

Birds of a Feather: Teaching Track Faculty in CS

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SUMMARY

A panel at SIGCSE 2004 illustrated the trend in computer science departments to hire faculty to teach in a teaching-track position that parallels the standard tenure-track position, providing the possibility of promotion, longer-term contracts, and higher pay for excellence in teaching and service. [1] This birds-of-a-feather is designed to gather educators who are currently in such a position to share their experiences as members of the faculty of their departments and schools, and to provide opportunities for schools considering such positions to gather information.

SIGNIFICANCE & RELEVANCE

As departments struggle with the needs for the introductory computer science sequence, a growing number of departments have realized that a need exists to hire faculty solely devoted to excellence in teaching. Carnegie Mellon University, University of California at Berkeley, University of Virginia and Duke University are just a few universities that have set up a teaching-track that provide career growth for university lecturers without granting formal tenure. These teaching-track positions include the possibility for promotion, longer-term contracts and greater pay as demonstrated by excellence in teaching, educational material development, and service. Since this type of position is relatively new in CS departments, the expectations and responsibilities for such faculty varies from one university to another, but they certainly differ from the traditional tenure-track positions.

It is clear that there is a great deal of interest in this type of session, as we had more than 60 participants in a similar sessions at SIGCSE '06, in Houston, Texas, and SIGCSE '07 in Covington, Kentucky.

The goal of this birds-of-a-feather is to give faculty in this type of track and others considering such a career option a place to meet and share experiences with one another. The major goals of this birds-of-a-feather are to:

- Allow teaching-track faculty to meet each other in a friendly, informal setting.
- Provide a setting for attendees who are in universities that are considering a teaching-track to learn more about the issues involved in setting up such a track.
- Share issues and concerns about evaluation and promotion for teaching-track faculty from participants of different locations. (What do we have in common? How can we help each other?)
- Plan some ways to allow teaching-track faculty in CS to communicate with each other after SIGCSE is over.

EXPECTED AUDIENCE / AV EQUIPMENT

Since SIGCSE caters to CS educators, especially at the introductory levels, there will likely be significant interest in this topic. We had more than 60 people attend sessions in the last two years, and could reasonably expect at least that number this year. No additional AV equipment is needed for this birds-of-a-feather.

REFERENCE

- [1] Dougherty, J.P., Garcia, D.D., Horton, T.B., and Rodger, S.H. Panel Presentation: Teaching Faculty Positions. In *Proceedings of the 35th Technical Symposium on Computer Science Education (SIGCSE '04)*, page 231-232, 2004.