

Report from the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Regular Rank Non-Tenure Track (RRNTT) Faculty Designations

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Background:

The Faculty Handbook currently states (Ch 3 p6) that “each department *establishes its own criteria* for evaluating candidates for appointment, reappointment and promotion in regular, non-tenure track ranks, and submits these in writing to the Dean for approval.” Given that the current establishment of criteria for hiring and evaluation of RRNTT faculty exists at the department level, ECAC created an *ad hoc* committee to look for consistency within a title, clarity between titles, and equity across campus. A previous committee (2016) examined expectations for appointment and promotion of RRNTT faculty, but was not charged to address inconsistencies in definitions of faculty designations across campus. ECAC developed the new charge to examine this issue.

Committee Charge:

To assess how the titles Professor of the Practice, Research Professor, Lecturer, and Senior Lecturer are currently used by schools, departments, and institutes across the university (excluding the schools of medicine and nursing) in order to ascertain if there is *consistency* in these classifications with regards to teaching, research, and service expectations. In addition, the committee is asked to:

- 1) Assess what distinguishes (or should distinguish) each of these ranks from the other;
- 2) Determine if new RRNTT designations are warranted or whether we should consolidate existing designations, given the changing context of higher education in general and Duke University in particular;
- 3) Define pathways for promotion in each rank and suggest recommendations for what those pathways should be;
- 4) Recommend procedures for evaluation of RRNTT faculty that will help ensure consistency in evaluations across units and departments.

Process:

The faculty handbook has no definitions for the RRNTT faculty designations of Lecturer, Professor of the Practice or Research Professor. To determine how these designations are currently being defined by different units across campus we worked with Vice Dean for Faculty Affairs Keven Moore to obtain bylaws for all departments in Trinity that had recently created categories to define RRNTT faculty. We examined the bylaws from 17 departments in Trinity (AMES, Biology, Computers Science, Cultural Anthropology, Dance, Education, Evolutionary Anthropology, German, History, International Comparative Studies, Math, Music, Neuroscience and Psychology, Romance Studies, Sociology, and Statistics) representing all three divisions, as well as bylaws from Fuqua, the Law School, and Sanford. Neither Pratt nor the Nicholas School mentioned RRNTT designations in their bylaws at the time of this review, although they do make many RRNTT appointments. They have subsequently begun this process. We also examined how 8 peer schools use these designations.

Findings

Comparisons to Other Schools

RRNTT are critical members of the professoriate at Duke and are deeply integrated into every division and school. They contribute significantly to the research and teaching mission of the university, as well as often carrying significant administrative loads. Many RRNTT faculty are award-winning scholars and have national and international reputations. RRNTT faculty are a critical and full integrated part of the strategic growth of teaching and research at Duke. Some units on campus consist solely of RRNTT faculty, such as the Program in Education, the Program in International Comparative Studies, as well as the Institutes and Centers.

Distribution of RRNTT Faculty at Duke. Provided by the Office Institutional Research

School	TTK	NTT	Total Reg Rank	% NTT
Arts and Sciences	499	196	695	28%
Divinity School	26	14	40	35%
Fuqua School of Business	91	14	105	13%
Law School	48	33	81	41%
Nicholas School of the Environment	49	15	64	23%
Pratt School of Engineering	124	47	171	27%
Sanford School of Public Policy	33	31	64	48%
University Institutes and Centers		36	36	100%
Total Reg Rank - Campus	870	386	1256	31%

The integration of RRNTT faculty into all academic realms is different from all of the peer schools investigated, except Harvard. The committee examined the roles of RRNTT faculty at Stanford, Harvard, Cornell, Princeton, Brown, Johns Hopkins, University of Chicago, and University of Pennsylvania. At Stanford, Brown, UPenn, and Cornell RRNTT faculty are strictly limited to either short time, visiting, non-academic professionals who are expected to continue their professional work outside academia while affiliated and return to their non-academic life after affiliation, or were simply short-term teaching fellows. Princeton only uses the titles Lecturer and Instructor. Johns Hopkins restricts PoPs to the business school and University of Chicago to the law School. The rich roles in research, pedagogical innovation, and administrative leadership that the RRNTT play at Duke are absent at these schools. Given that many of the schools used RRNTT only for short term positions or for hiring non-academic professionals, the number of non-tenure track faculty were specifically limited in their bylaws; e.g., restricted to being only 3% of the faculty at UPenn and 25% of the faculty at Cornell.

