Lecturer – An Alternative to the Tenure Track

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Introduction

When most people think of an academic position, they think of the traditional tenure-track progression from assistant professor through associate professor to full professor. However there is another alternative that is becoming increasingly common in many universities – The lecturer. The lecturer position is not right for everyone, but for some individuals it offers distinct advantages that make it preferable to the traditional tenure-track approach. In the following sections a number of different lecturers explain how they came to the lecturer position, what advantages (and disadvantages) it holds for them, and any other opinions or insights they wish to share regarding the lecturer position.

John T. Bell

I pursued a graduate education not from a desire to conduct research or to teach, but rather to improve my programming skills and to specialize in the area of computer simulation and modeling. When I graduated from the University of Wisconsin with a Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering and an MS in Computer Science, my intention was to work in the chemical processing industry as a simulation specialist. However I needed to remain in Madison while I waited for my wife to graduate, so I took a position in a small private computer-training firm. After four years of delivering 40 hours of lecture per week, my most marketable skill was my teaching ability, which was more valuable to academia than industry.

My wife and I needed to solve the infamous two-body problem, and after much searching settled at the University of Michigan (UM) in Ann Arbor, where she worked on a post-doc in molecular biology and I took a position as lecturer in the Department of Chemical Engineering. At the time there was some consideration of my moving onto the tenure track after the department completed the ongoing search for a new department head, but in practice that never happened. While at UM I initially taught a variety of chemical engineering courses, including senior plant design, reactor design, and unit operations laboratories. Later I taught college-level computing courses including introductory freshman computing and graduate courses in scientific visualization and virtual reality programming. I also conducted research, in conjunction with H. Scott Fogler, into the use and development of virtual reality for chemical engineering education. This research was conducted with undergraduate student programmers, and produced a number of virtual-reality based educational modules. Papers were written predominantly for ASEE and AIChE annual conferences[1-3], plus a few journal articles[4-6].

When my wife completed her post-doc we again went on the job market, looking for two suitable academic positions within the same geographic area. In the end I had to choose between two good offers – a lecturer position in computer science at the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC), or an assistant professor position at a different university. The two positions involved similar salaries, teaching duties, and opportunities for research. As a lecturer at UIC I am allowed to direct undergraduate and MS research projects, but not Ph.D. projects, (partially because my own Ph.D. is in a different field.) As an assistant professor at the other university I would have been allowed to direct Ph.D. students, but they were just getting ready to start their Ph.D. program, so there would not (initially) have been any Ph.D. students available to direct. Basically, my choice was between a tenure-track position at a teaching-oriented university and a non tenure-track teaching position at a more research-oriented university.

One of the primary reasons I chose the lecturer position was the lower stress levels, which I feel improves the overall quality of my life. (I have since gone through a divorce, which makes low stress levels at work even more valuable.) I am allowed to conduct as much research as I want to, but there are no pressures or obligations to do any research if I do not want to, and there are no detrimental consequences if I fail to publish papers or secure grant funding. My summer activities are completely my own choice – I can work on funded research, I can teach extra classes, I can go work outside the university, or I can just stay home and goof off all summer. I choose to work on funded research during the summer, with the comforting knowledge that it is by my own choice, and not because it is a requirement for tenure.

Another reason I chose the lecturer position is that I recognized in myself a priority towards teaching rather than research activities – When my workload gets overwhelming and there is not enough time to do everything, it tends to be my research that gets put off while I prepare my class materials, as opposed to cutting corners on my teaching to get more research done. I have also been fortunate to be affiliated with the Electronic Visualization Laboratory[7] at UIC, which is one of the world's leading research groups in the development of virtual reality (my area of research.)

Lecturers at UIC are considered full members of the faculty, attending all faculty meetings and having full voting privileges. The salary is generally lower than assistant professors, and the teaching duties are higher. (However the teaching load can be reduced for lecturers who maintain significant research programs or who undertake significant administrative duties.) Lecturers do not have the job security of tenure, but neither do they have the insecurity and stress of striving to attain tenure. The job security of lecturers in our field is actually quite high, because departments realize it would take two or three professors to replace the teaching duties of a single lecturer, and few research faculty want to increase their teaching loads. Another reason for lecturers' job security is that they tend to be individuals who put a higher priority on teaching than research, and therefore tend to get higher teaching ratings than their research-oriented counterparts.

