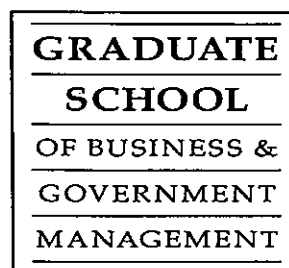


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**A survey of academic staff attitudes towards the
system of academic titles used in New Zealand
universities**

**Bob Cavana, Rob Crozier, Barrie Davis and
Perumal Pillai**



**VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
OF WELLINGTON**



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Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand

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**A SURVEY OF ACADEMIC STAFF ATTITUDES TOWARDS
THE SYSTEM OF ACADEMIC TITLES USED
IN NEW ZEALAND UNIVERSITIES ***

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December 1994

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* A modified version of this report was presented at the Annual Conference of the Australia and New Zealand Academy of Management in Wellington, New Zealand on December 7-10, 1994.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of a survey of academic staff at New Zealand universities to determine their attitudes towards a change in academic titles from the current British system to the US system. A questionnaire was developed and sent to a stratified random sample of 1340 academic staff selected from the 7 universities in New Zealand. A total of 671 valid responses was received. The responses were analysed statistically by university, faculty, designation, qualifications, gender, age and overseas experience. The comments were also analysed qualitatively.

The overall results indicated that 44% of the respondents preferred the current system of titles, 39% preferred the alternative US system and 17% did not have a preference. However, the differences between the preferences for the two systems were not significant at the 95% (or 90%) confidence level. The analysis by university revealed that although academic staff at Auckland and Victoria Universities generally preferred the alternative US system and academic staff at Canterbury, Lincoln and Otago Universities generally preferred the current system of academic titles, only responses from Massey and Waikato Universities indicated a statistically significant preference for the current system. Staff in the "professional" faculties (eg Agriculture, Commerce and Law) generally preferred the alternative US system, compared with academics from the more "traditional" academic areas (eg Humanities/Arts and Social Sciences) who tended to prefer the current British system. However, the only statistically significant differences were recorded by Medical/Dental academic staff who overwhelmingly indicated a preference for the current system. The results also indicated that staff who were born or had their main overseas academic experiences in Commonwealth countries (eg NZ, Australia and UK) tended to prefer the current British system of academic titles, whereas staff who were born or had their main overseas academic experiences in generally non-Commonwealth countries (eg in Asia, Europe (excl. UK) and North America) preferred the alternative US system. Professors and assistant/junior lecturers showed a statistically significant preference for the current system whereas, overall, senior lecturers tended to prefer the alternative system (although not statistically significant).

Generally the results indicate that there is not a majority support for either the British or the US systems of academic titles and there is a considerable level of dissatisfaction with the current system. Consequently it is concluded that more research needs to be undertaken to determine the best system of academic titles and salary scales for academic staff at New Zealand universities.

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The Association has, in the past, argued for a series of overlapping scales in order to avoid this level of resentment building up. To date, neither the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee nor the individual Vice-Chancellors have supported this concept although Waikato University has raised the issue as a means of solving the problem of integrating former College of Education staff into the university salary scale.

An informal survey undertaken by AUS in 1990 as part of a wider survey concerning the content of a possible national award for academic staff indicated that 58% of respondents preferred to retain the British system of academic titles. (Canterbury University was not included in the survey).

Halsey and Trow (1971) have devoted a chapter to the status and style of life of academic staff and noted elsewhere that *"...the maintenance of a style of life depends, at least in the long run, on a set of material conditions."* Their book was written at a time when, in the words of the authors, *"...university teaching is a traditionally gentlemanly profession informed by the norms of a democratically self-governing guild which is in the process of adapting itself to internal and external pressures towards bureaucracy and specialisation."* In their words, *"...A gentleman is not subjected to wages, hours and conditions of work. He has no employer, no trade union and no machinery of negotiation, arbitration and conciliation. He may receive remuneration but never a rate of pay. He may follow a career or vocation, or better still dedicate himself to a hobby, but he does not have a job."*

The prestige of an academic appointment thus brought about its own rewards in terms of its status in society.

Halsey (1992) also discusses what he sees as the *"proletarianisation"* of the academic profession brought about by the worldwide trend to increase participation in higher education.

Kogan, Moses and El-Khawas (1994, p50) note that *"...In some countries, the vertical gradings within institutions are in some respects less important than horizontal stratification, that is, status differences between institutional types and institutions."*

The authors go on to state that *"...the perception of most academics is that status and autonomy have been reduced alongside attempts to make higher education an instrument of the economy and more subject to 'steerage'."* They also analyse the structure of the academic profession in various countries noting that in Germany, for example, more than a third of university academic staff are professors whilst, in the *Fachhochschulen*, virtually all staff are called professor. Commonwealth jurisdictions appear to have a lower proportion of professors - e.g. in the U.K. in 1988-9, 4,000 of 37,000 academic staff (ie 10.8%) in the 'old' universities were professors; the figure in Australia in 1992 was 17.3%. *"...the core academic appointments are based on a structure of discrete titles and statuses that have long histories. But alongside these traditional structures there is a wide array of non-established academic and para-academic roles."*

They also note that there is an acknowledged status gap appearing between the 'haves' (those in permanent tenured posts) and the 'have-nots' (the growing number of those in casual posts) and *"...Unions representing staff might be expected to develop agendas that face more strongly these growing status differentials."*

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This is a descriptive research project as the major purpose of it was to gain a better understanding of the attitudes of academic staff towards the system of academic titles used in New Zealand universities. Survey based methods were used to collect detailed information regarding the characteristics of academic staff, faculties and universities and their preferences for each system.

INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

At a recent meeting of academic members of the Association of University Staff (AUS) held at the University of Waikato, a new salary scale incorporating US academic titles was unanimously rejected (AUS, 1994, p8). The main features of this "alternative system" were: the new US titles (assistant professor, associate professor and professor), a reduction in the number of steps in the equivalent lecturer grade, and a new associate professor grade which had a lower commencing salary than the current senior lecturer grade. However, it was not clear whether academics were opposed to the change to the US system of academic titles from the current British titles (assistant lecturer, lecturer, senior lecturer, associate professor/reader and professor), or whether they were opposed to other aspects of the salary package.

Research Objectives

This dilemma led to the current research project to investigate whether academic staff in New Zealand universities preferred the current British system of academic titles or the alternative US system (the main characteristics of the two systems are summarised in Table 1, although information on the proposed Waikato salary scale was not provided to respondents to this study). In addition, the AUS required information about the characteristics of academic staff who preferred each system, as this would help the AUS to better represent their members in future negotiations over academic staff salaries and conditions with the universities.

Table 1 Comparison of Current and Alternative Systems of Academic Titles

Current System (1)		Alternative System (2)	
Level	Salary Range	Level	Salary Range
Assistant/Junior Lecturer	\$31,200 - \$35,880	Assistant Professor	\$37,500 - \$49,088
Lecturer	\$37,440 - \$49,088		
Senior Lecturer	\$52,000 - \$67,080	Associate Professor	\$51,000 - \$75,920
Associate Professor/Reader	\$69,680 - \$75,920		
Professor	\$80,080 - \$99,840	Professor	\$72,000 - \$99,840

Sources:

(1) Pers. comm., AUS National Office, Wellington.

(2) Waikato proposal outlined in the AUS Bulletin No. 18, March/April 1994, p8 (AUS, 1994).

Background

A review of the literature showed that little work has been done in this precise area. However, straw polls undertaken at AUS meetings at various times in the past had indicated that there was often more resentment at the fact that (seemingly) underqualified staff in disciplines where recruitment is difficult may be appointed at higher ranks in order to provide a competitive salary, than at the higher salary level *per se*. For example, a person without a terminal degree (ie a PhD or equivalent) may have to be appointed at the senior lecturer rank in order to arrive at a salary level sufficient to recruit them. There is a perception then that there is a degree of "psychic income" in the status of academic staff.