Only Harvard is similar to Duke in recognizing RRNTT faculty as national and international leaders in their fields, who are expected to have academic doctorates (or the equivalent for the arts), who are expected to have leadership roles on campus and in faculty governance, and who could have long-term affiliations with the university

RRNTT and Gender

In Trinity College, the Nicholas School, and the Law School the majority of RRNTT faculty are female (53%, 60%, 58% respectively) compared to 30% overall for tenure track faculty across campus. This could be due to the historic use of the RRNTT faculty for female spousal hires. The percentages of female RRNTT faculty in Pratt and Sanford, are 34% and Sanford 31%, respectively. There is very little diversity in this population with the percentage of white faculty in each unit ranging from 72% to 100%. (Henriquez Faculty Compensation Report)

The Faculty Compensation Committee report from 2019 indicated that the largest inequity in salary by gender across the university was for PoPs and Lecturers, with the equity ratios varying from 87 to 97. (Assist PoP 87; Assoc Pop 97; Full PoP 89.) The gender equity ratios for tenure track faculty are mostly above 90 and, indeed, the committee concluded that there wasn't a gender discrepancy in salary at Duke except in PoPs. The Faculty Compensation Committee did not analyze Research Professors given the broad range of descriptions and expectations across campus. Thus, while the PoP and Lecturer positions are predominantly filled by women, in general their male colleagues receive higher salaries.

The Current Status of RRNTT Faculty Designations at Duke:

While there is widespread representation of RRNTT faculty in almost all units on campus, there is tremendous variation in how these faculty designations are being used within schools and sometimes within individual departments or programs. Thus, *faculty with the same title and rank can have different job descriptions and different evaluation criteria for promotion*. The greatest variations we observed are in the Research Professor and PoP categories.

Research Professor

This faculty designation had the widest range of expectations. Depending on the department, Research Professors can have a teaching load ranging from zero to “tenure track levels.” The expectation for external funding can range from 0%, fully on salary, to 100%, fully external. In some units Research Professors are expected to *assist* tenure track faculty in their research, while in others they function as fully independent researchers. In some departments the expectations listed in the bylaws for Research Professors and PoPs are identical. Below are examples drawn from different bylaws indicating the expectations for Research Professors from different units on campus.

**Different expectations and roles for Research Professors across campus.
Each line is from the bylaw of a different unit on campus.**

do only independent research and be funded by external grants
assist tenure track faculty in research
publication record should be comparable to that of a tenured professor
research and teaching
research teaching and administrative work
teaching expectation and load of tenure track faculty
no teaching
fully salaried
fully supported by external funding

Professor of the Practice

This faculty designation is also variably defined across campus. In some units PoPs are expected to do “some research”, in others the expectation is “high levels of peer reviewed scholarship” and “international recognition for scholarship,” while in still others the focus and evaluation is mostly on teaching and service. This designation includes a diverse array of faculty from different backgrounds, from people without terminal degrees whose main career is outside of academia and who affiliate with the university for a few years before returning to their main position, to faculty who are formally trained as academics and conduct standard academic research. This category also includes colleagues with MFAs and others terminal professional degrees. Given the wide and accommodating nature of the word “practice” this has become a broad category including musicians, journalists, and chemists. PoPs are expected to participate in a highly variable distribution of teaching, service, scholarship, administration, and fundraising, depending on their unit and sometimes their personal agreement with their chair or dean. Many, but not all, departments require national, and some international, recognition for promotion to Full, but some require it in scholarship, while others recognize service and leadership in the field. There seems to be little clear definition of a PoP or how it differs from tenure track for evaluation and promotion in some units.

