



MEMORANDUM

May 7, 2014

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees
FROM: Nancy L. Zimpher, Chancellor
SUBJECT: Appointment of Distinguished Professors

Action Requested

The proposed resolution appoints the faculty members listed below to the rank of Distinguished Professor at the State University of New York campus indicated.

Resolution

I recommend that the Board of Trustees adopt the following resolution:

Whereas the State University of New York Board of Trustees has proudly established a historic tradition of acknowledging and honoring extraordinary faculty achievement through appointment to Distinguished Faculty Rank; and

Whereas the appointment to Distinguished Faculty Rank at the state-operated campuses is both a system-wide distinction and a promotion in rank; and

Whereas the SUNY Board of Trustees has the authority to bestow system-wide distinctions; now, therefore, be it,

Resolved that each faculty member listed below be, and hereby is, appointed to the rank of Distinguished Professor at the State University of New York campus indicated, effective May 7, 2014:

Professor Phillip McCallion, University at Albany
Professor Georges Dicker, SUNY College at Brockport
Professor Margarita L. Dubocovich, University at Buffalo
Professor Jerold C. Frakes, University at Buffalo
Professor Aidong Zhang, University at Buffalo

Professor Christopher A. McRoberts, SUNY College at Cortland
Professor M. Mahmood Hussain, Downstate Medical Center
Professor Jose-Manuel Alonso, SUNY College of Optometry
Professor Vitaly Citovsky, Stony Brook University
Professor Robert Harvey, Stony Brook University
Professor Kenneth Kaushansky, Stony Brook University

Background

Appointment to the rank of Distinguished Professor is conferred upon individuals who have achieved national or international prominence and a distinguished reputation within a chosen field. This distinction is attained through significant contributions to the research literature or through artistic performance or achievement in the case of the arts. The candidates' work must be of such character that the individuals' presence will tend to elevate the standards of scholarship of colleagues both within and beyond these persons' academic fields. It must be of such quality that students and scholars on other campuses of the State University could and would wish to benefit by lectures and seminars or other appropriate presentations the faculty members might bring to them.

The contributions of these scholars far exceed those mentioned in this resolution. Several important characteristics are omitted for brevity's sake. The candidates are also considered superlative teachers, setting the highest academic standards for their students. Beyond their scholarship, the candidates have contributed meaningfully and consistently in several notable areas, including extensive and superior service to the profession; leadership and ongoing participation on influential disciplinary committees; membership on prestigious editorial boards; service as reviewer or consultant on regulatory, advisory, and award-making bodies; and status as an invited presenter at conferences and symposia. The following encapsulates their disciplinary accomplishments:

Professor Phillip McCallion – Dr. McCallion is in the School of Social Welfare at the University at Albany, a Hartford Geriatric Social Work Faculty Scholar and Mentor and is Co-Director of the Center for Excellence in Aging and Community Wellness. Professor McCallion's research centers on system design to create aging prepared communities, foster the evaluation of the implementation of non-pharmacological interventions for persons with dementia and of psycho-educational interventions for family caregivers, and increase the reach of palliative care programs. As part of these agendas, Professor McCallion has a strong emphasis on standing up widespread use of evidence-based interventions, collaboration with state and local agencies, building community capacity and realizing effective, sustainable community-clinical linkages. Professor McCallion's research has been supported by grants and awards from numerous federal, state, local, private, and international sources. He has over 100 publications on interventions with older adults with chronic conditions, caregivers of frail elderly, persons with Alzheimer's disease, and persons with

intellectual/developmental disabilities. Dr. McCallion has also written on management issues for the providers of human services.

Professor Georges Dicker – Dr. Dicker has taught philosophy at the College at Brockport since 1970. He is the author of books on John Dewey, perceptual knowledge, Descartes, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant; four of these were published by Oxford University Press, the leading English-language publisher in philosophy. Professor Dicker's books are distinctive in that they are accessible to undergraduate students, and yet sufficiently rigorous and insightful to be indispensable to, and regularly praised by, expert scholars. Dr. Dicker has also published over 40 articles and reviews, and he has made roughly 100 paper presentations in ten Western countries and guest-taught in Taiwan. He has held a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship-in-Residence at Brown University and he was selected for participation in four N.E.H./Council for Philosophical Studies summer institutes. He has been highly active in university service for over three decades and has served as Chair of the Philosophy Department since 1994.