Responses

A total of 690 questionnaires were returned but 19 were regarded as invalid since the question that related to academic title preference was not answered, or 2 or more important demographic questions were left unanswered. Hence the analysis was based on 671 valid responses. However, a total of 148 (or 22%) of the respondents did not complete the gender question. This may have been because they inadvertently missed it out on the questionnaire or, alternatively, because they objected to answering it. During the questionnaire pretest, a number of staff members indicated that they thought the gender question was irrelevant. However the question was retained because of the valuable demographic information that it would provide. Overall at New Zealand universities, females comprise about 25% of total academic staff, and 26% of the respondents (where gender was specified) were females. A chi-square test indicated that there were no significant statistical differences between the male/female survey response numbers and the numbers expected based on the academic staff at all universities in New Zealand. Currently there are still large gender differences in the New Zealand universities, with 59% of female academic staff in the survey occupying the positions of assistant/junior lecturers or lecturers compared with 25% of men, and 8% of females in the senior positions of associate professor or professor compared with 31% of men. However, 47% of the females in the survey were under 40 years of age compared with 26% of the males.

Data Analysis

The questionnaire responses were loaded into an Excel spreadsheet (Microsoft Corporation, 1992) for preliminary analysis and then imported into the JMP statistical package (SAS, 1989) on the Macintosh personal computer for further statistical analysis. Responses to the main question regarding preference for current (British) or alternative (US) systems of academic titles were analysed by sub group (eg by university, faculty, designation etc). Chi-square tests were undertaken to examine the hypothesis that there was no differences in the responses between each category of the subgroups. Also chi-square tests were prepared to test whether there was any significant statistical difference between the responses for the current system compared with the alternative system for each category of each subgroup. For the second set of chi-square tests, the null hypothesis that there are no differences in the preferences between the current system and the alternative system would be rejected if the calculated chi-square (with 1 degree of freedom) was greater than 3.841 (at the 95% confidence level) and 2.706 (at the 90% confidence level) (Sekaran, 1992, p411-2).

RESULTS

The main results of the analysis of the academic titles survey are summarised in Table 3. This includes the number and percentages of responses for each category of each subgroup, the percentage of respondents indicating a preference for the current British system of academic titles, the alternative US system or indicating no preference. The chi-square results (as discussed in the previous section) are also presented.

The overall results indicated that of the 671 valid responses, 44% (298) of the respondents preferred the current system of titles, 39% (262) preferred the alternative US system and 17% (111) did not have a preference. However a chi-square test indicated that there was no statistical difference between the preferences for the current and alternative systems at the 95% (or 90%) confidence level. The analysis by university revealed that although academic staff at Auckland and Victoria Universities generally preferred the alternative US system and academic staff at Canterbury, Lincoln and Otago Universities generally preferred the current system of academic titles, only responses from Massey and Waikato Universities indicated a statistically significant preference for the current system. The reason why Waikato University staff may have been so strongly opposed to the US system, is because the earlier offer to change to the US system had also incorporated unfavourable changes to the salary scales (AUS, 1994, p8).

Data Collection Methods

Following discussions with a number of academic staff from a wide range of disciplines at Victoria University of Wellington, a questionnaire was prepared which asked academics to state their preference for the current British system of academic titles, the alternative US system or to indicate no preference. (Note, however, that no information was provided about salary levels and other conditions of employment). In addition a range of demographic questions were asked from each university including questions on the respondent's faculty, designation, highest qualification, membership of the Association of University Staff (AUS), age group, gender, place of birth, and experience at academic institutions overseas. General comments were also requested. The draft questionnaire was pretested and then the final version was sent to the secretaries of randomly selected departments at each university where they were distributed to staff members. The questionnaire (see Appendix 1), which was contained on one side of an A4 page with an introductory letter by the AUS Academic Vice-President on the back, took about 10 minutes to complete. The completed questionnaires were then sent by internal mail by 16 September 1994 to the AUS branch organiser at each university and then returned for analysis at Victoria University.

Sample Characteristics

A stratified random sample of 1340 academic staff was selected from the total of 4100 academic staff from all 7 universities in New Zealand. Following Sekaran (1992, p253), a total of 351 valid responses was required to provide a 95% confidence level in the results of the main analysis. In addition where the sample is required to be broken into sub groups (eg males/females, university), "a minimum sample size of 30 in each category is necessary" (Roscoe, 1975). A total of 671 valid responses was received, which represented nearly a 50% response rate (or 16% of the total population of academic staff). Between 48 and 163 valid responses were received from each university thus satisfying Roscoe's criteria. Details of the sample characteristics by university are provided in Table 2.

Table 2 Sample Characteristics by University

<i>University</i>	<i>Academic Staff (1) (No.)</i>	<i>Staff Surveyed (No.)</i>	<i>Proportion of Staff Surveyed (%)</i>	<i>Valid Responses (No.)</i>	<i>Proportion of Valid Responses (%)</i>
Auckland	966	330	34	163	49
Canterbury	451	160	35	74	46
Lincoln	211	100	47	48	48
Massey	686	240	35	105	44
Otago	774	270	35	120	44
Victoria	464	160	34	101	63
Waikato	537	130	24	60	46
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>4089</i>	<i>1390</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>671</i>	<i>48</i>

(1) University full time equivalent academic staff as at 31 July 1993
(Ministry of Education, 1993).

Staff in the "professional" faculties (eg Agriculture, Commerce and Law) generally preferred the alternative US system, compared with academics from the more "traditional" academic areas (eg Humanities/Arts and Social Sciences) who tended to prefer the current British system. However, the only statistically significant differences were recorded by Medical/Dental academic staff who overwhelmingly indicated a preference for the current system, perhaps reflecting the traditional special salaries and conditions they hold compared with other academic staff members.

The results also indicated that staff who were born or had their main overseas academic experiences in Commonwealth countries (eg NZ, Australia and UK) tended to prefer the current British system of academic titles, whereas staff who were born or had their main overseas academic experiences in generally non-Commonwealth countries (eg in Asia, Europe (excl. UK) and North America) preferred the alternative US system. On average, respondents had spent about 7-9 years either studying, on sabbatical or working at academic institutions in the country/area of their main overseas experience (note: this is not the average of their total overseas experiences).

Professors and assistant/junior lecturers showed a statistically significant preference for the current system whereas, overall, senior lecturers tended to prefer the alternative system (although not statistically significant). An explanation for the assistant/junior lecturers' preference for the current system is that typically they are younger, recruited from New Zealand and with very little experience at overseas academic institutions.

Overall, 67% of the responses were from AUS members (very similar to their proportion of membership) and there were no differences in preferences between AUS and non-AUS members. However, although the female academic staff showed a statistically significant preference for the current system, only 28% of females indicated a preference for the alternative system compared with 43% for males, perhaps reflecting their shorter overseas experience in academic institutions (36% of females had no overseas academic experience compared with 17% of males).

Appendices 2 to 8 contain the summarised results of the survey for each university separately.

COMMENTS BY RESPONDENTS

Alternative System - Comments

Generally, the comments provided by academics who indicated a preference for the alternative US system of academic titles were concerned with introducing a system which was better understood in North America, Asia and Europe; would help recruitment from those areas; would help NZ academics in gaining research and consultancy projects in those parts of the world; and would improve status, reduce hierarchies and improve morale. Some examples of the specific comments provided are:

Would give us the status, without costing more salaries.

The alternative system would be less hierarchical and thus an improvement.

I feel the current system seriously disadvantages New Zealand academics below Professor level in international comparison!

The alternative system would also bring New Zealand into line with European usage (especially Germany and Switzerland).

I consider this is an essential change to:

(a) raise the status of academic staff in the eye of the public,

(b) Take some heat out of the poor promotion environment that many now see exists in the Universities.

