

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Proposal 38-22

(Voting Units: Academic)

“Proposed Revisions to Academic Rank Definitions Section of the Faculty Handbook and Associated Proposed Revisions to Board of Trustees Policy”

Submitted by: Academic and Instructional Policy Committee, Instructional Track Faculty Working Group, and Office of the Provost and Senior VP for Academic Affairs

I. Introduction

The Instructional Track Faculty (ITF) Working Group (formerly called the Non-Tenure-Track Working Group) proposes four changes to academic rank titles at Michigan Tech: (1) MTU has historically referred to the majority of non-tenure-track teaching faculty with rolling appointments as Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, and Principal Lecturers. We propose to change these rank titles to be consistent with updated rank titles used at other universities; (2) We propose to eliminate the use of the phrase “non-tenure-track faculty” in the faculty handbook because it defines a large group of faculty members by who they are not, rather than by who they are. The goal of both proposed changes is to elevate the perception of the importance of instructional faculty at Michigan Tech; (3) We propose some editorial updates to the faculty ranks definitions to reflect current usage; and (4) We propose a reorganization of the revised faculty rank definitions to group closely related academic-rank definitions.

II. Rationale

Faculty on Lecturer-track appointments are extremely important to the overall quality of Michigan Tech’s educational programming. These faculty members design and deliver a significant portion of instruction at Michigan Tech, including first-year and other lower division courses, as well as upper division and graduate classes. The quality of a Michigan Tech education would be diminished without the expertise provided by Lecturer-track faculty. The ITF working group contends that the proposed changes to academic rank titles are justified based on three factors:

A. The term “lecturer” is not the best reflection of the position.

The term “Lecturer” does not accurately reflect the work that these faculty members do, nor the impact of their work on the quality of education at Michigan Tech. Lecturing is not the best instructional practice and is not encouraged as a primary instructional strategy on campus. Lecturers engage with students in a range of contexts and support their learning using engaging, hands-on teaching methods. Most lecturers also have responsibilities such as advising senior design projects and teaching labs, which do not include any “lecturing”.

B. Benchmarking with other institutions

Since the time that the Lecturer track rank definitions were developed, much has changed in higher education. To ensure that Michigan Tech continues to attract and retain high-quality instruction-focused faculty, it is important to update these terms. Changing the name of the title could be a start of a process that makes the instructional track more attractive to applicants and elevates the role of these important faculty on campus. For comparison, we have provided the terms used by a sample of other universities in the table below.

| Institutions on Operational Peer List (https://www.mtu.edu/institutional-research/peers/) | | | |
|--|---|--|--------------------|
| Clarkson University | Teaching Assistant Professor | Teaching Associate Professor | Teaching Professor |
| Colorado School of Mines | Teaching Assistant Professor | Teaching Associate Professor | Teaching Professor |
| Missouri University of Science and Technology | Teaching Assistant Professor | Teaching Associate Professor | Teaching Professor |
| New Jersey Institute of Technology | University Lecturer (Instructional staff) | Senior University Lecturer (Instructional staff) | |
| Northeastern University | Assistant Teaching Professor | Associate Teaching Professor | Teaching Professor |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| The University of Alabama in Huntsville | Lecturer/Clinical instructor | Clinical Assistant Professor | Clinical Professor |
| The University of Alabama in Huntsville | Lecturer/Clinical instructor | Clinical Assistant Professor | Clinical Professor |
| Additional Institutions | | | |
| University of Michigan | Clinical Assistant Professor* Lecturer I/II | Clinical Associate Professor Lecturer III/IV | Clinical Professor |
| Michigan State University | Assistant Professor - Fixed Term Lecturer/ Assistant instructor | Associate Professor - Fixed Term | Professor - Fixed Term |
| University of Utah | Assistant Professor (Lecturer) | Associate Professor (Lecturer) | |
| University of Washington | Assistant Teaching Professor | Associate Teaching Professor | Teaching Professor |
| Ohio State University | Assistant Professor - Clinical | Associate Professor - Clinical | Professor, Clinical |
| Syracuse University | Assistant Teaching Professor | Associate Teaching Professor | Teaching Professor |
| UC San Diego | Lecturer or Senior Lecturer | Lecturer or Senior Lecturer with Potential for Security of Employment (PSOE) | Lecturer or Senior Lecturer with Security of Employment (PSOE) |

C. Perceptions of Faculty Roles on Campus

Currently, the Michigan Tech faculty handbook includes two separate sections (1.5.1 and 1.5.5) that define faculty ranks for Tenured/Tenure Track faculty and Non-Tenure-Track faculty, suggesting that these roles differ in importance. To elevate the roles of those faculty who currently fall into the “Non-Tenure-Track” academic ranks, we propose combining these faculty handbook sections to include one section that defines academic ranks for all faculty on campus.