My personal teaching load is five courses per (2-semester) year, which is a one-course reduction from the "normal" lecturer's load of six, due to my research activities. In addition to my teaching, I also advise the student chapter of ACM and direct the Virtual Reality Undergraduate Projects Laboratory (VRUPL) [8], which currently has sixteen active members working on a variety of virtual reality simulations[1]. I have directed one completed Masters project since

I started at UIC two years ago and am currently advising a second Masters student in the area of immersive interactive three-dimensional scientific visualization. I have recently submitted a grant proposal to the National Science Foundation that will hopefully allow me to support two graduate students per year for three years.

Another benefit I see to the lecturer position is the (relative) ease of finding a suitable opening, particularly in the case of a two-career couple. Finding two tenure-track positions in the same city can be very difficult, and usually involves some difficult compromises. If either half of the couple fails to get tenure, then the search starts all over again. Hiring a lecturer is generally easier than hiring a tenure-track faculty candidate, because a department head can often make the decision without a lot of committee bureaucracy or dean-level approval, and because the decision is more easily reversible if the candidate does not work out or if conditions change. In the case of computer science, almost every university in the world teaches some form of computer classes, even if they do not have a formal computer science department or research program. This means that lecturers in the field of computer science are employable everywhere, and are not geographically constrained to a few select schools.

Ann Ford

I came to the University of Michigan in the fall of 1981, graduate fellowship in hand, eager and intent on earning my Ph.D. and training for a career as a university teacher, researcher and scholar. My chosen field of study, computer science, was growing in size and evolving rapidly at that time as it is today, and I knew that this particular field would provide me with a wide variety of career options both in terms of what particular interests I could focus on, as well as in terms of what types of positions I would have open to me. I also knew that if for some reason I did not go on for the Ph.D., that I would be well prepared with an MS degree to enter the job market, most likely as a software developer. I saw that option as a "fall-back" position however. I wanted to teach, very much, and also was under the impression that unless I obtained a Ph.D., a career involving teaching would not be a possibility for me. I also knew that I truly loved the university environment and given the choice, would pursue a career at a major research university.

I completed my first year of graduate school with my love of both computer science and the university atmosphere intact. During the summer after my first year of graduate studies, I took a position as a computer programmer at a local software firm. I learned a great deal about software and business in this position, but I also learned a great deal about myself. The job entailed my sitting in a cubicle much of each day, writing code as part of a large software project. I was alone most of the time, concentrating on this work, and while I had some interaction with other people, it was much less than what I was used to on a daily basis. During those four months of work, I became more and more convinced that what I wanted to do, was teach. What I found most enjoyable about that summer job was writing the user training manual for the software that I had written. I also wanted to teach classes to the actual users about how to use the software, but that was not a practical possibility during the short time frame of summer. However, what was clear to me more than ever, was that I wanted to teach. I wanted to help people learn.

I started my second year of graduate studies armed with this new self-knowledge. I loved computer science, and I knew that no matter where my career path led, I wanted teaching to be a major part of it. As often happens in life, the unexpected happened that fall semester. My then-husband and I learned that I was expecting our first child. I finished my MS degree and made the decision to not work for a few years and focus on raising children. Since raising children is largely a teaching job, this suited me very well!

After five years at home, I decided that I wanted to go back to formal work part-time. I called the EECS department at the University of Michigan, and asked about possible positions of all sorts. This was mid-December 1987. To my surprise and delight, the department hired me to teach a large 100-level programming class in January 1988. I had never taught before, not even as a teaching assistant in graduate school. I had done tutoring, one-on-one, and given guitar lessons! However nothing in my background prepared me for the reality of teaching that first class.