Table 3 Summary Results of the Academic Titles Survey

	<i>Preference for Academic Titles</i>					<i>Chi-Square</i>
	<i>Responses</i>		<i>Current System</i>	<i>Alternative System</i>	<i>No Preference</i>	
	<i>(No.)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	
<i>University</i>						<i>26.9 †</i>
Auckland	163	24	38.7	48.5	12.9	1.8
Canterbury	74	11	48.7	37.8	13.5	1.0
Lincoln	48	7	43.8	39.6	16.7	0.1
Massey	105	16	51.4 *	25.7	22.9	9.0
Otago	120	18	44.2	35.8	20.0	1.1
Victoria	101	15	34.7	47.5	17.8	2.0
Waikato	60	9	60.0 *	30.0	10.0	6.0
<i>Faculty</i>						<i>40.6 †</i>
Agriculture	26	4	30.8	42.3	26.9	0.5
Commerce/Admin	94	14	36.2	48.9	14.9	1.8
Education	28	4	35.7	42.8	21.4	0.2
Humanities/Arts	137	20	46.0	35.8	18.3	1.8
Law	23	3	39.1	56.5	4.4	0.7
Medical/Dentistry	68	10	60.3 *	14.7	25.0	18.9
Sci/Eng/Arch	210	31	43.3	45.7	11.0	0.1
Social Sciences	36	5	52.8	30.6	16.7	2.1
Other	49	7	46.9	28.6	24.5	2.2
<i>Highest Qualification</i>						<i>9.5 †</i>
Doctorate	461	69	43.6	41.7	14.8	0.2
Masters	130	19	43.1	38.5	18.5	0.4
Other	80	12	51.3 *	25.0	23.8	7.3
<i>Designation</i>						<i>25.4 †</i>
Professor	77	11	58.4 *	31.1	10.4	6.4
Assoc Prof/Reader	89	13	50.6	37.1	12.4	1.9
Senior Lecturer	278	41	38.9	46.8	14.4	2.0
Lecturer	180	27	42.8	35.6	21.7	1.2
Assst/Jun Lecturer	43	6	48.8 *	23.3	27.9	3.9
Not Spec.	4	1	50.0	25.0	25.0	0.3
<i>AUS Member</i>						<i>2.7</i>
Yes	450	67	44.2	39.6	16.2	1.1
No	219	33	44.3	38.4	17.4	1.0
Not Spec.	2	0	100.0	0.0	0.0	2.0
<i>Age Group</i>						<i>13.2</i>
under 30	28	4	53.6	28.6	17.9	2.1
30 - 39	184	27	46.2 *	31.5	22.3	5.1
40 - 49	240	36	43.8	42.5	13.8	0.1
50 - 59	181	27	40.3	44.8	14.9	0.4
60 & over	38	6	52.6	34.2	13.2	1.5
<i>Gender</i>						<i>16.0 †</i>
Female	137	20	46.0 *	27.7	26.3	6.2
Male	386	58	44.0	42.5	13.5	0.1
Not Spec.	148	22	43.9	40.5	15.5	0.2
<i>Place of Birth</i>						<i>41.6 †</i>
Asia	30	4	10.0	76.7 *	13.3	15.4
Australia	37	6	51.4	35.1	13.5	1.1
Europe (excl. UK)	33	5	24.2	57.6 *	18.2	4.5
New Zealand	354	53	48.3 *	33.3	18.4	9.8
North America	47	7	29.8	59.6 *	10.6	4.7
United Kingdom	145	22	47.6	35.9	16.6	2.4
Other	25	4	56.0	36.0	8.0	1.1
<i>Main Overseas Experience</i>						<i>49.3 †</i>
Asia	19	3	26.3	57.9	15.8	2.3
Australia	68	10	45.6	39.7	14.7	0.3
Europe (excl. UK)	40	6	37.5	50.0	12.5	0.7
North America	195	29	33.3	55.4 *	11.3	10.7
United Kingdom	190	28	51.1 *	29.5	19.5	11.1
Other	17	3	52.9	35.3	11.8	0.6
None	142	21	53.5 *	23.9	22.5	15.9
TOTAL	671	100	44.4	39.1	16.5	2.3

* indicates the preferred system, statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

† indicates that there are significant differences between the categories at the 95% confidence level.

Please DO AWAY with the one-professor/one inflated salary system - why not have several professors (if so qualified) in one department?

Since all NZ Universities are now going to courses, points, and semesters we might as well switch titles to the North American system as well.

The current system is only understood by academics but unfortunately not by non academics or students.

Titles are very important. High time we changed.

Since a majority of our staff are recruited from overseas (primarily North America) it would save all involved valuable time spent explaining our system of academic titles if we converted to the internationally recognised academic title system.

All NZ Universities must move together on this, so as not to leave inconsistencies.

Lecturer/senior lecturer not understood in US. The hypocrisy of calling people lecturers but judging them solely on research must go. Research and senior researcher would be more honest.

Current System - Comments

In contrast to above, academics supporting the current system of academic titles expressed concern that changing to the alternative US system would mean that the title "professor" would lose considerable status; the alternative system was merely a means of credentials inflation; there were more important issues that should be addressed including salary, conditions and the use of "professor" for managerial and administrative positions; and there would be a need to change the entire salary and promotional system and not just the academic titles. Some specific comments were:

In USA/Canada a 'Professor' has very little meaning. Anyone who teaches in a college, university etc is called a 'Professor'. It simply means 'teacher'. Our NZ system follows the British system, where titles are earned and demarcation is clearer. It would be a retrograde, step to go to the 'level playing field system'. I hope that reason prevails not just a majority vote!!

Where would the divisions be relative to the current system? The real issues are: rate of promotion through the system ; recognition through promotion of achievements; salaries; differential salary scales/rates of advancement in different faculties (eg. Medicine, Commerce). A new set of titles does nothing to address this and in fact has the danger of being an appeasement, offering us fancy titles in place of higher salaries or a more favourable career structure.

I don't see any particular advantage in changing what we call ourselves. The quality of what we do is much more important.

Titles really don't mean much to lay people, except for "Professor" so current system probably the best.

Alternative would be acceptable only if associate professors with tenure become professors at the change over.

The "Alternative System" is the North American nomenclature. But in North America the work 'professor' is more a job description than an academic title, and is used in much the same way 'lecturer' or 'university teacher' is used here. In fact in the USA 'doctor' is often used when a formal title is required, even if the person concerned occupies a distinguished named chair.

Have for many years believed that the alternative would significantly improve morale and performance at no expense.

The current system is not universally known and it is often misunderstood to our disadvantage.

In communication with North American colleagues current academic title (lecturer) is a source of embarrassment.

It would make explanations unnecessary in the US where 'lecturer' designations signal absence of tenure.

The university says that promotion to associate professor requires the same rigorous assessment of academic performance as the awarding of a Professorial Chair yet in practice there is a clear difference in status. There are a number of instances where appointments to Head of Department at the professorial level have been made where the successful applicant would have difficulty being promoted.

My major research contracts are in the US and Canada where my NZ title is a source of embarrassment.

This change will come one day, so why not now?

I think this will enhance recruitment from North America and Europe and be better understood generally.

I have only been here two months and I am already tired of explaining my title, since in the US, a lecturer is a junior staffer, usually without a PhD.

I would also like to see a loosening of the tie between academic title and salary levels.

A need for more egalitarian system.

The alternative system has much more meaning in most parts of the world.

Need to equate to Australia and USA. Readers at VUW do not reflect academic excellence to be readers - some simply longevity at Vic.

Provided current reader/associate professor status is upgraded to title of full professor. For, NZ associate professor seems the equivalent of full professor status in eg. USA.

I am familiar at first hand with the American system and it works well. As everyone is entitled to use Professor no-one does!

Some scholars and lay people in China, Japan, and Taiwan do not understand what is a reader or lecturer.

Support the alternative, because it means much more sense to the general public - who are our clients!!

The quicker the better that the quaint UK system is abandoned in favour of a less hierarchical structure.

Fully support change- current system is too hierarchical, creates status divisions and creates confusion in relation to North American Universities!

Current system is too hierarchical and does not reflect the fact that we all basically have the same qualifications and do the same work.

There is a more serious point: The title "Professor" is now coming to mean senior managerial status, in that it is being given to Vice-chancellors and full-time Deans. While this may be inevitable, we should be concerned about the fact that the traditional collegial nature of universities is disappearing. Seniority is being increasingly associated with management, and we could be heading for a situation in which those who do the real work of teaching and research are all viewed as just 'workers'. The AUS therefore ought to be working to preserve and enhance the concept of academic seniority, in the interests of all academics and their status. For instance it could argue a case for linking professorial status to some comparable status in the public sector (senior hospital managers that would help a lot with salary claims) given that most academics, and most AUS officials are not Professors, and given the politics of envy and the 'tall 'poppy' syndrome, it is likely that the present pressure to 'bring Professors into line' will continue. Unfortunately the overall effect of this may just be to lower the standing of the academic profession itself.

No Preference - Comments

The academics who did not have a particular preference for either system, indicated that they were more concerned about issues related to salary and conditions; and felt that not enough information had been given about the comparisons between the two systems. Some specific comments were:

Titles used should be in line with those currently being used internationally so that overseas institutions and persons will have a picture of the situation when making applications or merely corresponding.

It is difficult to comment unless we know how the two systems will operate.