Professor Margarita L. Dubocovich – Dr. Dubocovich, of the University at Buffalo, is the world's foremost authority on the brain hormone melatonin and the regulation of melatonin receptors, Professor Dubocovich has significantly broadened the scientific understanding of melatonin's impact on circadian rhythms, sleep disorders, and depression. Credited with discovering melatonin receptor subtypes, which revolutionized the field, she also pioneered the pharmacology of melatonin receptors agonist and antagonist agents. The owner or co-owner of three patents related to agents developed for her research, since 1985 she has received continuous funding support from the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, and major pharmaceutical companies including Glaxo, Inc. and Eli Lilly and Company. Dr. Dubocovich is also an ardent educator, with the goal of building a culturally and intellectually diverse and academically inclusive community of undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral fellows and faculty. She has received numerous international honors, including the 2005 Award for Outstanding Scientific Contributions from the Latin-American Congress of Pharmacology, the 2011 Aaron B. Lerner Pioneer Award, and the 2012 PhARMA Foundation Award in Excellence in Pharmacology and Toxicology.

Professor Jerold C. Frakes – Dr. Frakes, of the University at Buffalo, is internationally renowned for his groundbreaking contributions to the field of Early Yiddish and for his work on Jewish, Christian, and Muslim intercultural relations as revealed in their respective literary traditions. Within the last year alone, he has won four major fellowships: a Guggenheim, a National Humanities Center Fellowship (declined), Harvard University's Radcliffe Institute Fellowship, and a research fellowship in Paris (declined). External reviewers note that he is "in a class of his own, 'performing heroic scholarship, without any peer' in the U.S. in his pioneering publications on Yiddish literature, and is 'perhaps the most

important figure in medieval Germanic Studies in the broadest sense.” He reads in every language pertinent to his broad range of scholarship and has published in, or translated from German, Yiddish, and French as well as English. In 2011, he published three books—a monograph, an edited collection on Latin and German medieval perceptions of the “Muslim Other,” and a “cultural history of Litvak Jewry”—all seminal contributions that continue to build his legacy to Yiddish studies and comparative literary scholarship.

Professor Aidong Zhang – Dr. Zhang, of the University at Buffalo, is a Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE), Dr. Zhang is an internationally recognized authority in the fields of multimedia and bioinformatics. Credited with major conceptual and practical advances in the fields of databases, multimedia, and bioinformatics, Professor Zhang has also had a major impact on these fields through the patented algorithms she has developed with her team. Her stature and reputation can be further gauged by her editorship in major journals, including the most prestigious journal in her field, *IEEE Transactions on Knowledge and Data Engineering*. Instrumental in forging new research directions in the Information Retrieval (IR) community, Dr. Zhang has pioneered novel techniques for semantic clustering and querying that are now widely accepted as the standard in image database design. She has received a number of awards and honors, and has attracted continuous external funding for two decades with federal grants totaling more than \$12 million, including a prestigious CAREER Award from the National Science Foundation and funding from the National Institutes of Health.

Professor Christopher A. McRoberts – Dr. McRoberts, of SUNY Cortland, is a worldwide authority on the Triassic Period, focusing on bivalves and the end-Triassic mass extinction event. A field paleontologist specializing in the taxonomy and paleoecology of bivalves, Dr. McRoberts’ geological expeditions have taken him to Nevada, Oregon, Alaska, Texas and multiple regions of Western Europe. His prolific and innovative research on the timeframe for defining the global Triassic-Jurassic boundary has impacted the geoscientific study of other periods of global change. Professor McRoberts has been recognized through numerous prestigious international appointments, including Secretary General for the International Union of Geological Sciences Commission on Triassic Stratigraphy; Co-leader of the International Geological Correlation 458 Project; Chair of the Northeast Section of the Paleontological Society; and two Research Associate posts, at the American Museum of Natural History and at Binghamton University. He is currently Editor-in-Chief of *Albertiana*, the official journal of the Subcommittee on Triassic Stratigraphy. A strong advocate for undergraduate research, Dr. McRoberts often collaborates with his students in the field and in professional publications.

