT, Princeton, U. Maryland, U. Michigan, U. Pennsylvania, and Yale do not have an equivalent title. Regardless, we acknowledge that there is a perception among lecturers in various Colleges and units that they are disadvantaged by not having a Professorial title in terms of job satisfaction and ability to apply for research funding. Implementation of the Professor title may help to alleviate these sentiments. In our opinion, the Teaching Professor title should be used to provide recognition and promotion opportunities for outstanding faculty whose primary function is teaching. The policy only mentions excellence in undergraduate teaching, whereas lecturers also teach professional students and changes to the title should apply to all lecturers, not just those involved in undergraduate teaching.

We favored retaining both the Teaching Professor and current lecturer titles and the enabling legislation should provide guiding criteria by which these titles can be distinguished and used by Colleges and units across the campus, given their discipline-specific expectations. The enabling legislation should include guidance on transitioning of lecturers to Teaching Professors, as outlined in the other approved RTE Professorial titles. The Teaching Professor titles should not erode tenure at this institution and the limits on the number of teaching faculty with a Professor title should be commensurate with the other RTE Professorial titles (acknowledging that the College of Veterinary Medicine received senate approval to remove limits on the RTE professorial titles). In addition, Cornell is a research institution and faculty with Professorial titles, including that of the Teaching Professor, should be innovative and scholarly, and advance knowledge in the area of their expertise, through publication or other avenues. We also strongly believe that teaching should not be delegated only to RTE faculty but should remain as an important part of a tenure-track/tenured Professor responsibilities to ensure that Cornell remains a premier teaching institution, where faculty incorporate their research knowledge into their teaching endeavors. The option to switch tenured or tenure track faculty to appointments that have no teaching responsibilities should not be endorsed. Extension faculty seem to be the only constituent that are "left out" of the Professorial RTE titles. We recommend that the working group give consideration as to whether the next step would be creating a Professor of Extension and include extension faculty in this current proposal versus adding it in future.

1. Towards the Establishment of a Teaching Professor Title: An Exploratory Discussion of the Options and Issues. Michael Clarkson (Computer Science) and Charles van Loan (Computer Science)