Surely there are matters of greater significance facing tertiary education than THIS??

I prefer the system which will pay me the most!!

Titles don't concern me much; excellence of teaching, research does.

Unless there are contractual or financial implications there seems little point in changing.

If there is to be change, it should be implemented at all NZ universities. I do acknowledge feelings of current associate professors who feel their status would be eroded vis-a-vis senior lecturers by the proposed change. Has any constructive suggestion been offered as to how this will be dealt with? Will all associate professors become full professors?

Titles mean little when you have got them.

No strong preference. The issues of salary increases and maintaining conditions seem more important ones to address.

Academic titles are elitist and should abolished.

The current system is patently out of line with North American terminology and so stupid. The alternative system is preferred if the following is adopted. Professor 30%, Associate Professor 40% and Assistant Professors 30%. You need to define the break points. The current system and alternative system can only be compared when the end points are defined. An Associate Professor in North America is quite junior so the current definition of Associate Professor in NZ is very confusing. The old Reader term was at least distinctive.

The prefixes 'assistant' and 'associate' have quite specific meanings in North America, connected with tenure etc., which are quite different to the situation here.

Alternative system is just another form of credentialisation (and inflation of credentials).

I do not need to be called Professor to feel better about my job. I am proud to be a senior lecturer and would feel no more important (but more embarrassed) to be called Professor when I am not (don't want to be !).

The idea of everybody being called Professor is appalling!! It will simply downgrade the term.

In the US associate professor indicates tenured faculty. To keep the same meaning here you would have to call all senior lecturers and some lecturers, "associate professor".

The alternative system has numerous other employment issues associated with it, it is far more complex than appears. The current and alternative systems cannot be interchanged, without altering other conditions of employment.

To have too many variations on the professorial theme is in my opinion very affected, very American and absolutely ludicrous, and the end result is that the title is not worth the paper that it is written on. It does however seem to be the modern trend where everyone claims to be a "manager", "director", "executive", "professional" or "specialist" for what is in reality a very modest job, but it would be unfortunate if academia were to follow suit.

I would only be interested in an alternative system if people currently associate professors became professors, and senior lecturers became associate professors and lecturers/junior lecturers became assistant professors. This would match better the American system. I would like us to go to the American system but it has to be completely compatible with that system.

Taken literally "assistant professor" is inaccurate. In no way do junior staff directly act in an assistant role to senior staff. US titles are therefore anachronistic.

No point changing our titles but not upgrading our salary and working conditions!! I don't wish to have a better title and yet still be so overworked!!

Leave the system as it is - we do not need to imitate the USA! Besides, titles do not engender respect - reputations do.

Strongly opposed to US system which I worked in for some years as a department head. Rank in US system unrelated to salary, and poor differentiation of promotion steps. Title professor drops out of use - everyone's Dr.

In British Commonwealth countries, "Professor" is a title signifying senior academic status. This is widely recognised as part of our culture, and is not likely to be changed by fiat. At VUW there was a recent optional change of "Reader" to "Associate Professor" which resulted from a campaign started by people who were concerned that the present criteria for promotion to Reader were inappropriate for certain 'professional' disciplines, like architecture. The change has not achieved the desired outcome, i.e. the promotion criteria have not altered, but it is notable that people across all disciplines are taking up the option to change their designation. This would seem to support the view that academics view their own status as being enhanced by the change.

I am all in favour of people being made to feel good about their own image, but by calling everyone "professor" this will just render the terminology meaningless, or make it indistinguishable from "lecturer", and therefore serve no purpose.

Appendix 1

5 September 1994

Dear Colleague

Overleaf is a survey questionnaire that aims to establish attitudes of academic staff to the system of academic titles used in New Zealand universities.

The survey is being conducted at the suggestion of a member of the Faculty of Commerce and Administration, Victoria University, on behalf of the Association of University Staff (AUS) and is being sent to a random sample of academic staff employed in New Zealand universities.

The questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. AUS asks you please to take the time to complete and return the questionnaire. The information gained from the survey will provide a comprehensive overview of the preferences of academic staff regarding academic titles.

Please return the completed questionnaire by Friday 16 September via the internal mail system to :

Peter Donelan
AUS Branch President
Mathematics
extension 8318

Thank you for completing the questionnaire. The results of the survey will be published in the AUS "Bulletin". Your response will be completely confidential as individual responses will not be identifiable in the survey results.

Thank you

Nick Park

Nick Park
AUS Academic Vice-President

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CONCLUSIONS

This paper has presented the results of a survey of academics at universities in New Zealand to determine their attitudes towards changing the current British system of academic titles to the alternative US system. The results of the survey were not conclusive as 44% of the respondents wished to retain the current system and 39% indicated they preferred the alternative US system with about 17% expressing no preference in either system. An analysis of the comments showed that there would be many advantages of changing to the US system in terms of increased status, a less hierarchical system and a better understood system internationally. Against this, supporters of the current system claimed that the title "professor" would lose a lot of its status under the American system where everyone would be professors and the US system was just a means of "credentials inflation". Academics who did not indicate a preference for a particular system of academic titles commented that there was insufficient information about the salary and conditions underlying the alternative system, so a clear preference could not be made until more information was available.

It is concluded that there is a sufficiently high level of dissatisfaction with the current British system of academic titles for further research to be undertaken to evaluate the academic and promotional systems available at universities in the different countries that New Zealand has substantial contact with. Following this further research and discussions between the Association of University Staff of New Zealand and the seven New Zealand universities, a recommendation can be made regarding the system of academic titles and salary scales most suitable for New Zealand's universities. This may result in a compromise situation between the British and US systems, but it is hoped that a new system will alleviate many of the grievances identified by the participants to this study and also provide opportunities for professional development and advancement of all academic staff in New Zealand.

Acknowledgments

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Appendix 2
Summary Results of the Academic Titles Survey: University of Auckland

<i>Preference for Academic Titles</i>						
	<i>Responses</i>		<i>Current System</i>	<i>Alternative System</i>	<i>No Preference</i>	<i>Chi-Square</i>
	<i>(No.)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	
<i>Faculty</i>						
Commerce/Admin	25	15	28.0	56.0	16.0	36.1 †
Education	12	7	58.3	25.0	16.7	2.3
Humanities/Arts	20	12	5.0	65.0 *	30.0	1.6
Medical/Dentistry	34	21	61.8 *	17.7	20.5	10.3
Sci/Eng/Arch	66	40	37.9	59.1 **	3.0	8.3
Other	6	4	33.3	66.7	0.0	3.1
						0.7
<i>Designation</i>						
Professor	30	18	50.0	40.0	10.0	11.9
Assoc Prof/Reader	30	18	40.0	50.0	10.0	0.3
Senior Lecturer	59	36	44.1	47.5	8.4	0.3
Lecturer	32	20	18.8	56.3 *	24.9	0.1
Asst/Jun Lecturer	11	7	36.4	45.5	18.1	6.0
Not Spec.	1	1	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.1
						1.0
<i>Highest Qualification</i>						
Doctorate	131	80	38.2	48.9	12.9	1.5
Masters	20	12	35.0	55.0	10.0	1.7
Other	12	7	50.0	33.3	16.7	0.9
						0.4
<i>AUS Member</i>						
Yes	101	62	37.6	50.5	11.9	0.5
No	62	38	40.3	45.2	14.5	1.9
						0.2
<i>Age Group</i>						
under 30	5	3	20.0	80.0	0.0	11.1
30 - 39	31	19	38.7	41.9	19.4	1.8
40 - 49	60	37	41.7	40.0	18.3	0.0
50 - 59	49	30	32.7	61.2 *	6.1	0.0
60 & over	18	11	50.0	44.4	5.6	4.2
						0.1
<i>Gender</i>						
Female	29	18	37.9	37.9	24.2	4.9
Male	93	57	40.9	49.5	9.6	0.0
Not Spec.	41	25	34.2	53.7	12.1	0.8
						1.8
<i>Place of Birth</i>						
Asia	10	6	0.0	90.0 *	10.0	38.3 †
Australia	9	6	66.7	33.3	0.0	9.0
Europe (excl. UK)	10	6	0.0	70.0 *	30.0	1.0
New Zealand	90	55	41.1	46.7	12.2	7.0
North America	4	2	0.0	100.0 *	0.0	0.3
United Kingdom	31	19	45.2	35.5	19.3	4.0
Other	9	6	66.7	33.3	0.0	0.4
						1.0
<i>Main Overseas Experience</i>						
Asia	6	4	16.7	50.0	33.3	26.8 †
Australia	18	11	27.8	61.1	11.1	1.0
Europe (excl. UK)	14	9	7.1	78.6 *	14.3	2.2
North America	48	29	39.6	56.3	4.1	8.4
United Kingdom	51	31	54.9 **	33.3	11.8	1.4
Other	7	4	57.1	28.6	14.3	2.7
None	19	12	26.3	42.1	31.6	0.7
						0.7
TOTAL AUCKLAND	163	100	38.7	48.5	12.9	1.8

* indicates the preferred system, statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

** indicates the preferred system, statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

† indicates that there are significant differences between the categories at the 95% confidence level.