III. Proposal

The ITF Working Group proposes four changes to the faculty handbook:

1. Change the titles of Lecturer-track faculty as follows:

- Lecturer to Assistant Teaching Professor
- Senior Lecturer to Associate Teaching Professor
- Principal Lecturer to Teaching Professor

2. Faculty handbook section 1.5 currently includes two subsections: **1.5.1 Tenured/Tenure-Track Academic Rank Definitions** and **1.5.5 Non-Tenure-Track Academic Rank Definitions**. The ITF Working Group proposes to eliminate the “Non-Tenure-Track” language in the Faculty Handbook by combining the current Sections 1.5.1 and 1.5.5 of the Faculty Handbook into a single section called “Academic Rank Definitions”. These proposed changes and the associated changes to Board of Trustees Policy 6.1 are tracked below.

3. Incorporate editorial updates to the faculty ranks definitions to reflect current usage.

4. Reorganize the revised faculty ranks definitions to group closely related academic-rank definitions. The proposed reorganization is as follows:

1.5.1 Academic Rank Definitions

1.5.1.1 Tenured/Tenure-Track
Promotional Ranks
Assistant Professor
Associate Professor
Professor

1.5.1.2 Instructional-Track Promotional Ranks

Assistant Teaching
Professor
Associate Teaching
Professor
Teaching Professor

1.5.1.3 Librarian and Archivist
Promotional Ranks
 Librarian/Archivist
 Senior Librarian/Archivist
 Principal Librarian/Archivist

1.5.1.6 Research Ranks

1.5.1.7 Visiting Ranks

1.5.1.8 Adjunct Ranks

1.5.1.4 Instructor Rank

1.5.1.9 Affiliated Rank

1.5.1.5 Professor of Practice Rank

Proposed Revisions to the Faculty Handbook Section 1.5.1

1.5.1 Academic Rank Definitions

1.5.1.1 Tenured/Tenure-Track Promotional Ranks

Assistant Professor: An appointment requiring an earned doctorate or terminal degree or equivalent and the potential for excellence in teaching and research.

Associate Professor: An appointment requiring an earned doctorate or terminal degree or equivalent and demonstrated quality teaching, recognition for scholarly activities, and service to the university community.

Professor: An appointment requiring an earned doctorate or terminal degree or equivalent and demonstrated sustained quality teaching, wide recognition for scholarly activities, and substantial service to university and appropriate outside communities.

All tenure-track appointments entail full responsibility for teaching, performing research, advising students, and performing professional and university service.

1.5.1.2 Instructional-Track Promotional Ranks

Assistant Teaching Professor: An appointment requiring a master's degree or professional qualifications equivalent to a master's degree in a discipline relevant to the instructional topic(s). Assistant teaching professors may be expected to deliver existing courses, develop new teaching materials and course segments, develop new courses to keep pace with changes in the discipline, represent a department/college within the University, advise undergraduate students, conduct research, and serve on committees. Assistant teaching professor

appointments are two-year, renewable (rolling) appointments. Notice of termination must be given at least one year in advance of an appointment's expiration. (See Appendix L)

Associate Teaching Professor: An appointment requiring a master's degree or professional qualifications equivalent to a master's degree in a discipline relevant to the instructional topic(s). In addition to the expectations for assistant teaching professors, an associate teaching professor is expected to demonstrate excellence in teaching and leadership in education. Associate teaching professors are expected to develop new courses, and implement new teaching methods and procedures designed to enhance learning within the department/college and across the University. Associate teaching professor appointments are continuing appointments. Notice of termination must be given at least one year in advance of an appointment's expiration. (See Appendix L)

