Approval of Possible Academic Staff Title: Professor of Practice

Report and Resolution

At its November 5, 2018, March 5, 2019, and April 1, 2019 meetings, the Faculty Senate discussed the use of the word “professor” in potential future Academic Staff titles. One of the titles that was discussed was “Professor of Practice,” which was originally combined with another title (“Teaching Professor”) due to the fact that both grew out of the same ad hoc committee originally. Based on the discussion in these meetings, the Faculty Senate requested that a separate ad hoc committee be formed to research the Professor of Practice title further. The report of that committee – the Ad Hoc Committee on Practitioner-Instructional Titles – is attached hereto. The implementation of these titles will align with the implementation of all titles in scope for the TTC. Senate action does not create any new titles.

Professional schools and departments, such as the College of Engineering, the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, and the La Follette School of Public Affairs, have particularly expressed interest in such a title and have argued that the lack of it has prevented us from bringing some important people to campus as instructors.

Resolution

WHEREAS the Faculty Senate passed a resolution in December 2001 that the word “professor” shall not be used in a title without prior approval of the title by the Faculty Senate (Faculty Document 1596);

WHEREAS several schools, colleges, and departments have felt hampered in their ability to attract instructional staff to teach for credit courses based on their real-world practice expertise due to the lack of a “professor of practice” title on our campus;

WHEREAS a faculty-academic staff ad hoc committee recommended the creation of a “Professor of Practice” title for experts with professional / practice experience to teach about real-world applications for a period of time consistent with that allowed by current “faculty associate” or “lecturer” titles;

WHEREAS a relevant “professor of practice” title would allow for the hiring of people with relevant experience and expertise in non-academic organizations, significant leadership experience and evidence-based reputations for superior accomplishments in field, senior technical, research, or management positions outside academia;

WHEREAS such instructional personnel would enrich student experience through deep understanding and appreciation of best practices in settings outside the academy, provide students with understanding of practical applications of a particular field of study, and be able to teach, advise, and collaborate in areas directly related to expertise and experience outside academia;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate approves the creation of the “Professor of Practice” title series in this context to include the titles “Assistant Professor of Practice,” “Associate Professor of Practice,” and “Professor of Practice;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate strongly opposes the use of the “Professor of Practice” title as a substitute for tenure-track faculty appointments and acknowledges that those hired into such a position would have to hold a degree at least one level above the level of instruction, or otherwise approved as qualified by the Dean in addition to substantive professional / practice experience.
Professor of Practice
(Title pending Faculty Senate approval)
Job Description
DRAFT

JOB INFORMATION

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<th>Job Title:</th>
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JOB SUMMARY

Provides classroom, online and/or laboratory instruction associated with a single course or series of courses within an academic discipline, assists with the design and execution of administrative functions associated with academic instruction and the development of pedagogy/andragogy or assessment tools and resources to support quality study earning. Provides for-credit instruction in formats such as classroom, online, and/or laboratory settings, including grading. Serves as an instructor of record.

TYPICAL RESPONSIBILITIES  (Other duties as assigned)

1. Assists in developing techniques and/or model programs for carrying out instructional goals in disciplinary area and may help identify ways in which new techniques could be of assistance
2. Assesses learner performance and prepares reports recommending instructional improvements
3. Develops teaching techniques that enhance course effectiveness in alignment with desired outcomes and established strategy
4. Provides classroom, online, and/or laboratory instruction including grading
5. Supervises the day to day activities of work unit employees involved in instructional support as needed
6. Assists in defining the objectives of the program and play a major role in carrying out program duties

Education:
Combined substantive professional/practice experience and a degree at least one level above the level of instruction, or otherwise approved as qualified by the Dean.

Final Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Practitioner-Instructional Titles

This document represents the final report and recommendations of the ad hoc committee on Practitioner-Instructional Titles. Our charge from the University Committee (July 11, 2019) was to “assess the need for titles such as Professor of Practice or the like and, comparing those needs to what is currently in use on campus,...propose solutions in the form of recommendations to the University Committee.” Following review of practice and previous efforts in this regard, a campus wide survey of current need for and titling of practice-based instructors, as well as significant deliberation and discussion, the committee recommends the creation of a new title: Professor of Practice, in line with the current Faculty Associate titling series, for optional
use in departments where the currently used titles impede recruitment of instructional staff with appropriate professional/practice experience. Additional information and explanation follows below and the committee is available to answer any questions that may arise.

**Proposed position description**

**Create “Professor of Practice” Title Series**

The title **Professor of Practice (Asst., Assoc., No Prefix, Dist.)** will be reserved for individuals with relevant professional/practice experience in non-academic organizations. They must have substantive professional/practice experience in a position outside academia, plus a degree at least one level above the level of instruction, or unique qualifications per the minimum qualifications policy. These individuals would be expected to enrich the experience of students by bringing a deep understanding and appreciation of the best practices as applied in real-world settings. They provide students with an understanding of the practical applications of a particular field of study. Professors of Practice teach courses, advise students, and collaborate in areas directly related to their expertise and experience outside of academia. Professors of Practice must have an evidence-based reputation for superior accomplishments in their fields. This may be substantiated by published works or presentations disseminated outside the scope of traditional scholarly journals and conferences, but otherwise subject to the same standards of quality and impact that govern other research contributions within the university.