

Enabling Legislation for the Teaching Professor Title

Draft: March 17, 2024

This is a draft for public comment. It has not yet been submitted for Senate consideration.

A college or school that wants to make teaching professor (TP) appointments must submit for Faculty Senate approval a proposal that describes how it intends to implement the track. The content of the proposal and how it is to be processed are set forth in this document.

Part I. Proposal Content

A. Justification

A statement offering justification for adoption of the TP title is required. There must be an explanation as to why the current range of RTE teaching titles makes it difficult to realize important educational objectives. The practices of peer schools and experiences with respect to recruiting can be used in support of the justification.

B. Description of Position

The proposed Faculty Handbook description of the TP title is as follows:

The teaching professor titles are available only for long term, non-tenure-track faculty members whose efforts are devoted primarily to the teaching mission of the university and whose skill and independence are at the level of the tenure-track faculty. Assistant, associate, and full teaching professors are expected to achieve a similar level of professional expertise as their counterparts on the tenure track. Teaching professors at higher ranks can demonstrate impact inside and outside the university through activities such as pedagogical innovation, curriculum development, and leadership roles. Consistent with their rank and local needs, teaching professors are also expected to contribute teaching-related service, especially in areas that concern advising, mentoring, curriculum, and the management of degree programs.

Based on that title description, the proposal should state expectations the unit has for teaching professors. Examples should be given of the kinds of impact that are important to the unit, and of the kinds of service opportunities that exist.

C. Terms of Appointment

Degree Requirements

The proposal should describe the degree requirements for appointment to TP positions. Candidates should usually hold a graduate degree that is appropriate to the level and field of

instruction the individual will provide. In situations where such degrees do not exist, the proposal should identify alternative degree requirements. The proposal should explain whether higher TP ranks would entail higher degree requirements.

Proposals may identify relaxed degree requirements based on teaching experience. For example, a proposal could state that if an individual is already appointed at Cornell or another university, and the individual has already demonstrated the quality of teaching accomplishment appropriate to TPs within the college or school, and the individual demonstrates a trajectory that promises a continued high level of achievement, then the dean may accept other degrees.

Searches

Searches for open TP positions are expected to be national in scope with review procedures comparable to what is used for TT hires.

Reappointments and Promotions

Colleges that adopt the TP title are expected to document and publicize the processes that will be followed for all reappointments and promotions. The proposal itself should briefly describe the following:

- (a) The candidate's input to the process, e.g., CV, teaching statement, list of possible reviewers, etc.
- (b) The department's input to the process, e.g., course evaluation summaries, peer reviews, etc.
- (c) The department's method for soliciting reference letters, e.g., number required, possible reliance on external references, etc.
- (d) Who in the department is eligible to vote on the case, e.g., senior lecturers, PoP's (and which ranks), CP's (and which ranks), other TPs (and which ranks), tenured faculty, etc.
- (e) What is forwarded to the dean, e.g., the dossier, a recommendation letter from the chair that reports the outcome of the vote, etc.

The text associated with (a)-(e) does not have to be detailed at the level of an appointments manual but it should provide enough information to indicate a commitment to the fair evaluation of candidates.

The proposal should address the extent to which the reappointment procedures afford teaching professors a reasonable degree of job security in the unit, recognizing that the track is intended for long-term members of the faculty. Minimizing the process needed for reappointments would be appropriate to convey that long-term status.

D. Limitations

To guard against the erosion of the tenure system, TP appointments are to be limited in scope and limited in number.

Scope

The proposed Faculty Handbook description of the TP title limits the scope of TP appointments to focus on teaching rather than research:

The teaching professor titles may not be used to replicate the combined teaching and research responsibilities of the tenure track faculty. Accordingly, job duties of a teaching professor appointment should not require conducting research, publishing its results, or advising graduate research students. Teaching professors may choose to participate in such activities, especially when related to pedagogy, and should stay current with research in their area to best incorporate it into their teaching. Nevertheless, research activity must not be required for appointment, reappointment, or promotion along the teaching professor track.

The proposal must include a statement affirming this limitation of scope and stating any variances that the college or school expects.

