

Proposal to Create a Third Tier Within the Lecturer Track
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UFC Non-Tenure Track (NTT) Task Force

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During the 2017 State of the University address, IU President Michael McRobbie asked the campuses “to consider changes to the non-tenure-track ranks to provide stronger career paths that recognize the professionalism of these important and growing segments of IU’s instructional community.” Several IU campuses were already exploring options along these lines. In fact, both the BFC and IFC voted in favor of enhancing career paths for those in Lecturer track by creating a third tier within that track. In November 2018, Executive Vice President for University Academic Affairs, John Applegate presented the following charge to the UFC Executive Committee:

“To date, multiple campus faculty governance bodies have considered the addition of a third level to the lecturer rank, to parallel the tenure-stream and clinical professorial ranks. The campuses considering the issue have strongly favored the change, but there remains vigorous disagreement on the title and perhaps on the assignment of current faculty on the new scale. Available faculty ranks, and their requirements in broad terms, are uniform across Indiana University, and so a change in ranks requires action by the University Faculty Council and Trustees.

“The committee is charged to recommend to the full UFC (1) whether or not to create a third lecturer rank, and if so (2) the titles of the new series of lecturer ranks and (3) the placement of existing faculty into the new series. The committee should engage academic administrators as needed to consider implementation issues and other potential consequences of changes in the lecturer ranks.

“The committee should make every effort to conclude its work in time for the spring 2019 UFC meeting.”

Rationale for Adding a Third Tier to the Lecturer Track:

Apart from the Lecturer/Senior Lecturer track, all of our current full-time instructional, research, or clinical tracks consist of three ranks. An example is the Clinical Professor rank with Clinical Assistant Professor, Clinical Associate Professor, and Clinical Professor. However, the Lecturer rank has only two tiers: Lecturer and Senior Lecturer‡. Although the Lecturer rank has existed at IU for many years, the rank of Senior Lecturer was created in the mid-1990s. It was meant to represent a promotion from the rank of Lecturer for those who demonstrate excellence in

‡ University Policy ACA-18, Regulation of Clinical and Lecturer Appointments

teaching and satisfactory performance in service. However, examination of the UFC records from that period indicate that the original idea considered was to expand the lecturer rank to encompass three tiers, similar to the Clinical Professor track. Despite support for the previous proposal within the UFC, the concept of a three-tier Lecturer rank was changed to a two-tier track. With this proposal, the Task Force hopes to correct what might be considered an historical mistake.

Adding a third tier to the Lecturer ranks will benefit not only the faculty members involved but the University as a whole. Under the current system, a Lecturer could reach the top rank of Senior Lecturer within relatively short time and then find themselves without additional opportunities for continuing professional recognition. Adding the third tier would provide an additional possibility for promotion and thereby serve as an incentive to pursue continuing avenues of professional development and academic achievement. At the University level, enhancing career development for those in the Lecturer track will contribute to IU's status as a world leader in undergraduate and graduate education. The third tier will improve our ability to recruit and retain excellent instructional faculty by rewarding teaching excellence and emphatically state that our current Lecturers and Senior Lecturers are an essential and highly valued part of IU.

Developing the Task Force's Recommendations

Because of its broad base, experience in faculty governance, and inclusion of members from Academic Affairs units, the Task Force was able to evaluate many options and scenarios. In addition to meetings of and discussions among the Task Force, we sought the opinions and viewpoints of the IU faculty as an essential part of our process. The campuses have been engaged in faculty governance-driven discussions and town hall meetings on this topic. In addition, the Task Force developed and delivered a survey that was circulated to each full-time faculty member at IU.

Surveying the Indiana University faculty on the title of the title of the proposed third tier

The Task Force survey was designed to gauge interest in the possible titles for the third tier in the Lecturer track. Respondents were asked for demographic information including campus and classification, and then were encouraged to rank order the following titles (with 1 being the most desirable and 5 being the least desirable): Principal Lecturer, Senior Lecturer with Distinction, Teaching Professor, University Lecturer and Other.

The survey was distributed to 6,170 full-time faculty, both tenured/tenure-track and non-tenure-track ranks, across all IU campuses, and received 1,385 responses (a 22.4% response rate.)

48.9% of respondents selected Teaching Professor as their 1st or 2nd choice, however it was also the most disliked title with 36.17% of respondents selecting it at their 4th or 5th choice. The open-ended survey questions reflect this divide with a nearly even number of comments strongly in support of the title and strongly opposed to the title.

Another desirable title that emerged from the survey was Senior Lecturer with Distinction, with 55.31% of respondents selecting it as their 1st or 2nd choice and 18.05% ranking the title in their bottom two.

Responses to the other two proposed titles, Principal Lecturer and University Lecturer, were mixed, but mostly neutral with the highest percentage of respondents for each title ranking them as their 3rd choice.

Evaluation of the proposed titles

An increasing number of universities are opting to use the title of Teaching Professor. Universities that have adopted this title have noted several benefits of doing so. One such benefit is as an aid to recruiting and retaining quality teachers. The title Teaching Professor is viewed as one that confers respect, which can facilitate obtaining grants, receiving invitations to present, and establishment of strong collaborations. Certain universities using the Teaching Professor title replace the Lecturer track with a three tier Teaching Professor track using the titles Assistant Teaching Professor, Associate Teaching Professor, and (full) Teaching Professor. Other retain the Lecturer track and add to it a separate three-tiered Teaching Professor track. Having a track combining both Lecturer/Senior Lecturer and Teaching Professor titles may be without precedent. As mentioned above, Teaching Professor is popular with many faculty, gaining more first place votes than any other title, although it is admittedly unpopular with other faculty.