Teaching Professor: An appointment requiring a master's degree or professional qualifications equivalent to a master's degree in a discipline relevant to the instructional topic(s). In addition to the expectations for assistant teaching professors and associate teaching professors, a teaching professor is expected to demonstrate exceptional achievements in teaching and education, either through fundamental contributions to University's mission or as a result of national or international impact. Teaching professor appointments are continuing appointments. Notice of termination must be given at least one year in advance of an appointment's expiration. (See Appendix L)

1.5.1.3 Librarian and Archivist Promotional Ranks

Librarian/Archivist: This is a beginning professional rank. The base qualification for entry is educational training or experience appropriate to the professional requirements of the position. Professionals at this level are doing journey-level work to build competence within their field. Their work requires guidance and mentoring by supervisors and more experienced colleagues. At this level, individuals exhibit evidence of a beginning record of professional excellence. Librarians and archivists will have two-year (rolling) renewable appointments. Notice of termination must be given at least one year in advance of the appointment expiration. (See Appendix L)

Senior Librarian/Senior Archivist: The basic qualification for this rank is the demonstrated ability to competently fulfill the range of library functions applicable to the individual's primary assigned area of responsibility. The individual should demonstrate evidence of a continuing record of professional excellence. An individual at this level should demonstrate the ability to work productively independently, make sound decisions, and be an active and productive participant in the betterment of the library and the University. They should accept responsibility for their continued professional growth and development without dependence on a supervisor. Senior librarians and senior archivists will have continuing appointments. Notice of termination must be given at least one year in advance of the appointment expiration. (See Appendix L)

Principal Librarian/Principal Archivist: An individual promoted to this rank is one who has received recognition within the University, as well as at regional, state, and national levels as a result of excellence in job performance, professional achievement/scholarship and service. Excellence in job performance must be at the highest level with evidence of leadership and a broad understanding of overall library operations beyond the primary assignment. Principal librarians and principal archivists will have continuing appointments. Notice of termination must be given at least one year in advance of the appointment expiration. (See Appendix L)

1.5.1.4 Instructor Rank An appointment requiring a master's degree, or a bachelor's degree and professional qualifications equivalent to a master's degree in a discipline relevant to the instructional topic(s). Instructors may be expected to deliver existing courses, hold office hours, perform other duties associated with instruction, and contribute limited service. Instructor appointments are considered temporary, one-semester, or semester-by-semester appointments, for full-time or part-time work with contracts of no more than one year. (See Appendix L)

1.5.1.5 Professor of Practice Rank An appointment requiring a bachelor's degree with significant professional experience. A professor of practice may be expected to deliver existing courses, develop new teaching materials and course segments, develop new courses to keep pace with changes in the discipline, represent a department or college within the University, advise undergraduate students, conduct research, serve on committees, be active in professional societies, and maintain awareness of current practices in the field outside of academia. Professor of practice appointments are continuing appointments. Notice of termination must be given at least one year in advance of an appointment's expiration. (See Appendix L)

1.5.1.6 Research Ranks

The research title can prepend any of the tenured or tenure-track academic ranks (assistant professor/associate professor/professor). An appointment offered to persons with qualifications commensurate with the research qualifications and the level of accomplishment of a regular tenure-track faculty of the same rank. The appointment is appropriate for those with full responsibility for research activities (including serving as principal investigator on grants and contracts), limited responsibility for advising (direct graduate theses and dissertations and serve on graduate committees), and minimal service activities. Appointments are initially for up to three years and are renewable depending upon funding for additional three-year periods.

1.5.1.7 Visiting Ranks

The visiting title can be included with any of the tenured or tenure-track academic ranks (assistant professor/associate professor/professor). This title is used to connote a guest appointment normally offered to a faculty member from another institution who is appointed at the rank they hold at that institution. Responsibilities will normally be similar to those of tenure-

track faculty in the department or college in which the appointment is made. Visiting appointments shall normally be for one year or less.

Visiting Professor of Practice: A short-term guest appointment offered to a candidate with the requisite professional experience for a position as a professor of practice when the appointment will be for one-year or less. Visiting professor of practice appointments shall be for one year or less.

