



STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

DISTINGUISHED PROFESSORSHIP

CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE RANK

SCOPE OF THE PROGRAM

The Distinguished Professorship, one of the four designations comprising Distinguished Faculty Rank, is a tenured academic rank above that of full professor. It was created by the SUNY Board of Trustees to recognize and reward the scholarship and research of SUNY's finest and most accomplished faculty, and to provide the system-wide acknowledgement this level of achievement merits. **The Distinguished Professorship is open only to State-operated campuses of the State University and may be conferred upon persons in any of the disciplines or fields of study.**

NATURE OF THE PROGRAM

Appointment constitutes a promotion to the State University's highest academic rank, and it is conferred solely by the State University Board of Trustees. The expectation is that individuals so appointed will be accorded such support as is appropriate to the individual's academic endeavor consistent with the resources of the campus, including a salary above the mean salary for full professors. The Distinguished Faculty medallion, specifically commissioned to commemorate this distinction, is awarded to each newly appointed faculty member.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

These criteria necessarily are stated in the most general terms and are meant to supplement rather than supplant criteria developed by the appropriate local nominating body. There are, however, required criteria that the campus will use for the selection of candidates for this rank. To be nominated for the Distinguished Professorship:

- ❑ The individual must have achieved national or international prominence and a distinguished reputation within the individual's chosen field through significant contributions to the research literature or through artistic performance or achievement in the case of the fine and performing arts.
- ❑ The person's work must be of such a character that the individual's presence will elevate the standards of scholarship of colleagues both within and beyond the individual's respective academic field.

- The person's work must be of such quality that students and scholars on other campuses of the University could and would wish to benefit by lectures and seminars, or other appropriate presentations the individual might bring to them.

PROCEDURES AT THE CAMPUS LEVEL

GENERAL RESTRICTIONS ON ELIGIBILITY

The following are special conditions that limit eligibility.

Faculty holding Distinguished Faculty Rank – Distinguished Librarian, Distinguished Professor, Distinguished Service Professor, or Distinguished Teaching Professor – may not be nominated for another Distinguished Faculty Rank designation;

Faculty holding qualified academic appointments (as defined in Board of Trustees policies: Individuals holding titles of academic rank preceded by the designation...“visiting” other similar designations) may not be nominated; ¹

Faculty who have retired or faculty serving in part-time capacities are ineligible; and

Posthumous nominations are not permissible.

SELECTION PROCESS

The formal submission of a nomination for appointment to the rank of Distinguished Professor is entirely at the discretion of the campus President.

To select candidates for nomination, the campus may employ any screening process it chooses. Regardless of the process followed, however, all deliberations, communications, and actions regarding the nomination must be held strictly confidential.

NOMINATION PORTFOLIO

Once a decision is made to submit a nomination, a nomination portfolio will be compiled. It will consist of the President's letter of endorsement, a nomination abstract, the candidate's *curriculum vita*, key campus nominating letters, and external letters of recommendation. The contents of these supporting documents are described below:

- President's Endorsement/Transmittal Letter - This letter, signed by the President, should highlight the candidate's most outstanding accomplishments and describe the campus support for the nomination. [This letter may be the document used in the Board of Trustees resolution, should the nomination be recommended.] The letter should be

¹ *The State University of New York Policies of the Board of Trustees – 2001 Article II§ 1 (k)*

addressed to Dr. Risa I. Palm, the University Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. A separate letter is to accompany each nomination.

- Nomination Abstract of 150 to 180 Words – Please provide a brief abstract of 150 to 180 words. This abstract should provide a clear, thematic picture that describes the candidate's main accomplishments. It should highlight why the candidate has been nominated to Distinguished Professor and may be taken from other parts of the nomination package. If the candidate is an awardee, this abstract may be used for press releases or testimonials.
- *Curriculum vitae* - an up to date and moderately comprehensive *vita* that includes among other information, the candidate's educational background, academic/visiting appointments held, honors and awards received (and the significance of these awards), external funding garnered with dollar amounts, publications with clear authorship noted, research record, invited/keynote presentations, presentations at other conferences/symposia, service contributions to the profession (work with learned societies, editorial boards, conferences organized, etc.) and memberships in disciplinary organization.
- Key Campus Nomination Letters -- Letters from the Provost (Chief Academic Officer) and candidate's Dean are to provide detailed information and the specific rationale – preferably in laymen's terms – for the candidate's nomination and justification for appointment.
- External Letters of Recommendation (from outside of SUNY) -- at least five but no more than eight, from prominent, "disinterested" scholars, generally individuals who have not collaborated, co-authored, or co-taught with the candidate – to validate the stature of the candidate proposed for appointment.