Academic Titles Preference Questionnaire

We would like to know which set of academic titles you would prefer to be used in New Zealand Universities. But first please tell us something about yourself.

(Please tick the appropriate box)

1. Currently at which University:

- Auckland
- Waikato
- Massey
- Victoria
- Canterbury
- Lincoln
- Otago

2. Currently in which Faculty:

- Agriculture
- Com & Admin
- Education
- Humanities/Arts
- Science/Engineering/Architecture
- Social Science
- Law
- Medical/Dentistry
- Other (please specify)

3. Designation:

- Professor
- Associate Professor/Reader
- Senior Lecturer
- Lecturer
- Assistant /Junior Lecturer

4. What is your highest qualification?

- Doctorate
- Masters
- Other

5. Are you a member of AUS?

- Yes
- No

6. Age:

- Under 30
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60 & over

7. Gender:

- Female
- Male

8. Place of Birth:

- Asia
- Australia
- Europe (Excl.UK)
- New Zealand
- North America -
- United Kingdom
- Other (please specify)

9. Have you had significant overseas experience in educational institutions? Indicate period of stay in years (y) and months (m).

Location	Studied	Sabbatical	Employed
Asia			
Australia			
Europe (Excl.UK)			
New Zealand			
North America			
United Kingdom			
Other (please specify)			

10. Which set of academic titles set out below would you prefer to be used in New Zealand Universities?

- Current System
 - Professor
 - Associate Professor/Reader
 - Senior Lecturer
 - Lecturer
 - Assistant/Junior Lecturer
- Alternative System
 - Professor
 - Associate Professor
 - Assistant Professor
- No Preference

11. Comments

Appendix 4
Summary Results of the Academic Titles Survey: Lincoln University

<i>Preference for Academic Titles</i>						
	<i>Responses</i>		<i>Current System</i>	<i>Alternative System</i>	<i>No Preference</i>	<i>Chi-Square</i>
	<i>(No.)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	
<i>Faculty</i>						
Agriculture	10	21	40.0	50.0	10.0	8.0
Commerce/Admin	12	25	16.7	66.7 **	16.6	0.1
Sci/Eng/Arch	22	46	59.1 **	22.7	18.2	3.6
Other	4	8	50.0	25.0	25.0	3.6
<i>Designation</i>						
Professor	3	6	66.7	0.0	33.3	10.1
Assoc Prof/Reader	4	8	75.0	25.0	0.0	2.0
Senior Lecturer	24	50	33.3	50.0	16.7	1.0
Lecturer	13	27	46.2	46.2	7.6	0.8
Asst/Jun Lecturer	4	8	50.0	0.0	50.0	0.0
<i>Highest Qualification</i>						
Doctorate	29	60	37.9	44.8	17.3	2.3
Masters	9	19	44.4	44.4	11.2	0.2
Other	10	21	60.0	20.0	20.0	0.0
<i>AUS Member</i>						
Yes	35	73	48.6	34.3	17.1	1.6
No	13	27	30.8	53.9	15.3	0.9
<i>Age Group</i>						
under 30	3	6	33.3	33.3	33.4	8.4
30 - 39	13	27	46.2	46.2	7.6	0.0
40 - 49	18	38	55.6	38.9	5.5	0.0
50 - 59	12	25	25.0	41.7	33.3	0.5
60 & over	2	4	50.0	0.0	50.0	1.0
<i>Gender</i>						
Female	5	10	40.0	40.0	20.0	0.7
Male	34	71	41.1	41.1	17.8	0.0
Not Spec.	9	19	55.6	33.3	11.1	0.5
<i>Place of Birth</i>						
Asia	2	4	0.0	100.0	0.0	12.6
Australia	2	4	0.0	100.0	0.0	2.0
New Zealand	26	54	50.0	34.6	15.4	0.7
North America	4	8	0.0	75.0 **	25.0	3.0
United Kingdom	11	23	63.6 **	18.2	18.2	2.8
Other	3	6	33.3	33.3	33.4	0.0
<i>Main Overseas Experience</i>						
Australia	2	4	0.0	100.0	0.0	15.1
Europe (excl. UK)	2	4	0.0	100.0	0.0	2.0
North America	17	35	29.4	58.8	11.8	1.7
United Kingdom	12	25	50.0	25.0	25.0	1.0
Other	1	2	100.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
None	14	29	64.3 *	14.3	21.4	4.5
TOTAL LINCOLN	48	100	43.8	39.6	16.6	0.1

* indicates the preferred system, statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.
 ** indicates the preferred system, statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

Appendix 3
Summary Results of the Academic Titles Survey: University of Canterbury

<i>Preference for Academic Titles</i>						
	<i>Responses</i>		<i>Current System (%)</i>	<i>Alternative System (%)</i>	<i>No Preference (%)</i>	<i>Chi-Square</i>
	<i>(No.)</i>	<i>(%)</i>				
<i>Faculty</i>						
Commerce/Admin	2	3	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0
Humanities/Arts	33	45	45.5	45.5	9.0	0.0
Medical/Dentistry	5	7	100.0 *	0.0	0.0	5.0
Sci/Eng/Arch	30	41	40.0	40.0	20.0	0.0
Other	4	5	75.0 **	0.0	25.0	3.0
<i>Designation</i>						
Professor	10	14	90.0 *	0.0	10.0	9.0
Assoc Prof/Reader	11	15	72.7	27.3	0.0	2.3
Senior Lecturer	33	45	33.3	51.5	15.2	1.3
Lecturer	18	24	33.3	44.4	22.3	0.3
Asst/Jun Lecturer	1	1	100.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
Not Spec.	1	1	100.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
<i>Highest Qualification</i>						
Doctorate	61	82	49.2	37.7	13.1	0.9
Masters	7	9	42.9	57.1	0.0	0.1
Other	6	8	50.0	16.7	33.3	1.0
<i>AUS Member</i>						
Yes	58	78	48.3	37.9	13.8	0.7
No	16	22	50.0	37.5	12.5	0.3
<i>Age Group</i>						
under 30	1	1	100.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
30 - 39	17	23	35.3	29.4	35.3	0.1
40 - 49	27	36	40.7	59.3	0.0	0.9
50 - 59	22	30	54.6	31.8	13.6	1.3
60 & over	7	9	85.7 *	0.0	14.3	6.0
<i>Gender</i>						
Female	7	9	57.1	28.6	14.3	0.7
Male	57	77	49.1	36.8	14.1	1.0
Not Spec.	10	14	40.0	50.0	10.0	0.1
<i>Place of Birth</i>						
Asia	5	7	20.0	80.0	0.0	1.8
Australia	7	9	28.6	42.9	28.5	0.2
Europe (excl. UK)	3	4	33.3	66.7	0.0	0.3
New Zealand	36	49	55.6	30.6	13.8	2.6
North America	8	11	50.0	37.5	12.5	0.1
United Kingdom	15	20	53.3	33.3	13.4	0.7
<i>Main Overseas Experience</i>						
Asia	2	3	0.0	100.0	0.0	2.0
Australia	5	7	40.0	60.0	0.0	0.2
Europe (excl. UK)	4	5	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0
North America	28	38	35.7	50.0	14.3	0.7
United Kingdom	24	32	66.7 *	16.7	16.6	7.2
Other	1	1	0.0	100.0	0.0	1.0
None	10	14	60.0	20.0	20.0	2.0
TOTAL CANTERBURY	74	100	48.7	37.8	13.5	1.0

* indicates the preferred system, statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

** indicates the preferred system, statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

† indicates that there are significant differences between the categories at the 95% confidence level.