**Different expectations and roles for PoPs across campus.
Each line is from the bylaw of a different unit on campus.**

some research, mostly teaching
peer reviewed nationally and internationally recognized scholarship
innovation that leads to recognition at the national level
performance experience, but scholarship not expected
scholarship of teaching/scholarship of application/scholarship of integration
expectation of continued engagement and achievement in their profession outside of the university
requiring external letters for promotion
no requirement for external letters for promotion
teaching
teaching load equal to tenure track faculty
teaching load higher than tenure track faculty.

Lecturer

Lecturers are also involved in a wide range of academic affairs depending on the unit. Some Lecturers are expected to be predominantly engaged in teaching and student interaction, while others are expected to conduct research as well. Many units expect administrative duties.

**Different expectations and roles for Lecturers across campus.
Each line is from the bylaw of a different unit on campus.**

no research
some research
teaching and research
teaching and advising
teaching only
teaching, research, and admin
fundraising as decided by chair

Emergent Themes:

- The high level of variation in expectations for the different faculty designations is likely a reflection of the historical contingency of many hires. It also reflects not having well defined faculty designations between schools, within a school, or even within a unit.
- The word “practice” has become almost meaningless across campus, as many PoPs are trained and have similar job descriptions as tenure track faculty.

- For PoPs in the Natural Sciences it can be extremely difficult to do research that will generate a national or international reputation, given the limited access to laboratory and research space, no start-up resources, or graduate students.
- In many parts of campus RRNTT faculty are expected to have national or internationally recognized scholarship, yet RRNTT faculty do not have regular access to leave and sabbaticals to advance their research. Trinity College has an application for competitive Dean's Leave, but the number of applications approved each year has varied widely depending on the dean. Institutes mostly hire PoP and Research Professor faculty, but these colleagues have no access to leave to write books, conduct field research, or otherwise advance their scholarship as they have no affiliation with Trinity, despite significant teaching contributions for undergraduates.
- Duke currently does not hire artists with MFAs into tenure track positions and instead hires them as PoPs. As we will recommend below, the MFA should be considered the terminal degree in the field and candidates with MFAs should be eligible for tenure track positions.
- Currently RRNTT faculty can have contract lengths that range from 3 to 10 years. Some faculty who have been at Duke for decades are still reviewed every 4 years. We find this an inefficient use of faculty, chair, and committee time and recommend longer contracts for highly vetted, successful faculty.

Recommendations:

RRNTT faculty at Duke reflect the flexible, interdisciplinary nature of Duke's academic environment and commitment to integrating novel pedagogies, public scholarship, and real-world experience into research and teaching. We believe the recommendations below recognize and will continue to develop Duke's leadership in this area. We also recognize that there are two populations of RRNTT faculty: those currently employed by Duke and those to be hired in the future. We believe that our recommendations below should not harm or reduce the status of any current RRNTT faculty, but be used to create clarity, transparency, and equity for current colleagues, as well as a clear and standardized process for future hires.

1. Change the title of Lecturer to Teaching Professor (assistant, associate, full). Faculty with this position should predominantly be involved in teaching. By creating the title Teaching Professor Duke recognizes the role of these faculty in the professoriate. It was noted by some on the committee that PoP is often given as a title to candidates when they are hired who only teach in order to confer a higher sense of status when hiring non-academic professionals. The Teaching Professor title would now parallel the Research Professor title and clearly indicate the main responsibility.

2. Use the title Research Professor for those whose primary expectation is scholarship and who have minimal teaching. Reserve the Research Professor title for those conducting independent work and use Research Scientist for those assisting a tenure track faculty member with research.

