

## **Policy 5.062 Distinguished Professors**

### **REVISED GUIDELINES FOR THE SELECTION AND REVIEW OF DISTINGUISHED PROFESSORS**

#### **I. Goals, Criteria, and Required Evidence**

- **Goals of the Policy on Distinguished Professors**

The title of Distinguished Professor is conferred on an individual by the University Board of Trustees in recognition of exceptional scholarly achievement. The purpose of these appointments is to recruit new faculty or retain existing faculty whose appointments enrich the University, especially when candidates require special incentives to influence their decision to accept an offer or to remain within the University. These appointments are expected to contribute to CUNY's commitment to recruit and retain an excellent faculty representing a rich diversity of gender and ethnicity.

- **Criteria for Distinguished Professorship Appointments**

CUNY Distinguished Professors should comprise a small number of exceptional individuals. That number is currently limited to 250 under the terms of the collective bargaining agreement. The primary purpose of the awards is to recruit or retain outstanding faculty. Distinguished Professorships are reserved for faculty with records of exceptional performance by national and international standards of excellence in their profession. There must be substantial evidence of this exceptional performance, including significant quantities of high-quality work in areas of importance in their disciplines. In addition to superb scholarship, Distinguished Professors are expected to participate in appropriate teaching and service roles in their colleges. However, this honor is granted in recognition of the quality and impact of a nominee's scholarship.

Nominations from colleges are expected to represent a balance between the number of Distinguished Professors recruited from outside the University relative to those appointed from internal CUNY candidates. Since Distinguished Professor appointments are not provided solely to recognize past performance, there must be evidence that their quality of performance will continue.

In all but the most exceptional circumstances, candidates who have been rejected may be renominated only once after a minimum of three years from the action.

- **Review Process**

Colleges must review the performance of all Distinguished Professors at the end of every fifth year after initial appointment. The President will submit the review to the Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost. In consultation with appropriate departmental and College persons, the President is expected to recommend to the Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost that a Distinguished Professorship be discontinued if there is failure to perform at the scholarly levels expected of persons at that rank.

- **Required Evidence for Awards**

There must be evidence that the candidate is regarded nationally, and where appropriate,

internationally, as a leading scholar in his/her academic field. There also must be evidence that the candidate, if named University Distinguished Professor, will continue to perform as a faculty member at levels appropriate for Distinguished Professors.

Campuses should seek at least ten (10) external letters of evaluation from full professors or people of comparable standing outside the academy who are widely recognized authorities in the nominee's field and can provide objective analyses of the nominee's qualifications. As part of the nomination materials sent to the University, the campuses should provide the evaluating committee with each reviewer's vita. The review letters should include a comparison of the nominee to a specific list of other distinguished scholars in the field and provide a clearly articulated rationale for the assessment. Reviewers should acknowledge any prior contact with the nominee; they should not ordinarily be coauthors with the candidate, and they cannot be from any CUNY college.

## II. Procedure

- **Overview**

The procedures which guide the appointment to Distinguished Professor are designed to enable the University to gauge the appropriateness of nominees for this award. Beginning in fall 2014, nominations for the appointments may be presented to the University Board of Trustees at any Board meeting. Prior to presentation to the Board the case must have: (1) college endorsement based on the approved policy and/or practices of the college, which must incorporate the goals, criteria, and evidence prescribed in Section 1 of these guidelines; (2) submission of the materials to the Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost's Office; (3) solicitation of evaluative letters by the Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost when additional documentation is necessary; (4) review by the Distinguished Professor Selection Committee and recommendation to the Chancellor; (5) approval by the Chancellor and recommendation to the Board Committee on Faculty, Staff, and Administration; (6) approval by the Board Committee on Faculty, Staff, and Administration; and (7) approval by the Board of Trustees.

- **College Process**

The College President will forward to the Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost (1) a current c.v. checked for accuracy and completeness; (2) letters of recommendation from the College's President and from the Chief Academic Officer; (3) at least ten (10) external evaluations, accompanied by vitas of the evaluators; (4) documentation of the processes used up to the point of submission of the case from the College, including an account of the process by which external evaluators' letters were solicited; (5) representative samples of the candidate's scholarly and/or creative work, as appropriate, and any additional evidence of exceptional performance by national and international standards of excellence.

*Note: The evaluations submitted by the College are critical. The evaluators must be among the most highly respected persons in the field, and they must be objective, without reason for bias; for example, as mentioned above, evaluators should not ordinarily be coauthors with the candidate.*

*Again, reviewers also cannot be from any CUNY college.*

- **University Process**

After the College-level process is completed and the materials are forwarded to the Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost's Office, the Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost will request additional supporting materials if the external evaluations are deemed insufficient.

The Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost forwards each nomination to a Distinguished Professor Selection Committee. The Selection Committee will then meet and evaluate the candidates' portfolios, making recommendations to the Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost, who will send the final recommendations to the Chancellor for review and submission to the Board Committee on Faculty, Staff, and Administration, including the Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost, with eventual approval required by the University Board of Trustees. Because every effort will be made to avoid conflicts of interest in the composition and conduct of each Selection Committee, members of a Selection Committee should disclose any ties to the nominee under discussion at the beginning of deliberations. The Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost may ask members to recuse themselves if there is a reasonable concern that a member's ties with a nominee would compromise the Committee's deliberations.

- **Timetable**

Beginning in fall 2014, the University Board of Trustees will act on nominations for Distinguished Professor at any Board meeting during which a nomination is presented. Submissions of nominating materials from the Colleges to the Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost's Office for appointment to University Distinguished Professor will be accepted on a rolling basis for consideration by the Board of Trustees at a subsequent meeting. Once an appointment has been approved by the Board, it will go into effect on the first day of the subsequent month.

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