Several universities updated the title in they Lecturer/Senior Lecturer track with Principal Lecturer as a title for a third tier. University Lecturer and Senior Lecturer with Distinction were suggested during the Task Force's discussions. An advantage of these three is that they provide continuity, clearly identifying a single Lecturer track. However, University Lecturer and Principal Lecturer lacked solid support among the faculty. An advantage of Senior Lecturer with Distinction is that it clearly delineates a higher rank than Senior Lecturer and so should be a title that confers respect. It is not clear that this title is in use at other universities. Senior Lecturer with Distinction is popular with the faculty and had a less negative reaction than Teaching Professor.

Overall, the Task Force finds both Teaching Professor and Senior Lecturer with Distinction to be acceptable titles for the new third tier. That said, there is more support among the members of the Task Force for Teaching Professor than Senior Lecturer with Distinction. This is because most of the Task Force members concluded that the Teaching Professor title will have a stronger positive effect on those faculty members affected and the University as a whole. Nevertheless, the Task Force highly values adding the third tier and so endorses adopting Senior Lecturer with Distinction if the UFC prefers that title over Teaching Professor.

Specific Policy Recommendations

The Task Force has two recommendations that affect University policies and asks that they be discussed and voted on in sequence:

1. IU should create a third tier that is situated at the top of the Lecturer track.

2. The title of the new tier should be Teaching Professor.[§]

Additional considerations

Appointment to and promotion within the Lecturer/Senior Lecturer/Teaching Professor track.

Those currently at the Senior Lecturer rank could remain at that rank or stand for promotion to Teaching Professor as they wish. The Task Force recommends having the new title as the highest tier within the Lecturer track in part because it creates a natural step up and so provides current Senior Lecturers who choose to apply with a chance at a bona fide promotion. In this way, successful applicants will have risen to the pinnacle of this track and as such the qualifications for promotion should include significant accomplishments in teaching. Like promotion to Senior Lecturer, promotion to Teaching Professor should be expected to carry with it an increase in salary. In the proposed system, current Lecturers could achieve 2 promotions (and salary increments) to reach Teaching Professor.

The Task force encourages the campuses to adopt their own criteria for promotion within the Lecturer/Senior Lecturer/Teaching Professor track. Departments and/or programs need to create discipline or field-specific guidelines for expectations and criteria that demonstrate that the benchmarks for advancement have been met or surpassed. Likewise, schools and/or academic units need to create academic-unit-specific guidelines. In a similar vein, the Campus P&T Committee will need to create campus-wide guidelines. For all three of these groups, referring to existing guidelines for excellence in teaching for Senior Lecturer and for tenure track faculty may prove helpful. The guidelines generated at each level need to be proposed, approved by a positive vote, and posted according to the appropriate shared-governance policies and procedures. The Campus P&T Committee will address the administrative role with which the Office of Academic Affairs is charged.

The Task Force notes that current guidelines for promotion to Senior Lecturer in certain units at IU require an exceedingly high level of achievement in teaching, service, and scholarly activity, so much so that these criteria would in actuality be suitable for advancement to Teaching Professor. Therefore, it is important for departments and programs, units, and the campuses to be cognizant of this as they develop their criteria. In the Task Force's view, having three tiers within the Lecturer/Teaching Professor track will considerably strengthen the career path for faculty in this track as well as rewarding long-term commitment to excellence in teaching at IU.

Additional Considerations

Timeline. We suggest that the new rank be added such that the first cadre of applicants will stand for promotion in AY2020-21. Since promotion to Teaching Professor will depend on evaluation and a vote by the campus promotion and tenure committee, dossiers for promotion to the Teaching Professor would have to be submitted to each Office of Academic Affairs according to the same

[§] If the UFC opts to adopt the new title Senior Lecturer with Distinction, then Teaching Professor will need to be replaced with Senior Lecturer with Distinction in the ACA-14 TP.docx and ACA-18 TP.docx documents.

schedule that is set as for all other promotion dossiers. This means that current Senior Lecturers who are interested in and ready to prepare a dossier for advancement would need to have the requisite materials ready for evaluation at the program and/or department and/or unit levels by the end of the 2019-2020 academic year. For this to happen, the applicable criteria for promotion would need to be articulated, passed, and posted at all levels (program/department; unit; campus) by the end of the Fall 2019 semester. This means that each Campus P&T Committee would need to meet earlier than usual (in Fall 2019) in order to establish the campus guidelines for Senior Lecturer and Teaching Professor and post them by the end of the Fall 2019 semester.

Necessary resources. Offering promotions within the Lecturer track and creating the Teaching Professor tier is dependent on availability of additional resources. It should be noted that matters of compensation, i.e. the ranges of compensation at each tier of a track and upon advancement from one tier to the next, fall completely within the purview of the dean (or executive associate dean) and are circumscribed by the dean's budgetary responsibilities. Similarly, particulars of workloads tend to be academic-unit-specific. Moreover, compensation as well as teaching and service loads of Lecturers vary widely across the University. Systematic collection of information about the teaching and service loads, contract lengths, and compensation of Lecturers and Senior Lecturers is recommended. This is important in efforts to not only be transparent but also to achieve equality and fairness. In addition, each academic unit needs to provide information about the number and kinds of courses (including the number of students in those courses and sections) for which the Lecturer track are responsible. This is a reporting requirement that the deans do not always provide but that the data offices can, although access to that data may be restricted.