Title	Teaching	Research	Service
Research Prof (assist, assoc, full)	-	expected	supportive
Teaching Prof (assist, assoc, full)	expected	-	supportive

3. PoPs are the only RRNTT faculty who are expected to do all three things that a tenure track faculty member does. We recommend splitting this category to better reflect the differing nature of “the practice” and using three faculty designations, as designated below. (The committee also recognizes the discipline-specific title of Clinical Professor in the Law School for faculty who teach and work in law clinics and acknowledges that Duke should keep that title.)
- **Professor of the Arts.** This title raises the profile of the arts at Duke and recognizes the particular practice and scholarship that artists provide to the community.
 - **Professor of the Practice.** This designation would be used for faculty who have careers outside of academia, but whose professional skills enrich the instruction and scholarship at Duke. This designation reflects a number of the faculty in the Sanford School and the Law School.
 - **Career Track Professor** This designation parallels the definitions recently created in the medical center for non-tenure track faculty. This designation would include Assistant, Associate, and Full Professor without tenure, and faculty would be addressed as, for example, Associate Professor. This designation would be used for traditionally trained academics with terminal degrees who develop or continue their scholarship, teaching and service at Duke.

Title	Teaching	Research	Service
For promotion to Full must have national recognition in <i>research or service</i>			
Professor of the Arts (assist, assoc, full)	expected	expected	expected
Professor of the Practice (assist, assoc, full)	expected	expected	expected
Career Track (assist, assoc, full)	expected	expected	expected

4. Pops must demonstrate teaching excellence. We recommend that we distinguish the other expectations of PoPs from tenure track faculty by requiring national recognition in scholarship *or* service to the field. Thus, faculty who are recognized leaders in pedagogical innovation, leaders in their disciplinary field for service, or traditional scholarly innovation would be considered for Full. Several departments in Trinity already use this expectation for PoPs.

5. The relative weighting between scholarship, teaching, and service that will be used for evaluation should be defined clearly at hiring and at every contract renewal. Consistency and oversight of all job expectations allows less opportunity for favoritism or exploitation.
 - a. While PoPs may have differently weighted job descriptions across campus, they should be similar at the school level and for Trinity should have buy-in from the deans for evaluation. We recommend the Trinity divisional deans be responsible for equity across departments in weighting and clarity of expectations.
 - b. Different schools might have different expectations for weighing teaching, scholarship and service, *but they should be consistent within a school*. There currently is no oversight process for schools outside of Trinity or within Institutes.
6. In rare but appropriate cases, the committee recommends allowing RRNTT faculty doing scholarship equivalent to tenure track to apply to convert their job title to tenure track in a no-risk manner. That is to say, allow a faculty member who is already a Pop to apply for tenure without the risk of losing the PoP position. Committee members noted that in some departments the most productive and internationally recognized scholars are PoPs.
7. Regularize contract lengths and provide longer contracts for faculty that have a track record of excellence. Currently 3, 4, 5, and 10-year contracts are used. Some RRNTT faculty who have been at Duke for decades still have 4-year contracts, which is an inefficient use of time for faculty under review, chairs, and reappointment committees.
8. Allow artists with MFAs to apply for tenure track positions at Duke. The MFA is the terminal degree in this field, similar to the MD and JD. By not recognizing this terminal degree in the arts, Duke is less competitive in attracting and retaining top talent.
9. If RRNTT faculty are expected to have national or internationally recognized scholarship (PoPs and Research Professors) then they should have access to academic leaves and sabbaticals to advance it. Currently, only Trinity College offers a leave process, called Dean's Leave. The competitive process for this non-guaranteed leave has varied widely over time, with some deans approving 50% of the requests for leave and others almost none. In the past Research Professors were not eligible, despite their greater emphasis on research. Institutes mostly hire PoP and Research Professor faculty, but these colleagues have no access to leave to write books, conduct field research, or otherwise advance their scholarship as they have no affiliation with Trinity, despite significant teaching contributions for undergraduates. We recommend that access to academic leaves and sabbaticals apply to those currently holding RRNTT positions at Duke, as well as those hired in the future.