In these letters, the recommenders should: comment briefly about their relationship to the candidate, corroborate the candidate's merit for appointment, describe the candidate's stature in the discipline, catalog the candidate's most important achievements, speak to the influence and impact of the candidate's contribution on the discipline (in laymen's terms where possible), and explain the significance of the candidate's awards and honors.

Each external letter of recommendation should be accompanied either by the author's *curriculum vitae* or a description of the author's disciplinary stature to provide review panelists a context for the recommendation submitted.

SUBMISSION OF NOMINATIONS

Nominations are to be submitted to Dr. Kavita Pandit, Senior Vice Provost, T-8, SUNY Plaza, Albany, NY 12246. Only the original nomination needs to be submitted. Copies of the candidate's works, articles, reviews, etc. **are not** to be included as part of the portfolio.

Electronic nominations will also be accepted at the following e-mail address: Kavita.Pandit@suny.edu. When this option is exercised, the campus must retain the original portfolio containing original signatures of the President, Chief Academic Officer, appropriate Dean and each scholar submitting a recommendation.

PROCEDURES AT THE UNIVERSITY-WIDE LEVEL

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF NOMINATIONS

Receipt of nominations will be acknowledged to the President by the Senior Vice Provost. A copy of the acknowledgement will be sent to President's designee.

SYSTEM-LEVEL REVIEW OF NOMINATION PORTFOLIO

A review of candidate's nomination portfolio will be conducted at the University-wide level by a specifically constituted panel known as the University-wide Advisory Council on Distinguished Professorships.

This panel is comprised of Distinguished Professors from across the University and of representatives from the Office of the University Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at System Administration.

The nomination portfolio will form the basis for the Council's decision. No external referees will be involved in the system-level evaluation process.

The panel meets two times each year, and its meetings will be timed to coincide with the State University Board of Trustees sessions when appointments are traditionally conferred: September and March. The Council's deliberations will be held in the strictest confidence. To facilitate timely review of nomination portfolios, please submit new submissions by Friday of the second week of July for a September decision or Friday of the second week in January for a March decision. Late submissions will be considered in the next award cycle.

APPOINTMENT PROCESS

The University-wide Advisory Council on Distinguished Professorships will make its recommendations to the Provost, who in turn will make recommendations to the Chancellor. The recommendation will take the form of a resolution to the SUNY Board of Trustees. (The President's letter of endorsement and transmittal may be the document that will be included in the Board resolution. It should be noted that the resolution is the only information the Trustees see in making their decisions.) Appointments become effective on the day, and at the time, the Trustees vote on the appointment.

Nominations being recommended for the Board of Trustees consideration will be voted upon by the Trustees as an "Action Agenda Item" during the open session of the Trustees meetings. It should be noted, however, that as promotions these appointments are personnel matters subject to discussion during the Executive Session of the Board's meetings.

NOTIFICATION OF APPOINTMENT

On the day of Board action, the Senior Vice Provost will notify the campus President or the President's designee to confirm appointments made by the Trustees. Formal notification to the appointee will follow and will be conveyed by letter from the Chancellor, with a copy to the campus President. In addition, a news release will be prepared to publicize the appointments.

QUESTIONS

Questions regarding these procedures or appointments are to be directed to Dr. Kavita Pandit, who can be reached at Kavita.Pandit@suny.edu.

It should be noted, however, that due to the confidential nature of the nominations, inquiries pertaining to specific candidates may only be discussed with the campus President or the President's designee.

November 2007