

October 30, 2025

Dean of Faculty, Eve DeRosa
Office of the Dean of Faculty
Cornell University
315 Day Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853

Re: College of Human Ecology Proposal for adoption of Teaching Professor track titles

Dear Dean DeRosa,

Attached please find the proposal for the adoption of Teaching Professor titles in the College of Human Ecology.

The RTE teaching faculty and tenure-track (TT) faculty voted on the proposal during the period October 10, 2025 to October 27, 2025. The votes, described below, overwhelmingly favored the adoption of these new titles.

RTE faculty summary

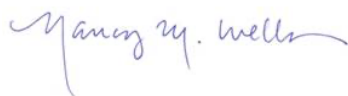
14 RTE teaching faculty total
13 total votes
12 in favor, 1 opposed, 0 abstain

TT faculty vote summary:

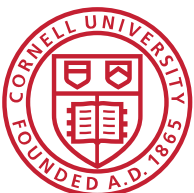
66 TT faculty total
50 total votes
40 in favor, 8 opposed, 2 abstain

It is my understanding that the Faculty Senate will vote on CHE's proposal at the November 12 meeting. Please let me know if any additional materials are needed in anticipation of that vote.

Sincerely,



Nancy M. Wells
Senior Associate Dean, Research + Graduate Education
Professor, Human Centered Design Department



Office of the Dean

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College of Human Ecology
Proposal for the Academic Title of Teaching Professor
Last edited 9/15/2025

A. Justification

The College of Human Ecology (CHE) requests permission to use the Teaching Professor title at all ranks (assistant, associate, and full) to recruit and retain the best possible faculty to meet our educational goals and to maximize their contributions within the College. There are three core reasons that make the use of the Teaching Professor title important to our goals. First, “Teaching Professor” reflects the intellectual contributions made by many teaching-track faculty and acknowledges our commitment to excellence in undergraduate education. The current two-tier lecturer track is not well suited to support professional growth and innovation. Second, peer institutions are increasingly using this title or similar titles. As this occurs, the College is compromised in its ability to recruit and retain the best possible non-tenure track faculty. Third, the Teaching Professor title addresses what may be perceived as a disparity between “Lecturer” and titles such as “Research Professor” and “Professor of Practice.”

B. Description of Position: the role of a Teaching Professor within CHE culture.

Consistent with the Faculty Handbook description of the teaching professor title, these titles in the College of Human Ecology will be available only for benefits eligible (50% FTE or greater), long term, non-tenure track faculty appointments focused on teaching and not on research.

While specific responsibilities will vary by individual and department/ unit, three primary responsibilities will be part of each Teaching Professor position:

- Substantive teaching responsibilities in degree programs, primarily at the undergraduate level.
- Broader impact beyond the immediate classroom/ seminar/ lab/ studio. The teaching professor is expected to contribute to the College and unit mission over and above their teaching contribution. These activities could be related to student activities such as career advising, project or other community engaged learning activities, pedagogical innovation, program development or outreach. Alternatively, these activities could be more institution-building such as institute development and leadership.
- Service. Consistent with their rank and local needs, teaching professors are expected to contribute to teaching-related service, especially in areas that concern advising, mentoring, curriculum, and the management of degree programs. Teaching professors are eligible to serve in key administrative roles such as directing an MPS program or as Director of Undergraduate Studies.

1. *Criteria and expectations for appointment at the rank of Assistant Teaching Professor*
Assistant teaching professors are expected to demonstrate potential to develop into excellent classroom teachers. They may also contribute to the development of existing

or new courses, and/or serve as faculty advisors, including advising student projects and academic and honorary societies.

2. *Criteria and expectations for appointment at or promotion to the rank of Associate Teaching Professor.* To be appointed or promoted to the rank of associate teaching professor, candidates are expected to have six or more years of full-time experience teaching in higher education (at Cornell or elsewhere) and to demonstrate, or have potential for, making contributions to their department's educational mission beyond those typically required of an assistant teaching professor. These contributions might include creating novel and effective learning activities, contributing to curricular development and assessment at the course or departmental level, design and implementation of a new course, or other service or leadership in areas of importance to their department. Service activities may also relate to the broad student experience or to department-level activities such as accreditation, advising or other initiatives, and to student engagement such as mentoring, clubs, or programs.

An associate teaching professor should demonstrate broad knowledge of the field and be able to draw on that knowledge to make connections between introductory and advanced level courses. Candidates should show evidence of continued development of their pedagogy and/or of keeping current in their area of instruction.