†† indicates that there are significant differences between the categories at the 90% confidence level.

Appendix 6
Summary Results of the Academic Titles Survey: University of Otago

<i>Preference for Academic Titles</i>						
	<i>Responses</i>		<i>Current System</i>	<i>Alternative System</i>	<i>No Preference</i>	<i>Chi-Square</i>
	<i>(No.)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	
<i>Faculty</i>						
Commerce/Admin	13	11	53.9	38.5	7.6	31.9 †
Humanities/Arts	29	24	55.2 *	17.2	27.6	0.3
Law	19	16	31.6	63.2	5.2	5.8
Medical/Dentistry	29	24	51.7 *	13.8	34.5	2.0
Sci/Eng/Arch	16	13	35.7	35.7	28.6	6.4
Other	14	12	25.0	75.0 **	0.0	0.0
<i>Designation</i>						
Professor	11	9	54.6	36.4	9.0	17.8 ††
Assoc Prof/Reader	7	6	57.1 *	0.0	42.9	0.4
Senior Lecturer	52	43	36.5	48.1	15.4	4.0
Lecturer	42	35	47.6	33.3	19.1	0.8
Asst/Jun Lecturer	7	6	57.1 *	0.0	42.9	1.1
Not Spec.	1	1	0.0	0.0	100.0	4.0
<i>Highest Qualification</i>						
Doctorate	71	59	42.2	38.0	19.8	0.5
Masters	26	22	46.2	34.6	19.2	0.2
Other	23	19	47.8	30.4	21.8	0.4
<i>AUS Member</i>						
Yes	68	57	41.1	38.2	20.7	0.9
No	50	42	46.0	34.0	20.0	0.1
Not Spec.	2	2	100.0	0.0	0.0	2.0
<i>Age Group</i>						
under 30	5	4	60.0 **	0.0	40.0	6.0
30 - 39	45	38	44.4	37.8	17.8	3.0
40 - 49	34	28	41.1	44.1	14.8	0.2
50 - 59	31	26	45.2	32.3	22.5	0.0
60 & over	5	4	40.0	20.0	40.0	0.7
<i>Gender</i>						
Female	29	24	44.8	31.0	24.2	6.0
Male	64	53	37.5	40.6	21.9	0.7
Not Spec.	27	23	59.3 **	29.6	11.1	0.1
<i>Place of Birth</i>						
Asia	3	3	33.3	0.0	66.7	17.2
Australia	5	4	100.0 *	0.0	0.0	1.0
Europe (excl. UK)	5	4	60.0	40.0	0.0	5.0
New Zealand	66	55	43.9	36.4	19.7	0.2
North America	15	13	26.7	60.0	13.3	0.5
United Kingdom	20	17	40.0	30.0	30.0	1.9
Other	6	5	50.0	33.3	16.7	0.3
<i>Main Overseas Experience</i>						
Asia	3	3	66.7	0.0	33.3	22.3 †
Australia	11	9	54.6	27.3	18.1	2.0
Europe (excl. UK)	6	5	66.7 *	0.0	33.3	1.0
North America	37	31	29.7	62.2 *	8.1	4.0
United Kingdom	31	26	38.7	29.0	32.3	4.3
Other	4	3	50.0	25.0	25.0	0.4
None	28	23	57.1 **	25.0	17.9	0.3
TOTAL OTAGO	120	100	44.2	35.8	20.0	1.1

* indicates the preferred system, statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

** indicates the preferred system, statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

† indicates that there are significant differences between the categories at the 95% confidence level.

†† indicates that there are significant differences between the categories at the 90% confidence level.

Appendix 5
Summary Results of the Academic Titles Survey: Massey University

<i>Preference for Academic Titles</i>						
	<i>Responses</i>		<i>Current System</i>	<i>Alternative System</i>	<i>No Preference</i>	<i>Chi-Square</i>
	<i>(No.)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	
<i>Faculty</i>						
Agriculture	16	15	25.0	37.5	37.5	0.4
Commerce/Admin	21	20	52.4	28.6	19.0	1.5
Humanities/Arts	10	10	50.0	30.0	20.0	0.5
Sci/Eng/Arch	17	16	64.7 **	23.5	11.8	3.3
Social Sciences	17	16	52.9 **	17.7	29.4	3.0
Other	24	23	58.3 *	20.8	20.9	4.3
<i>Designation</i>						
Professor	8	8	50.0	37.5	12.5	0.1
Assoc Prof/Reader	17	16	64.7 *	11.8	23.5	6.2
Senior Lecturer	39	37	51.3	30.8	17.9	2.0
Lecturer	28	27	46.4	25.0	28.6	1.8
Asst/Jun Lecturer	13	12	46.2	23.1	30.7	1.0
<i>Highest Qualification</i>						
Doctorate	54	51	55.6 *	27.8	16.6	5.0
Masters	35	33	45.7	25.7	28.6	2.0
Other	16	15	50.0	18.8	31.2	2.3
<i>AUS Member</i>						
Yes	67	64	53.7 *	25.4	20.9	6.8
No	38	36	47.4	26.3	26.3	2.3
<i>Age Group</i>						
under 30	7	7	42.9	28.6	28.5	0.2
30 - 39	35	33	54.3 *	17.1	28.6	6.8
40 - 49	39	37	53.9 **	28.2	17.9	3.1
50 - 59	20	19	45.0	30.0	25.0	0.6
60 & over	4	4	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Gender</i>						
Female	35	33	62.9 *	14.3	22.8	10.7
Male	51	49	45.1	37.3	17.6	0.4
Not Spec.	19	18	47.4 **	15.8	36.8	3.0
<i>Place of Birth</i>						
Asia	3	3	33.3	66.7	0.0	0.3
Australia	4	4	25.0	0.0	75.0	1.0
Europe (excl. UK)	10	10	20.0	50.0	30.0	1.3
New Zealand	62	59	53.2 *	17.7	29.1	11.0
North America	6	6	33.3	66.7	0.0	0.7
United Kingdom	20	19	75.0 *	25.0	0.0	5.0
<i>Main Overseas Experience</i>						
Asia	2	2	0.0	100.0	0.0	2.0
Australia	12	11	50.0 **	8.3	41.7	3.6
Europe (excl. UK)	9	9	44.4	44.4	11.2	0.0
North America	24	23	33.3	54.2	12.5	1.2
United Kingdom	18	17	72.2 *	11.1	16.7	8.1
Other	1	1	100.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
None	39	37	56.4 *	12.8	30.8	10.7
TOTAL MASSEY	105	100	51.4 *	25.7	22.9	9.0

* indicates the preferred system, statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

** indicates the preferred system, statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

† indicates that there are significant differences between the categories at the 95% confidence level.

†† indicates that there are significant differences between the categories at the 90% confidence level.