To make a long story short, I loved teaching that class. I was hired originally as an adjunct lecturer, and continued in that position for about five years. At that point, I felt that I needed more salary and more permanence in my work. My options at that time were to take a position at a local software company, working in applications development, and alternatively, to approach the EECS department and ask if they would hire me as a lecturer full-time. The department responded by giving me a three-year, full time appointment as a lecturer. Since this was what I really wanted to do, I was thrilled. I have now been lecturer in this department, either adjunct or full-time, for about thirteen years.

My position has evolved greatly over time. Initially, teaching was my only task. After a few years, I became very interested in academic advising however, and asked my chair if I could participate in that activity within the department. I was given the role of a program advisor in the computer science degree program in UM's College of Literature, Science and the Arts. As the years went by, I gradually increased my advising role and eventually was named Chief Program Advisor for this undergraduate degree program. I still serve in that role today.

I also found myself more and more interested in curriculum development. Again, I approached my chair, and asked if I could become a member of the CSE undergraduate curriculum committee. Again, the answer was yes, and I became a very active and enthusiastic member of this committee, on which I served for six years. This task fit in extremely well with my role as teacher and advisor, and one of my proudest achievements is my role in the development of a new computer science undergraduate curriculum, put in place September 1, 2001.

As time went on, I was also asked to serve on many other departmental committees. Hence my service role increased greatly. For example, I served on an internal review committee for the CS undergraduate program. I also served on a committee that reviewed all of the undergraduate degree programs offered by the EECS department and made recommendations for the future of these programs.

I see the position of lecturer as ideal for me, and perhaps as ideal for others with similar interests. I love teaching, advising and curricular work. My department has allowed me to pursue all of these interests to the full extent that I have wanted to do so. I think one of the most crucial

questions any potential lecturer must ask is, what is the attitude of the specific department towards the position of lecturer? Do they see it as teaching-only? Will they allow and in fact encourage lecturers to pursue their interests along other lines, whether those other interests involve service or research activities, or both? In my department, there are also lecturers actively engaged in their own research. While teaching is still priority one for lecturers here, it is also the case that other interests are well-supported.

For me, the pros of the lecturer position mainly lie in the fact that I love to teach, and this position allows me to focus primarily on teaching. I also love to write, and have had the time to write and publish a textbook with a colleague[9]. I have not been particularly interested in doing active research at any point in the last thirteen years, and I am not required to pursue any. Thus the position aligns very well with my personal interests.

A major con of this position is a lack of job security as compared to tenure-track faculty. Another con of this position is that there are those occasions on which I do not receive the respect I feel is deserved both within my department and within the larger workplace, the university as a whole. Negative interactions range from comments such as a simple, "Oh, you're just a lecturer?" said in a particular tone of voice to, "Well, since you're a lecturer, I don't think you can vote on this issue." I have had to fight some battles (for example, to be allowed to vote) here and there, and generally have won those battles. But for the most part, negative interactions with other faculty and administrators throughout the university have been few and far between. I think the reason for this is not just my own competence (not to sound self-serving here, but let's face it, no one will treat you with respect unless you demonstrate personal competence and self-respect on the job) but perhaps more important, the support of my department administration and my college. It is absolutely critical for any lecturer to be treated with respect and given full support by his or her own department administration and by its faculty. This makes or breaks the position. For me, working as a lecturer in this department, is the ideal career.

Vladimir Goncharoff

I earned a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from Northwestern University in August 1983, and was fortunate to have been appointed assistant professor in the EECS Department at the University of Illinois at Chicago where I began work two weeks later, just in time for the beginning of the fall term. I had never taught a course before, never even been a teaching assistant, but now was given two courses to teach and felt that students expected me to know the subject material inside and out (they called me "professor," after all!). I recall my first few lectures: voice quivering, knees shaking inside my pant legs, trying to figure out how to adjust an overhead projector without losing train of thought… Over the next few years, thanks to constant practice, my teaching skills gradually improved to the point that I was able to present material clearly, not be thrown for a loop by difficult questions from students during lectures, and even spice up the material with corny jokes whenever necessary (to wake students up, for example). Apparently my efforts were appreciated as I had the honor of being recognized with teaching awards from fellow faculty and from the student body.