3. *Criteria and expectations for appointment at of promotion to the rank of (full) Teaching Professor.* To be appointed or promoted to the rank of teaching professor, candidates are expected to have eleven or more years of full-time experience teaching in higher education. They are expected to make significant contributions to the broad educational mission of their department, advance teaching and learning in their discipline, use innovative strategies in teaching and have impact beyond their department. Examples of such contributions may include: the development of materials such as a textbook, or a website making available important teaching materials in their field of instruction, development of educational software of value to courses taught at Cornell or elsewhere, dissemination of achievements via papers or presentations on education, curriculum development, mentoring other faculty's teaching efforts, development and delivery of distance learning courses, collaboration on teaching beyond the department, significant involvement in curricular innovation and leadership at the departmental or college level, leadership in national professional organizations appropriate to their field, or teaching awards beyond the college.

Full teaching professors are expected to contribute to department, college, or university service at a level beyond that of associate teaching professors. Participation in University governance, roles in committees of the College or the University, and engaging the public are each additional examples of the level of service expected of teaching professors.

We expect the distribution of Teaching Professor positions to be spread across units of the College. All Teaching Professor appointments will be at least 50% effort, and most will be at 100% effort.

C. Terms of Appointment

1. **Degree Requirements.** Teaching Professor titles of all ranks must hold a graduate degree that is appropriate to the level and field of instruction that the individual will provide.
2. **Course Loads.** The Teaching Professor is primarily a teaching position, with a full-time course load corresponding to five to six courses per year. Individual course loads will be determined based on the norms and precedents in the department, types of courses taught, and additional responsibilities that might be assigned by the department.
3. **Searches.** Searches for open Teaching Professor positions in the College of Human Ecology will typically be national in scope (with possible exceptions for search waiver-qualifying conditions, including spousal or affirmative action waivers). A search committee comprising four faculty members will be appointed by the Department Chair or Unit Director following the human resources policies of the university and practices of the specific unit within the College. Appointments will be discussed and voted upon at a meeting of tenured/ tenure-track faculty and RTE teaching faculty (see Section E re: Voting). Voting results along with the recommendation of the chair/ director will be presented to the Dean, who has final authority for such appointments.
4. **Processes.** This section describes the processes for appointment, reappointment, and promotion within the Teaching Professor ranks. Section F, below, describes the procedures that will be used to transition existing Lecturer-track faculty to the Teaching Professor track.

4.1 New Appointments. As noted above, searches for open Teaching Professor positions in CHE will be national in scope and include a dossier-based review process.

4.2 Reappointments. All Teaching Professors will be non-tenure track, renewable appointments for a defined period up to five years. Reappointment of Teaching Professors will be consistent with College RTE reappointment procedures (see: <https://cornell.app.box.com/s/m5v1vrqflshcntxvmkspgy6koktyhwha/file/1946285658029>).

4.3 Promotion to Associate or full Teaching Professor. Promotion from Assistant to Associate and from Associate to full Teaching Professor will require a dossier-based review. Promotions are voted on by the department faculty. Voting rights are as stated for the process of initial appointments.

5. **Appointment Lengths**

- Assistant Teaching Professors will typically have three-year appointments
- Associate and (full) Teaching Professors will typically have five-year appointments.

6. **Grievance.** Teaching Professors shall have access to the grievance policies of the College of Human Ecology. All final decisions regarding RTE appointments belong to the Dean of the College. There is no appeal to the Provost.

7. **Professional Development.** Teaching Professors at all ranks are encouraged to pursue professional development opportunities through pedagogically or scholarly-oriented conferences and leadership training. There is no sabbatical program for faculty holding Teaching Professor titles at any rank. Externally funded scholarly leaves for professional development purposes will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The policy for professional development leaves is outlined in [University Policy 6.2.1](#).

D. Limitations

1. **Scope.** The principal task of Teaching Professors is to provide outstanding classroom teaching. We also expect that Teaching Professors will fill service roles, particularly roles related to teaching (e.g., directing a master's program or serving as Director of Undergraduate Studies).

As noted in the enabling legislation, the teaching professor titles may not be used to replicate the combined teaching and research responsibilities of the tenure track faculty. Accordingly, those in Teaching Professor positions are not required to conduct research, publish results, or mentor PhD students. Teaching Professors may choose to participate in such activities, especially when related to pedagogy, and generally, should stay current with research in their area to incorporate it into their classroom teaching. Research activity will not be expected or required for appointment, reappointment, or promotion within the Teaching Professor track in the College of Human Ecology.

