

**University of Florida - Office of Academic Affairs**  
**8-5-14 - DRAFT**  
***Proposal for new faculty title series: Professor of Practice***

Purpose:

Academic deans requested that OAA explore the creation of a non-tenure eligible faculty title series emphasizing relevant industry/professional experience.

Discussion:

There are several drivers for this request. The teaching, research and service missions of some departments and programs could be enhanced by inclusion of individuals on the faculty with industry/professional experience. In some cases, accrediting bodies require that faculty engage in professional activities with industry, including such things as participation in relevant professional associations, practice-oriented intellectual contributions, or ongoing direct contact with industry. Eligible individuals for these faculty positions may not have degree credentials or appropriate terminal degrees associated with academic rank, but would possess highly appropriate and relevant experience of benefit to students and programs. Such individuals would not be prepared to, nor would they necessarily be interested in, the research agenda required of tenure-track positions.

Therefore, this proposal suggests implementation of a new, non-tenure-eligible faculty title series: Assistant Professor of Practice, Associate Professor of Practice, and Professor of Practice. An individual could be hired at any of the levels, depending on qualifications and University needs, or could be promoted internally within the series as appropriate.

Professors of Practice are not expected to conduct independent research or publish in peer-reviewed journals, but would be expected to advise research faculty on projects, serve as liaisons between the University and industry or government to identify funding or research projects, or work with disciplinary faculty to identify and articulate industry-specific research projects.

Professors of Practice would not teach core disciplinary courses, but would be expected to teach courses in their specific area of industry expertise and professional experience. They might also assist disciplinary faculty in devising professionally-informed courses within existing academic degree programs. Faculty hired into this title series would not be able to chair graduate committees unless she or he held the appropriate terminal degree in their field. (The Graduate School is currently discussing faculty titles generally and service on graduate committees. This proposal recognizes that it would be desirable to allow faculty in this series to serve on graduate committees.)

Professors of Practice would perform service for the department, college, University, and beyond the University as appropriate. They would be expected to assist students and departments in developing networks to industry, developing internships or other job opportunities for students, and serve on governance committees as appropriate.

This title series is not intended to replace or offset either the tenure-eligible faculty titles, or the tenure-ineligible series such as "Clinical" or Lecturer. It is designed to provide flexibility for the University to address the requirements of professional programs. Colleges could use the titles for academic programs that require contributions by experienced practitioners, normally for accreditation purposes. The

Provost's Office and Human Resources would closely monitor the use of these titles initially to ensure appropriate use and determine if changes need to be recommended. Faculty appointments in this title series would follow all the usual requirements for national searches, be subject to promotion criteria that outline "distinction" in the field, and follow the requirements of all pertinent Regulations and collective bargaining agreements.

Proposal:

To create this new faculty title series, OAA proposes appropriate changes to the University Constitution and by-laws, and the addition of the following section to UF Reg. 7.003(2)(a):

*Professor of Practice (Specialty Faculty title). Candidates for this tenure ineligible faculty rank shall hold the highest degree appropriate to the field or possess equivalent qualifications based on professional experience. A candidate for this field-specific rank shall be expected to demonstrate a national or international record of distinction in non-academic (industry) achievement pertinent to the position, and have demonstrated applied and practical professional experience relevant to the goals of the academic unit. This position will require ongoing professional engagement in the candidate's practice field, including maintaining professional credentials, and contributions to research, teaching and service within and outside the University. It may not be used with the modifiers "Research" or "Clinical." A candidate for this rank must have a distinguished record of achievement beyond the level of associate professor of practice.*

*Associate Professor of Practice (Specialty Faculty title). Candidates for this tenure ineligible faculty rank shall hold the highest degree appropriate to the field or possess equivalent qualifications based on professional experience. A candidate for this field-specific rank shall be expected to demonstrate a national or international record of distinction in non-academic (industry) achievement pertinent to the position, and have demonstrated applied and practical professional experience relevant to the goals of the academic unit. This position will require ongoing professional engagement in the candidate's practice field, including maintaining professional credentials, and contributions to research, teaching and service within and outside the University. It may not be used with the modifiers "Research" or "Clinical." A candidate for this rank must have a distinguished record of achievement beyond the level of assistant professor of practice.*

*Assistant Professor of Practice (Specialty Faculty title). Candidates for this tenure ineligible faculty rank shall hold the highest degree appropriate to the field or possess equivalent qualifications based on professional experience. A candidate for this field-specific rank shall be expected to demonstrate a national or international record of distinction in non-academic (industry) achievement pertinent to the position and have demonstrated applied and practical professional experience relevant to the goals of the academic unit. This position will require ongoing professional engagement in the candidate's practice field, including maintaining professional credentials, and contributions to research, teaching and service within and outside the University. It may not be used with the modifiers "Research" or "Clinical."*