I haven't mentioned the other responsibilities I had as assistant professor – mainly doing research and writing grant proposals for external funding – and that is because my then new-found love of teaching (and the hours of preparation required to do it well, with a high degree of self-

satisfaction) literally pushed all other activities to a lower priority level. But tenure review was rapidly approaching, so I put in quite a few stressful 80-hour workweeks trying to make greater strides in research and grant production. It soon became apparent to both me and to my department head that as things stood, a tenured position would not be in my future. After five years my publication record was below average, external funding record adequate, and teaching ratings excellent; this, however, is not the formula for obtaining tenure at a research university. In a last attempt at publishing more papers in time for the tenure review, I took a year off from the university to work full-time in industry by day and simultaneously work on writing technical journal papers in the evening hours. The effort was "too little – too late" from a publications perspective, although the industrial position gave me valuable experience and state-of-the-art knowledge in digital signal processing code development.

But here is where the story gets a happy ending: my department head[1] offered me the opportunity to come back to UIC as lecturer (something totally unexpected for me) and also handle the administrative duties of being Graduate Admissions Director in the EECS Department. In spite of what some may consider being an unwise career move for an assistant professor, I gladly accepted the lecturer position. I found the administrative work boring and tedious but it was an implied condition of having been offered the lecturer position. As luck would have it, the government/industry contacts I made while on leave from the university facilitated a major research contract award shortly afterward; this external funding permitted me to "buy out" from the administrative work and concentrate on a new combination of research and teaching. Eventually, when the contract work finished, I became full-time lecturer in the department and won another teaching award from the graduating student body.

It has been a circuitous route taken, but somehow life has led me to the occupation that I probably do best and love the most: university-level teaching. The intellectual stimulation of teaching, constantly learning new material from textbooks and other sources, interacting with students, lecturing and commanding an audience – all of these have given me tremendous job satisfaction over the years. Having been lecturer for the past thirteen years now, I can honestly say that these have been the most enjoyable years of my professional life.

Susan Montgomery

I earned a BSE in Chemical Engineering from the University of Michigan in December 1984, and a MS and Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering from Princeton University in 1991, with future plans to teach at a primarily undergraduate institution or a community college. I then did a post-doc with Professor Scott Fogler, whom I had worked with as an undergraduate, managing the development of chemical engineering educational software. He was instrumental in the department's decision to hire me into a tenure-track position focusing on educational research, something few if any departments were doing at the time.

I successfully completed my three-year review, but my tenure path at that time changed. The college of engineering was uncertain how to evaluate the educational research I did. Originally it seemed that publication in JEE and presentations at ASEE conferences would be sufficient, yet

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[1] Professor Wai-Kai Chen, to whom I will forever be grateful.

later it appeared that they felt I should echo the tenure requirements of faculty in the school of education, going so far as to assign me a mentor from the school of education. This uncertainty, coupled with a high-demand marriage and a desire to have a second child, resulted in my decision to step off the tenure track. I was fortunate to have a very supportive department chair, Professor Ralph Yang, who, along with support from the Dean's office, allowed me to transition to the lecturer position. At the time the plan was to implement a new lecturer track in the college, analogous to the standard tenure track and the existing research-focused track, with promotions and tenure. I spent two years as an assistant professor at a 75% appointment, which would stop the tenure clock temporarily, giving me the option of returning, which I chose not to do. I am now on the third year of a three-year appointment as a lecturer, currently being evaluated for renewal, which I am expected to easily receive. Plans for the lecturer track in the college were dropped shortly after much negative reaction from faculty at the college faculty meeting at which it was introduced.

My responsibilities include teaching undergraduate and graduate courses, serving as Undergraduate Program Advisor and Chair of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee for our department, which currently has approximately 350 undergraduate students. I oversee our department's distributed advising program, represent our department at the first-year advising office, and handle all curriculum and ABET-related issues. I was involved as an ABET observer, with plans to become an accreditor, but stopped when I realized that travel time is too precious a commodity at this time. I limit business travel to one or two yearly trips. For example, I chose to forgo this year's ASEE annual conference in order to attend the ASEE's chemical engineering division summer school in July instead. I am not expected to do research, but I can if I choose to, such as my current involvement in a study into perceptions and attitudes towards cheating among engineering students. My work days are mostly filled with teaching, advising and committee work, with all course-planning and grading taking place at home after the kids go to bed or during the approximately 12 hours a week my ex-husband spends with them.