Appendix 8
Summary Results of the Academic Titles Survey: University of Waikato

<i>Preference for Academic Titles</i>						
	<i>Responses</i>		<i>Current System</i>	<i>Alternative System</i>	<i>No Preference</i>	<i>Chi-Square</i>
	<i>(No.)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	
<i>Faculty</i>						
						<i>19.5 ††</i>
Commerce/Admin	4	7	25.0	75.0	0.0	1.0
Education	5	8	40.0	20.0	40.0	0.3
Humanities/Arts	11	18	81.8 *	9.1	9.1	6.4
Law	4	7	75.0	25.0	0.0	1.0
Sci/Eng/Arch	23	38	65.2 *	21.7	13.1	5.0
Social Sciences	11	18	54.5	45.5	0.0	0.1
Other	2	3	0.0	100.0	0.0	2.0
<i>Designation</i>						
						<i>7.9</i>
Professor	8	13	75.0 **	12.5	12.5	3.6
Assoc Prof/Reader	5	8	80.0	20.0	0.0	1.8
Senior Lecturer	20	33	40.0	50.0	10.0	0.2
Lecturer	21	35	66.7 *	23.8	9.5	4.3
Asst/Jun Lecturer	5	8	60.0	20.0	20.0	1.0
Not Spec.	1	2	100.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
<i>Highest Qualification</i>						
						<i>1.6</i>
Doctorate	45	75	60.0 *	28.9	11.1	4.9
Masters	10	17	50.0	40.0	10.0	0.1
Other	5	8	80.0	20.0	0.0	1.8
<i>AUS Member</i>						
						<i>5.0 ††</i>
Yes	42	70	66.7 *	21.4	11.9	9.8
No	18	30	44.4	50.0	5.6	0.1
<i>Age Group</i>						
						<i>4.4</i>
under 30	4	7	75.0	25.0	0.0	1.0
30 - 39	19	32	68.4 *	15.8	15.8	6.2
40 - 49	24	40	50.0	41.7	8.3	0.2
50 - 59	13	22	61.5	30.8	7.7	1.3
<i>Gender</i>						
						<i>12.1 †</i>
Female	7	12	57.1 *	0.0	42.9	4.0
Male	30	50	66.7 *	30.0	3.3	4.2
Not Spec.	23	38	52.2	39.1	8.7	0.4
<i>Place of Birth</i>						
						<i>8.1</i>
Asia	1	2	0.0	100.0	0.0	1.0
Europe (excl. UK)	2	3	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0
New Zealand	33	55	66.7 *	24.2	9.1	6.6
North America	4	7	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0
United Kingdom	17	28	47.1	35.3	17.6	0.3
Other	3	5	100.0 **	0.0	0.0	3.0
<i>Main Overseas Experience</i>						
						<i>14.2 ††</i>
Australia	7	12	100.0 *	0.0	0.0	7.0
Europe (excl. UK)	3	5	100.0 **	0.0	0.0	3.0
North America	17	28	35.3	47.1	17.6	0.3
United Kingdom	18	30	50.0	33.3	16.7	0.6
None	15	25	73.3 **	26.7	0.0	3.3
TOTAL WAIKATO	60	100	60.0 *	30.0	10.0	6.0

* indicates the preferred system, statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

** indicates the preferred system, statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

† indicates that there are significant differences between the categories at the 95% confidence level.

†† indicates that there are significant differences between the categories at the 90% confidence level.

Appendix 7
Summary Results of the Academic Titles Survey: Victoria University of Wellington

<i>Preference for Academic Titles</i>						
	<i>Responses</i>		<i>Current System</i>	<i>Alternative System</i>	<i>No Preference</i>	<i>Chi-Square</i>
	<i>(No.)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	
<i>Faculty</i>						
						<i>11.4</i>
Commerce/Admin	17	17	29.4	52.9	17.7	1.1
Education	9	9	0.0	77.8 *	22.2	7.0
Humanities/Arts	34	34	50.0	35.3	14.7	0.9
Sci/Eng/Arch	36	36	30.6	52.8	16.6	2.1
Other	5	5	40.0	20.0	40.0	0.3
<i>Designation</i>						
						<i>13.1</i>
Professor	7	7	42.9	57.1	0.0	0.1
Assoc Prof/Reader	15	15	20.0	73.3 *	6.7	4.6
Senior Lecturer	51	50	31.4	51.0	17.6	2.4
Lecturer	26	26	46.2	23.1	30.7	2.0
Asst/Jun Lecturer	2	2	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Highest Qualification</i>						
						<i>4.3</i>
Doctorate	70	69	32.9	52.9 **	14.2	3.3
Masters	23	23	39.1	39.1	21.8	0.0
Other	8	8	37.5	25.0	37.5	0.2
<i>AUS Member</i>						
						<i>3.4</i>
Yes	79	78	30.4	51.9 *	17.7	4.4
No	22	22	50.0	31.8	18.2	0.9
<i>Age Group</i>						
						<i>12.1</i>
under 30	3	3	100.0 **	0.0	0.0	3.0
30 - 39	24	24	37.5	33.3	29.2	0.1
40 - 49	38	38	31.6	50.0	18.4	1.6
50 - 59	34	34	32.4	55.9	11.7	2.1
60 & over	2	2	0.0	100.0	0.0	2.0
<i>Gender</i>						
						<i>9.5 †</i>
Female	25	25	28.0	36.0	36.0	0.3
Male	57	56	40.4	50.9	8.7	0.7
Not Spec.	19	19	26.3	52.6	21.1	1.7
<i>Place of Birth</i>						
						<i>13.7</i>
Asia	6	6	0.0	83.3 *	16.7	5.0
Australia	10	10	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0
Europe (excl. UK)	3	3	33.3	66.7	0.0	0.3
New Zealand	41	41	41.5	31.7	26.8	0.5
North America	6	6	33.3	50.0	16.7	0.2
United Kingdom	31	31	29.0	54.8	16.2	2.5
Other	4	4	25.0	75.0	0.0	1.0
<i>Main Overseas Experience</i>						
						<i>6.4</i>
Asia	6	6	33.3	66.7	0.0	0.7
Australia	13	13	38.5	53.9	7.6	0.3
Europe (excl. UK)	2	2	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0
North America	24	24	25.0	54.2	20.8	2.6
United Kingdom	36	36	36.1	41.7	22.2	0.1
Other	3	3	33.3	66.7	0.0	0.3
None	17	17	41.1	35.3	23.6	0.1
TOTAL VUW	101	100	34.7	47.5	17.8	2.0

* indicates the preferred system, statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

** indicates the preferred system, statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

† indicates that there are significant differences between the categories at the 95% confidence level.

But respondents on both sides see that a change in the system of titles would lead to a reduction in the significance of those titles:

Supporter of British system:

I am all in favour of people being made to feel good about their own image, but by calling everyone "professor" this will just render the terminology meaningless, or make it indistinguishable from "lecturer" and therefore serve no purpose.

The use of the term professor would be likely to diminish in a changed system.

Supporter of US system:

I am familiar at first hand with the American system and it works well. As everyone is entitled to use Professor no-one does!

And people might concentrate a little more upon academic qualifications rather than upon ascribed status:

Supporter of British system:

Strongly opposed to US system which I worked in for some years as a department head. Rank in US system unrelated to salary, and poor differentiation of promotion steps. Title professor drops out of use - everyone's Dr.

This respondent agrees with the point that the title has reduced significance and is likely to drop from use and then adds an additional point about titles being tied to payments.

2 Elitism vs egalitarianism

The University should abandon its hierarchical system which reflects British quaintness in favour of a more egalitarian system:

Supporter of US system:

A need for a more egalitarian system.

An extreme position wants all academic titles abolished.

Unspecified support:

Academic titles are elitist and should be abolished.

Presumably such people would be partly satisfied by any reduction in the significance of titles to which, some believe, the alternative system could lead.

Others simply look forward to a reduction in hierarchy by a change:

Supporter of US system:

Current system is too hierarchical and does not reflect the fact that we all basically have the same qualifications and do the same work.

Supporter of US system:

The quicker the better that the quaint UK system is abandoned in favour of a less hierarchical system.

This position is directly opposed by those who would be appalled to lose the status of the British meaning of 'professor'. The defence is made that the British system appeals to reason, or some sense of values which British people will understand (although there is no confidence that a majority of people will recognise the reasonableness of this set of values).

Supporter of British system:

The idea of everybody being called Professor is appalling!! It will simply downgrade the term.

This line of development extends the discussion about the meaning of the terms and concentrates upon the associated status outcomes.

Supporter of British system:

In USA/Canada .. (a)nyone who teaches is a called a '(p)rofessor'. It simple means 'teacher'. .. It would be a retrograde step to go to the 'level playing field system'. I hope that reason prevails and not just a majority vote!

Supporter of British system:

In British Commonwealth countries, "Professor" is a title signifying senior academic status. This is widely recognised as part of our culture, and it is not likely to be changed by fiat.

3 Pomposity and claims to the status of academic work

There is a hope that preserving the English nomenclature will secure a fight against managerialism. There is a recognition of present trends but a hope, too, that the magic of the present system will ward off its worst excesses.

Supporter of British system:

The title "professor" is now coming to mean senior managerial status .. Seniority is being increasingly associated with management, and we could be heading for a situation in which those who do the real work of teaching and research are all reviewed as just 'workers'.

Appendix 9

OBSERVATIONS ON CAVANA et al's PAPER ON RECLASSIFYING ACADEMIC TITLES

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There is a measure of dissatisfaction with the present system of academic titles, and possibly with salary scales, according to a recent survey (Cavana et al, 1994). Only 44% of the respondents preferred the current system of titles (Professor; Associate Professor or Reader; Senior Lecturer; Lecturer; Assistant or Junior Lecturer). 39% were for an alternative system common in the United States (Professor; Associate Professor; Assistant Professor). And the other 17% were not prepared to state a preference between the two.

