

A Proposal to Establish the Faculty Rank of
Professor of the Practice

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OBJECTIVE:

Establish the rank of *Professor of the Practice of (Program or Discipline)*.

This rank would acknowledge the contributions of faculty whose scholarship involves their contribution as a professional. The *Professor of the Practice* rank would recognize experienced professionals who share their particular fine arts, engineering, music, architecture etc. expertise and experience on a full-time basis with the Smith College community.

This title may be used to appoint individuals who have demonstrated excellence in the practice as well as leadership in their specific field. These individuals would have attained regional and/or national prominence and, when appropriate, international recognition of outstanding achievement. Additionally, these individuals shall have demonstrated superior teaching ability appropriate to their field/discipline. As a minimum, the appointee shall hold the terminal professional degree in the field or equivalent stature by virtue of experience. Those who would hold the rank of *Professor of the Practice*, while having faculty stature, will not have the rights that are limited for tenured faculty save one that is the opportunity for sabbaticals in order to continue to grow their practice and engage actively with their respective communities. This title does not carry tenure, nor does time served as a *Professor of the Practice* count toward achieving tenure in another title.

The rank of *Professor of the Practice* is one that could be used in multiple programs and departments at Smith. The concept and scope as outlined here specifically address the benefits of this rank for the Picker Engineering Program at Smith College. The program would benefit from the

involvement of practicing engineers who as faculty (*Professors of the Practice*) would enable students to further understand the nature of engineering from design to realization and implementation of solutions.

CONCEPT AND SCOPE:

Among the full-time professional positions within the Picker Engineering Program at Smith College, it is desirable to make particular provision for those who are devoted to teaching students the skills, methods, and values of the engineering profession. It is proposed that the holders of these positions shall be called *Professor of the Practice of Engineering*. Those holding this title would:

1. be successful and effective professionals in the field of engineering. For example, *Professor of the Practice of Engineering* may be an individual who has designed and implemented systems that are noteworthy for their success, innovation, and importance. A *Professor of the Practice of Engineering* may additionally be an individual who has had significant involvement in entrepreneurial endeavors necessary to secure engineering success.

2. be an effective teacher of the profession. The *Professor of the Practice* would be expected to teach at the same level of commitment as a tenure track faculty member.

3. understand the contemporary research/scholarship that applies to the profession. This individual should be able to evaluate research/scholarship in their field, and facilitate the education of students and colleagues in these technical areas. This individual does not need to have a research track record comparable to tenure track faculty.

This proposal suggest that the title of *Professor of the Practice* as described above may apply to the ranks of *Associate Professor of the Practice*, and *Assistant Professor of the Practice*. The Associate and Assistant versions of this title would be applicable to the level of professional experience.

It is recognized that appointments of individuals to the rank of *Professor of the Practice* requires that the

individual have specific talents that amplify the talent pool of the faculty in tenure track positions. A PhD is not a strict requirement, but may be interpreted as evidence supporting experience and expertise.

The establishment of the rank of Professor of the Practice is a recognition of the value of experience and life long learning. It is recognition of the importance of student interaction with individuals who have practiced the discipline of engineering.