I am quite satisfied with my decision to become a lecturer. I have a job that combines my two passions, teaching and advising undergraduate students, and I work with colleagues who respect and appreciate my contributions. I like not having to write grant proposals and support a research enterprise, and while I don't have the pleasure of sabbaticals, I do enjoy an analogous flexibility during the summer. While in the past I managed a dozen undergraduate students developing educational software each summer, now I work part-time during the summer, allowing me to spend time with my two boys (ages 8 and 3) and take a couple vacations with them. My career goals include getting industrial experience, becoming more involved in the ABET accreditation process, and earning a Masters degree in a student-advising related degree. But for now, my boys come first.

Dale Reed

My road to becoming a lecturer has been serendipitous. I remember taking an interest inventory in high school and scoffing at the result that recommended teaching as a profession that well matched my interests and abilities. After graduating from college I worked for a medium-sized software company for a year and felt myself longing for the flexibility and stimulus of academia. (I also bridled at having only two weeks of vacation a year.) I decided to enroll in a Master's degree program, but discovered that financial aid for an MS only was practically non-existent, so

I applied and was accepted as a Ph.D. student at Northwestern University. As part of my financial aid I worked as a teacher's assistant for several courses, and discovered that I not only enjoyed the interaction with students but was able to effectively communicate technical material to them as well.

Meanwhile I had finished my graduate student coursework and Master's project, and decided to stay and finish the Ph.D. In hindsight, I should have weighed this decision more carefully. My research was interdisciplinary, combining artificial intelligence, some cognitive psychology, and music, developing an expert system to do sound equalization. With my research agenda being largely my own, I ended up working on my own and was not connected to an active research program or to a group of students (big mistake).

Thinking I had my dissertation well in hand, I became a tenure-track faculty member at Loyola University in Chicago. I got married, and was very active in my church community. While still supposedly working on my dissertation, I received several grants from the Department of Energy and the National Science Foundation to direct a summertime inner-city bilingual educational program for high-potential low-opportunity Hispanic middle school students in Chicago. I was busy, but not busy finishing my dissertation.

After five years of data gathering, software design, and writing I finally did finish my dissertation and get my Ph.D. It was obvious that I would not receive tenure at Loyola, having finished my dissertation so late, so I began to look around. A friend was teaching at the University of Illinois in Chicago and told me about the lecturer positions there. I was burned out on research based on my dissertation experience and welcomed the opportunity, since as a lecturer I only had to teach and didn't need to do committee work or research.

I am now entering my seventh year here at UIC as a lecturer. I still occasionally think it would be nice to have the additional job security as tenured faculty, but the price is too high. I am still very involved with my church, coordinating two bands in the contemporary worship style we have there. I regularly spend time volunteering in my children's classrooms. One summer when my first two children were ages 4 and 2 I stayed home for the summer, investing in my relationship with them and with my wife.

This is my "dream job". I get a good salary, I get to interact with students in a flexible environment, and I truthfully feel I can have an impact on the world around me by raising up my students. I get the latest books from publishers for free, learn the latest technology as part of my job, but I don't feel I have to lead a life Thoreau describes as "quiet desperation," selling my soul to either grants or publishing. I have ended up having grants and publications fairly regularly, but enjoy the freedom of want over necessity.

Cathleen Theys

While getting my BS in Computer and Electrical Engineering at Purdue University I initially thought that I would develop software focusing on human interfaces, until my junior year when I took my first of many semiconductor classes and fell in love with device physics. The instructor of that class became my wonderful Masters thesis advisor and I did research for him on photodetectors. I fully expected to get a job in the semiconductor industry after graduation in

May and after getting married in July. Then, months before graduation, my advisor left Purdue and my research turned sour. Frustrated with research, I switched to a non-thesis Masters degree, still got married, but had to stay an extra semester to finish the course work.