The quotations in the following come from the 671 respondents (academics at NZ universities) in that survey. The conflicts between their different value positions are summarised here under 5 headings which classify the reasons they gave.

- 1 Clarity and meaning in the nomenclature
- 2 Elitism vs egalitarianism
- 3 Pomposity and claims to the status of academic work
- 4 Titles and reward systems.
- 5 Detachment from the question.

When respondents gave the reasons for their positions they were not, of course, confined by these classifications so the correspondence between the system I apply and what they say cannot be exact. Sitting behind most reasons are usually a number of facts (beliefs about what is) and some values (beliefs about what ought to be). These are not always openly expressed so it has to be granted that most interpretation of what is common ground, and what is not, is likely to be mistaken at a number of points. However, the only way to test where there are agreements is through seeking reasoned response through a public platform.

Points of agreement are, of course, interesting. So, too, are points of disagreement - particularly those which use the same set of facts, and seem to suggest an aspiration to the same set of outcomes (which are based upon apparent belief in a similar set of normative values) and yet place considerable stress upon different policies, or different processes, to secure those outcomes. The following classification reveals that some differences among the respondents were of just this sort.

1 Clarity and meaning in the nomenclature

The present system is misunderstood.

Supporter of US system:

I have only been here two months and I am already tired of explaining my title.

Supporter of US system:

The current system is only understood by academics but unfortunately not by non academics or students.

Supporter of British system:

Titles really don't mean much to lay people, except for "Professors" so current system probably the best.

Supporter of British system:

Taken literally "assistant professor" is inaccurate. In no way do junior staff directly act in an assistant role to senior staff. US titles are therefore anachronistic.

This respondent did not apply similar logic to the assistant lecturer title. But perhaps this was their university applied a consistent logic to junior titles.

It does seem reasonable that the system of titles should have wide universal appeal.

Unspecified support:

Titles used should be in line with those currently being used internationally so that overseas institutions and persons will have a picture of the situation when making applications or merely corresponding.

A point about clarity is best made by the following respondent:

Supporter of US system:

The alternative system has much more meaning in most parts of the world.

and another similar one:

Supporter of US system:

The alternative system would also bring New Zealand into line with European usage (especially Germany and Switzerland).

And some who have different priorities but not so allegedly pure motives:

Unspecified support:

The issues of salary increases and maintaining conditions seem more important ones to address.

The argument between elitism and egalitarianism has extreme positions. However, there is considerable support for some sort of hierarchy or different levels of recognition. This means that those who suggest an indifference of one sort are out of tune with all those who see these as matters of considerable importance.

Nevertheless, very few reasons are furnished around the number of titles proposed. Few people seriously comment upon why five titles rather than three. In fact, a common approach applied by managers to solve problems which emerge from the rationing of cash rewards is to substitute a complex number of titles. Reich (1993, p. 182-3) provides an interesting commentary on the way titles are created. One of the supporters of the traditional system (above) wishes to avoid the trend. But the traditional system has already proliferated a much larger variety of titles than the five mentioned in the traditional list. Universities also have graduate assistants, fellowships, tutors, senior tutors, research assistants, researchers, and senior researchers in their academic employ. In addition they institute and maintain a number of bars in their scales and now seem bent upon applying an even more complex system of differentials using ranges of rates.

Cavana et al. (1994, p.3) do bring attention to these issues in citing Kogan et al.:

".. the core academic appointments are based on a structure of discrete titles and statuses that have long histories. But alongside these traditional structures there is a wide array of non-established academic and para-academic roles."

They also note that there is an acknowledged status gap appearing between the 'haves' (those in permanent tenured posts) and the 'have-nots' (the growing number of those in casual posts) and "..Unions representing staff might be expected to develop agendas that face more strongly these growing status differentials."

This then takes us back to the key need for reform, and that is to institute a fairer system of employment. For the system in which some are favoured and have a lot and others, by comparison, are considerably disadvantaged and have nothing like the same rewards and opportunities is unjust. And unjust systems of employment are not likely to be good for morale and can contribute to dysfunctional patterns of behaviour.

So a central question does surely ask just how many levels of hierarchy are useful. Here it is possible to reduce the words of one of the current system's supporters:

Supporter of British system:

To have too many variations .. is in my opinion very affected, and absolutely ludicrous.

Unspecified support:

The current system is patently out of line with North American terminology and so stupid. The alternative system is preferred if the following is adopted. Professor 30%, Associate Professor 40% and Assistant Professor 30%. You need to define the break points.

It may be that there are no matters affecting tertiary education which are more important than this. Perhaps those who think we have a serious morale and performance problem are right. Perhaps a system which explained ourselves better to the world might also make it possible to justify ourselves better to each other.

Since there has been a continuing egalitarian effect upon the proportions of the population proceeding to university perhaps it is time to acknowledge that this has had some effect, not only upon the workloads of staff, but also upon the standards demanded of students in their work, and even upon the performance of staff as they cope with heavier workloads.

The researchers' survey presents a strong case for a serious look at the structuring of academic titles and the associated reward structures.

Cavana, R.Y., Crozier, R.A., Davis, B.J., & Pillai, A.P. (1994) Attitudes towards reclassifying academic titles in New Zealand universities Dec ANZAM conference

Kogan, M., Moses, I., & El-Khawas, E. (1994) Staffing higher education - meeting new challenges. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Reich, R (1993) The work of nations: preparing ourselves for 21st century capitalism. Sydney: Simon & Schuster

However, not all the work that is done is believed to be equally worthwhile and those of lower standing should not be allowed to take upon themselves airs above their station:

Supporter of British system:

To have too many variations on the professorial theme is in my opinion very affected, very American and absolutely ludicrous. .. It does however seem to be the modern trend where everyone claims to be a "manager", "director", "executive", "professional" or "specialist" for what is in reality a very modest job ..

The same respondent then went on to suggest (in a rather contradictory line of argument) that it could be the job of the union to tie academics to manager status:

The AUS .. could argue a case for linking professorial status to some comparable status in the public sector (senior hospital managers that would help a lot with salary claims) given that most academics, and most AUS officials are not Professors, and given the politics of envy and the 'tall poppy' syndrome, it is likely that the present pressure to 'bring Professors into line' will continue.

Just why this line of argument might be successful is not clear. Surely it would only align academics with a group which some of the public believes to be overpaid and so would serve little helpful purpose. Furthermore, it seems to suggest a need to effect a link with management which was something the respondent was earlier anxious to repudiate.

Along with confusions of meaning go confusions about status and the criteria for changes of status under the present system.

Supporter of US system:

The university says that promotion to associate professor requires the same rigorous assessment of academic performance as the awarding of a Professorial Chair yet in practice there is a clear difference in status. There are a number of instances where appointments to Head of Department at the professorial level have been made where the successful applicant would have difficulty being promoted.

4 Titles and reward systems.

There are some who see status separated out from the payment issues

Supporter of US system:

Would give us the status, without costing more salaries.

Supporter of US system:

Have for many years believed that the alternative would significantly improve morale and performance at no expense.

One supporter of change would probably not be satisfied with any change in titles that might be offered if these did not address some other (perceived) fundamental difficulties in the promotion system.

Supporter of US system:

The hypocrisy of calling people lecturers but judging them solely on research must go. Researcher and senior researcher would be more honest.

But another, rather trusting to hard work and talent reaping its own reward, thought that the conservative system was best:

Supporter of British system:

Leave the system as it is - we do not need to imitate the USA! Besides, titles do not engender respect - reputations do.

And a different supporter of the status quo had a worry about insufficient salary and overwork.

Supporter of British system:

No point changing our titles but not upgrading our salary and working conditions!! I don't wish to have a better title and yet still be so overworked!!

There is a line of argument that suggests that the central issue should not be about the meaning of words, or about academic careers but should simply be a matter of what will secure the largest personal rewards.

Unspecified support:

I prefer the system which will pay me the most!!

5 Detachment from the question.

For some the detachment appears to arise from a surfeit of recognition:

Unspecified support: *Titles mean little when you have got them.*

However, for others it emerges because of an unwillingness to take a position with imperfect knowledge:

Unspecified support:

It is difficult to comment unless we know how the two systems will operate.

There are those who think we should concentrate our attention upon more important things.

Unspecified support:

Surely there are matters of greater significance facing tertiary education than THIS??

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