2. **Numbers:** RTE teaching faculty are defined as all long term, benefits-eligible faculty on renewable appointments who have appointments at any rank in the Lecturer, Teaching Professor, or Professor of Practice tracks. The number of RTE teaching faculty, R, with University Voting Rights shall not exceed 30% of the total number of teaching faculty (tenured and tenure-track faculty, TT, plus such RTE faculty).

$$R / R+TT \leq 30\%$$

E. Voting and Other Rights

Teaching Professors on benefits-eligible renewable appointments will have university voting rights (UVR) as defined in the Cornell Faculty Handbook.

Voting rights on appointments, promotions and reappointments are discussed above in Section C. Voting rights are extended only to benefits-eligible faculty on renewable appointments. The general rule is that teaching professors at any rank may vote on hiring

teaching professors at any rank but may vote on rank and promotion only of teaching professors up to their own rank.

Teaching Professors do not vote on hiring, tenure, or promotions of tenure-track faculty. Teaching professors at all ranks can vote on curricular matters at the departmental and college level.

F. Impact

Relation to TT and to other RTE Teaching Titles. The use of the Teaching Professor title is not intended to have any impact on the number of tenure-track faculty in the College of Human Ecology or within any academic unit in the College. Nor shall the Teaching Professor title impact the use of Professor of Practice titles. It is expected that there will not be any movement between Teaching Professor and tenure track appointments, but for exceptional situations and provost approval.

Lecturer-track faculty will contribute to the teaching needs of the college but may not meet degree requirements of the professorial teaching tracks, or may be appointed for specific short-term needs, or may teach specific classes part-time without participating in the broader mission of the college. Eventually, we expect to discontinue the Senior Lecturer title, as we do not plan to use this title for part-time or short-term faculty appointments.

a. Transition to Assistant Teaching Professor Title

Lecturers or senior lecturers meeting the Section B.1 criteria and expectations for appointment at the rank of assistant teaching professor may request to transition to assistant teaching professor title. The request should be made by the faculty member to their chair and should include an up-to-date CV and cover letter from the faculty member outlining their qualifications for the new title relative to the criteria stated in Section B.1. If approved by the chair, the chair will provide a letter endorsing the new title and will forward the CV, the candidate's letter, and the chair's letter to the Dean who will make the final decision. Appointment lengths and dates will be carried over from the faculty member's previous lecturer or senior lecturer appointment.

b. Transition to Associate Teaching Professor Title

Senior lecturers meeting the Section B.2 criteria and expectations for appointment at the rank of associate teaching professor may request to transition to the associate teaching professor title. The request should be made by the faculty member to their chair. Requests should include an up-to-date CV and cover letter from the faculty member outlining their qualifications for the new title relative to the criteria stated in section B. If approved by the chair, the chair will provide a letter endorsing the new title and will forward the CV, the candidate's letter, and the chair's letter to the Dean who will make the final decision.

The criterion that associate teaching professor candidates are expected to have six or more years full-time experience teaching in higher education is reduced to five years for transitions from current senior lecturers to associate teaching professor titles and for assistant teaching professors who were initially appointed as senior lecturers but who did not qualify to transition to associate teaching professor at the time CHE adopted the teaching professor track. This aligns with the appointment timing for senior lecturers. Appointment lengths and dates will be carried over from the faculty member's previous senior lecturer appointment.

c. Transition to (full) Teaching Professor Title

Senior lecturers meeting the Section B.3 criteria and expectations for appointment at the rank of (full) teaching professor may request to transition to the teaching professor title. Such transitions will be treated as a promotion. Eligible faculty should first consult with their chair and consider their qualifications against the high expectations for appointment at this rank as outlined in Section B.3. If following this consultation, the candidate and chair agree with transitioning to the teaching professor title, the candidate and department will follow the dossier-based promotion procedures outlined in Section C.4. If the candidate has within the past five years had a dossier-based review for reappointment or promotion, that dossier can be updated to address how the candidate meets the criteria in Section B.3 for appointment at the rank of (full) teaching professor. Upon successful review and appointment to the teaching professor title, the faculty member's appointment length and dates will be reset for up to five years.

G. Definition of RTE Teaching Faculty

RTE teaching faculty are defined as all benefits-eligible faculty with Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, or Professor of Practice titles. Once the Teaching Professor title is adopted, then faculty with Teaching Professor titles at any rank will also be considered RTE teaching faculty.