1.5.1.8 Adjunct Ranks

The adjunct title can preprend any of the other academic ranks associated with continuing academic appointments with instructional responsibilities (professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, assistant teaching professor, associate teaching professor, teaching professor, professor of practice). An appointment at this rank is offered to persons not regularly or primarily employed within an academic unit at the University. Such individuals--because of training, experience, credentials, and interest--are invited to participate in the teaching, research, and/or instructional programs of academic departments. Remuneration may be provided for teaching and/or research activities. Appointments shall be for no more than three years with the possibility of subsequent reappointments.

1.5.1.9 Affiliated Ranks

The affiliated title can preprend any of the other academic ranks associated with continuing academic appointments with instructional responsibilities (professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, assistant teaching professor, associate teaching professor, teaching professor, professor of practice, research assistant/associate/professor) and with the emeritus professor rank. Affiliated faculty appointments are used to acknowledge and support the scholarly contributions that faculty may make in more than one discipline.

All faculty members holding affiliated appointments must have a primary appointment within an academic department or college. The primary department or college will be responsible for annual reviews for the faculty member's reappointment, tenure, promotion, and salary consideration. The primary department/college is encouraged to seek and consider written input from the chair of the department(s) and/or dean of the college(s) hosting the faculty member's affiliated appointments.

Affiliated faculty appointments are at the same rank (e.g., associate professor, teaching professor, or research assistant professor) as a faculty member's primary appointment.

Affiliated faculty will not be granted tenure and/or promoted within a unit in which they hold an affiliated appointment.

Affiliated faculty appointments are possible with non-departmental and interdisciplinary programs as well as with departments or departmental programs.

All requests for affiliated appointments must be approved by the provost and president. Requests for affiliated appointments also need approval from the:

- faculty member's primary academic department chair (if in a department),
- dean of their primary college,
- approval from the affiliated-appointment discipline's department or college (for disciplinary appointments) or the appropriate executive group or director and dean(s) (for interdisciplinary appointments)
- dean of the faculty member's affiliated-appointment college.

Proposed Changes to Board of Trustees Policy

6.1 Faculty Definitions

The faculty comprises individuals holding the following ranks:

- assistant professor, associate professor, or professor (collectively referred to as “tenured and tenure-track faculty”);
- assistant teaching professor, associate teaching professor, or teaching professor;
- librarian, senior librarian, or principal librarian;
- archivist, senior archivist, or principal archivist;
- instructor;
- professor of practice;
- research assistant professor, research associate professor, research professor);
- visiting assistant professor, visiting associate professor, visiting professor, visiting professor of practice;
- adjunct professor, adjunct associate professor, adjunct professor, adjunct assistant teaching professor, adjunct associate teaching professor, adjunct teaching professor, adjunct instructor, adjunct professor of practice;
- affiliated assistant professor, affiliated associate professor, affiliated professor, affiliated assistant teaching professor, affiliated associate teaching professor, affiliated teaching professor, affiliated instructor, affiliated professor of practice, affiliated research assistant professor, affiliated associate research professor, affiliated research professor, affiliated emeritus professor;
- ROTC faculty;
- and emeritus faculty.

"Learned professions" shall mean those professions whose members are skilled in a calling or vocation requiring advanced knowledge as evidenced by a specific degree from a recognized College or University.

"Engaged in teaching" shall be interpreted to mean that the person is to teach during each academic semester of the normal academic year.

"Appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School" shall imply appointment to the Graduate Faculty as defined by the Graduate Council. Such appointment is limited to those with advanced degrees or equivalent experience, as well as interest and experience in research or teaching at the graduate level.

"Equivalent experience" shall be determined by the President of the University.

The Faculty of the University

The President shall hire the faculty of the University which shall consist of the Undergraduate and Graduate Faculties.

Each faculty member shall qualify for one or more of the following defined faculties.

1. The Undergraduate Faculty consists of the members of the learned professions who are engaged in teaching for a degree in one of the learned professions and/or direct supervision thereof.
2. The Graduate Faculty consists of members of the faculty who have been appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School to be members of the Graduate Faculty.

Administrative officials of the University and members of staff, may be accorded membership of the faculties and such membership shall be within a specific department or college of the University.

This policy shall be administered in accordance with procedures recommended by the Senate and approved by the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.