I had always dreamed that I would work in industry for many years, earn an honorary Ph.D. for my outstanding contributions to the field, and eventually teach in my retirement. During my last semester still in Indiana, my husband started as an assistant professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago. My husband happened to mention to the faculty at UIC that I might be interested in teaching when the department needed to fill a vacancy for their artificial intelligence class. I was taking AI for fun during my last semester, and when UIC phoned, I ambitiously told them that I could teach this dual senior and graduate level course. I was hired as an adjunct lecturer immediately. The next semester I was hired as a full-time lecturer. From software, to semiconductor industry, to Computer Science lecturer, you never know the where a career path will take an unexpected turn.

Two years later, my teaching load is six classes a year for nine months with no research requirements. In the CS department at UIC, professors teach much less and are required to bring in research grant money.

I was pleasantly surprised to learn I could teach without my Ph.D. and without being forced into a research professorship. As a professor, one starts as assistant, moves to associate, and then to full professor. Being a lecturer without a Ph.D., it appears that there is no career path for promotion above lecturer. My impression is that the job activities can evolve to include research, department service, curriculum development, etc., but the title always remains lecturer. However, I feel I have a very high level of job security as a lecturer in CS at UIC, and I get the respect of the department demonstrated as being classified as Faculty and getting the same voting rights as professors.

I have many favorite things about teaching, including the independence and flexibility in my work. I develop course materials and projects on my own, most of the time working from home at night and on the weekends, and otherwise teaching and holding office hours on campus four days a week. The personal interaction with the students satisfies my social personality. Every semester I try new teaching techniques to promote student learning and am rewarded when a few students stand out from the crowd to do remarkable work.

I also love the variety and intellectual challenge being a lecturer provides. I have taught at all levels. Last semester I taught a junior level theory course for CS majors on languages, automata, a CS sophomore level programming course in data structures and algorithms, and a course for all levels of non-CS undergraduates in the programming language Fortran. This semester I am teaching a dual senior and graduate level programming course on compilers, a freshman and sophomore level computer literacy course for non-CS majors, and Fortran again. The variety in courses is exciting, but it is also challenging to develop new courses every semester. Often professors spend their summers on research interests.

Teaching only nine months out of the year is another favorite perk. During my last summer off I did anything but work: travel, house remodel, read, and train my dog. In May, my husband and I are expecting our first child. I plan to return to teaching in the fall with the help of our extended

family here in Chicago. This summer I plan to apprentice with my dog trainer and volunteer at the local animal shelter training dogs to help them be more adoptable. Being a lecturer leaves lots of time to pursue other interests.

Patrick A. Troy

I pursued a graduate education to see if I might like a job in academia. At the time of starting my graduate education, I had already had 2+ years working in industry as a programmer and thought I might like to broaden my options. Having worked a few 80+ hour weeks in industry, I was not too excited about working such hours for the next 40 years. There were a few other factors that inclined me to seek a career in academia. One was that my father was a university professor. He had gently encouraged me to "follow in his footsteps" and I knew he would like me to pursue this option. Another factor was that I had spent many summers working at a summer camp teaching aquatics (swimming, lifesaving, boating, etc) while as an undergraduate student. I very much enjoyed my summers as a camp counselor and I saw graduate school as a way to continue spending my summers at camp.

I entered graduate school at Penn State fully planning on getting a Ph.D. I was interested in the field of Artificial Intelligence; however, after my first year of study all of the AI faculty members left to go to other universities. This meant that my plan for a Ph.D. would have to change. While finishing my Master's degree, I heard that the EECS Department at UIC was searching for lecturers. I heard this through my father who was doing some research at that time with a faculty member of the EECS department. This was the first time that I had considered pursuing the position of a lecturer.