Numbers

The proposal must also include a statement that limits the number of TP positions. One method to do this is to relate R, the number of RTE teaching faculty in the college or school, to T, the number of tenure-track faculty in the college or school, as follows:

$$R \leq .45 (R + T)$$

The effect of this restriction would be that at most 45 percent of the faculty who have teaching in their portfolio (RTE teaching faculty plus TT faculty) are permitted to be teaching-track faculty. This results in at least a 55 percent TT majority.

If this method is used, proposals would need to specify how R is to be determined in the college or school. This choice affects the voting requirements in Part II, section A. A possible definition would be all full-time faculty who have appointments at any rank on the L, CP, PoP, and TP tracks. If appropriate to the customs of the sponsoring unit, extension and research faculty could also be incorporated in the calculations.

Proposals are free to impose tighter and more specific restrictions on the number of TPs than the method above, or to impose a tighter restriction on the total number of teaching-track faculty (including TPs). Proposals may also impose restrictions at the department level as well as the college or school level.

Proposals that would allow the number of teaching-track faculty (including TPs) to exceed the number of tenure-track faculty in the college or school must be accompanied by a justification of why the teaching needs cannot be met by tenure-track faculty.

E. Voting and Other Rights

Teaching professors (all ranks) have University Voting Rights. The proposal must define other rights and responsibilities associated with TP appointments, including voting status at both the department and college levels on matters that concern hiring, promotions, and reappointments.

Access to grievance and appeals processes must be described.

The proposal should indicate the extent to which the unit will support regular scholarly leave opportunities for teaching professors. Such leaves would be used for professional development purposes in ways that benefit the unit and its educational mission.

F. Impact on Other Faculty Appointment Tracks

The proposal should briefly articulate an overall plan for RTE teaching in the unit by describing how the TP track will be used in combination with the L, CP, PoP, and tenure tracks to advance the quality of education. Changes (if any) in how the L, CP, and PoP tracks are implemented should also be described.

Processes for handling L-to-TP and other faculty transitions need to be outlined. Questions to be addressed include the following. Will some transitions be automatic, and if so, when will they occur? If transitions will be considered by application, how and when will the application process occur? How will the destination TP rank be determined?

Part II. Proposal Processing

A. Processing Within the Unit

The dean of the sponsoring unit communicates the proposal to the Dean of Faculty with a cover letter that specifies the outcome of two votes:

- *The TT Vote* is a polling of all assistant, associate, and full professors who have full time appointments in the sponsoring unit. The number of such faculty who support the proposal and the number who do not is to be reported in the cover letter together with the number of abstentions and the number of DNVs.
- *The RTE Teaching Faculty Vote* is a polling of all the faculty identified (as in section D above) as RTE teaching faculty. The number of such faculty who support the proposal and the number who do not is to be reported in the cover letter together with the number of abstentions and the number of DNVs.

In addition to reporting these results, the dean of the sponsoring unit has the option of communicating the extent of faculty support outside of the above electorates, e.g., the extent of support among the emeriti faculty.

To receive Senate consideration, the following outcomes are required:

- (a) at least two-thirds of the TT faculty must vote on the proposal and of those who do, at least one-half must support the proposal.
- (b) at least two-thirds of the RTE Teaching faculty must vote on the proposal and of those who do, at least one-half must support the proposal.

B. Processing by the Dean of Faculty

If the voting outcomes are satisfied, then the following steps are taken:

- The Dean of Faculty (DoF) shares the proposal and cover letter with the Committee on Academic Programs and Policy (CAPP).
- The DoF gives the sponsoring unit the opportunity to present their proposal to the Faculty Senate.
- The DoF makes the proposal and cover letter available for public comment on the DoF website for a period of sixty days.
- At the end of the comment period, the DoF asks CAPP to review the proposal for compliance with the enabling legislation. (The review is strictly about compliance—CAPP is not to weigh in on whether not they think the proposal is a good idea.)
- If CAPP determines that the proposal meets the requirements of the enabling legislation, then the DoF (in consultation with University Faculty Committee) will arrange to have the Faculty Senate act on the proposal. Use of the title by the sponsoring unit is authorized after a positive vote by the Faculty Senate and subsequent approval by the Office of the Provost.