Professor M. Mahmood Hussain – Dr. Hussain, of Downstate Medical Center, is an internationally renowned expert and leader in lipid biology and cardiovascular disease. He is one of SUNY Downstate’s most accomplished

scientists. Throughout his long and productive scientific career, he has paved many important new inroads into the molecular and cellular biology of how the hepatic and small intestinal cells participate in lipid metabolism to find better treatments for high cholesterol. The significance of his work is reflected in numerous institutional, national and international awards, being speaker and organizer for international conferences, over two decades of continuous extramural support by many national agencies including the NIH – bringing millions of dollars to the campus – and having published more than 150 articles, with several cited more than 100 times. He serves on numerous national and international grant review committees, on editorial boards of several scientific journals, including as Editor-in-Chief of *Nutrition and Metabolism (Lond)*.

Professor Jose-Manuel Alonso – Dr. Alonso, of the SUNY College of Optometry, is a visual neuroscientist who has made significant contributions to the understanding of how visual information is processed in the primary visual cortex, the area of the brain with the most detailed representation of visual space. A large body of Professor Alonso's work has been devoted to understanding the functional role of the connections from thalamus to visual cortex, which provides the main entrance of visual information to the brain. He also made contributions to understanding how receptive fields are constructed in the primary visual cortex, the role of neuronal synchrony in sensory processing, and the role of spatial attention and alertness in visual cortical function. More recently, his work has revealed pronounced asymmetries in the processing of darks and lights in the visual cortex, which could potentially explain a wide range of visual phenomena including an almost four-century-old puzzle dating back to Galileo.

Professor Vitaly Citovsky – Dr. Citovsky, of Stony Brook University, has made several major contributions to the field of plant-pathogen interactions with a focus on transport of nucleic acids using plant viruses and *Agrobacterium* as models. Dr. Citovsky was first to describe how plant viral cell-to-cell movement proteins form complexes with viral genomes and how *Agrobacterium* exports bacterial effectors and DNA into plant cells. These studies have had a major impact in the plant biotechnology industry that is based on the efficient transfer of genes and corresponding traits from any organism into crop plants. Professor Citovsky's research also contributes substantially in areas beyond plant-pathogen interactions. For instance, he also studies the composition and biochemical activities of a plant histone demethylase gene repressor complex. Dr. Citovsky found that unlike similar complexes in animal systems, in plants this includes a histone deubiquitinase activity. Research in his laboratory also pioneered the production of autoluminescent plants by reconstituting a bacterial multigene biochemical pathway for autoluminescence within plant chloroplasts. Professor Citovsky has multiple editorial responsibilities, is an enthusiastic mentor, has maintained a well-funded program, and has published over 170 articles in high impact journals.

Professor Robert Harvey – Dr. Harvey, of Stony Brook University, is a pre-eminent presence in the field of cultural and literary studies. He is widely known in the United States and Europe as a distinguished practitioner of such studies. His several books and numerous articles are recognized as ground-breaking, original contributions to a field he has created virtually single-handedly. His most recent book, *Witnessness: Beckett, Levi, Dante and the Foundations of Responsibility*, has revolutionized the understanding of what it means to be a witness of historically and personally significant events. Another sign of Professor Harvey's stellar international standing is found in his recent appointment as Program Director at the Collège International de Philosophie in Paris: a position reserved only for the most prominent scholars and critics of our time. At Stony Brook, Dr. Harvey has been the moving force behind the creation of an immensely promising new department, Cultural Analysis and Theory, which provides an innovative interdisciplinary approach to literature and affiliated fields.

Professor Kenneth Kaushansky – Dr. Kaushansky, of Stony Brook University, is a leading hematologist whose seminal contributions to hematopoiesis have been recognized by his election to membership in the most prestigious scientific and medical institutions including the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. As President of the American Society for Clinical Investigation, and the American Society of Hematology, Dr. Kaushansky has been a major driver in transforming medicine such that the treatment of patients can truly harness findings in the laboratory. He has been a prominent advocate and mentor of young physicians and researchers considering careers that bridge the clinic and laboratory. Dr. Kaushansky has brought a palpable sense of optimism and self-confidence to the faculty and students of the School of Medicine. In his two-plus years as Dean and Vice-President, Dr. Kaushansky has catalyzed transformative changes in basic and translational research, curriculum development, and the delivery of superb clinical medicine. He is an extraordinary scientist who has made lasting contributions to the basic biomedical sciences, is a clinician of the highest integrity, and is a wonderful role model in his capacity as outstanding physician-scientist, mentor and teacher.

It is my pleasure to present the faculty members named in this resolution to the Board of Trustees for its approval. A copy of the President's letter for each professor is attached. The letter highlights the individual's major career achievements, and provides the campus rationale for recommending appointment. Complete dossiers are available in the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost.

Attachments