There were a number of advantages that I saw in the lecturer position. First of all, after getting my "research rug yanked out from underneath me", I was not as enthusiastic as I had been about doing research. Second, I found that I really enjoyed teaching. My TA assignment had me in front of a classroom 6 hours a week and I loved it. Also, a big reason that I enjoyed being a camp counselor was that I did a large amount of teaching. Since the lecturer position emphasized teaching, this saw a good fit with my love of teaching. Third, I had just starting dating a woman who lived in the Chicago area. We would eventually marry. Fourth, the summer camp's year round offices were in Chicago, so I saw this as a way to get involved year round with the summer camp's program development.

I was hired by the EECS Department as a lecturer starting in August, 1990. As a lecturer, I was teaching three courses per term. I enjoyed the work and received the Silver Circle Teaching Award at the end of my second year at UIC. The graduating senior class selects the recipient of the award. This gave me great satisfaction and "proved" to me that I had made the correct choice in becoming a lecturer. I believe that my summers working as a camp counselor and TA assignment gave me the foundation and skills needed to be effective in the classroom.

As a lecturer, I have never taught summer school. I have spent my summers at the summer camp or working as a programmer/consultant for the company where my wife works. At the summer camp, I spent two summers as the camp director. This gave me administration experience that would later serve me in my lecturer position when named as the Director of Undergraduate Studies. As a programmer/consultant, this kept me up to date in the field a computer science.

Again gaining experience that would help me in my lecturer position to bring industry experience into the classroom.

In my position as a lecturer, I have earned four teaching awards, a curriculum advising award, been the faculty advisor of the student chapters of the IEEE-CS, IEEE and ACM. I also claim that I have taught the largest breadth of courses of any faculty member in the department. Teaching three courses per term for over eleven years allows the opportunity to teach a large variety of courses.

When the EECS Department split into the ECE and CS departments, I was asked to take on the role of Director of Undergraduate Studies for the CS Department. This is a role that had traditionally gone to someone with tenure. In this role, I have taken on a number of administrative responsibilities such as scheduling of classes and assigning faculty and TA's to teach those classes. I was (and still am) the person in the CS department resolving problems that occurred because of the department split and change of curriculums that occurred at that time. I am also department representative at the college level for any curriculum related committees. The foremost of these is the ABET Accreditation committee.

My position as a lecturer has changed dramatically over the years. My initial concerns were with the teaching of individual courses. My primary concerns these days deal with the entire curriculum of the CS Department. The evolution of my lecturer position has allowed the professors of the department to focus on research goals.

Conclusions

The position of lecturer is not for everyone, but it can offer significant rewards and job satisfaction for those who love to teach. Lecturers are afforded plenty of opportunity for pursuits outside the classroom, (including research, advising, administration, and outside interests), but are under no pressure to publish papers or raise grant money. Lecturer's salaries are generally lower than assistant professors', but then again, so are the stress levels. One noted benefit that most lecturers enjoy is the opportunity to devote more time to their homes and families, thereby improving their overall quality of life. Some colleagues and institutions view lecturers' status as slightly below that of assistant professor, while others treat lecturers with the respect of equal peers.

Lecturers at major research institutions have similar job duties to tenure-track professors at smaller colleges and teaching-oriented schools, but with greater opportunities to interact with traditional research-oriented colleagues and with greater access to research facilities and associated infrastructure. Summer activities include teaching, research, other work-related activities, or just staying home with the family.

An MS degree is sufficient for the lecturer position, although many lecturers' also hold Ph.D. degrees. The higher degree may or may not afford the lecturer some benefits, depending on their particular institution. Lecturers do not have the job security of tenure, but they do have security based on their high value to most departments. Although there is no traditional "ladder" for lecturers, there are opportunities for advancement. At least two of the authors of this paper have

been offered positions as assistant deans in their colleges – One turned it down because of conflicting interests and lifestyle impact, and the other is still considering the position.

Most of the authors of this paper did not plan to become lecturers when planning their careers. On the other hand, we all love our jobs, and generally would not trade them for tenure-track positions if they were offered to us at this point. Career decisions are a very individual matter, and the authors of this paper hope that they have provided some insight into an option that many budding academicians may not have previously considered.

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