MEMORANDUM

March 17, 2020

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Kristina M. Johnson, Chancellor

SUBJECT: Appointment of a Distinguished Librarian

Action Requested

The proposed resolution appoints Ms. Rebecca L. Mugridge to the rank of Distinguished Librarian at the State University of New York at Albany.

Resolution

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

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

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

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

Resolved that the faculty member listed below be, and hereby is, promoted to the rank of Distinguished Librarian at the State-operated campus indicated, effective March 17, 2020:

Ms. Rebecca L. Mugridge, State University of New York at Albany

Background

The Distinguished Librarian is a prestigious tenured University rank that is awarded to librarians whose contributions have been transformational in creating a new information environment within the institution by providing access to
information, sharing or networking information resources, and fostering information literacy. In extending its distinguished ranks to the library faculty, the State University of New York recognizes the accomplishments of all its faculty. It also assumes national leadership within higher education by becoming the first university system to so encourage and foster the full potential of the faculty status of librarians. The Distinguished Librarian rank honors and promotes the achievement of personal excellence, groundbreaking professional progress, and wide-ranging benefit to the academic community. The pathways to the rank are diverse.

To be eligible for nomination, a faculty member must have held the rank of full Librarian (or full Professor with direct library responsibilities at a community college) for five years, and at least three years of full-time service at the nominating institution. A brief summary of the candidate’s accomplishments follows:

Rebecca L. Mugridge – Ms. Mugridge, Dean of University Libraries at the University at Albany, is internationally recognized for librarianship, particularly in the areas of technical services assessment, resource sharing, information literacy, and data management. With the University at Albany since 2013, Ms. Mugridge’s research focuses on increasing library quality and efficiency by examining efforts such as improved workflows, better training, reorganization, and the use of digital tools and cooperative networks. Author of Managing Digitization Activities: A SPEC Kit (2006), she has also edited five books—including Teams in Library Technical Services (2006), Cooperative Cataloging: Shared Effort for the Benefit of All (2011), Cataloging Collaborations and Partnerships (2013), and Assessment of Cataloging and Metadata Services (2018)—and three special journal issues of Cataloging and Classification Quarterly. She has published nineteen articles, more than 100 book reviews and conference reports, and made contributions to the Library of Congress. Ms. Mugridge has led key work at two organizations that have broad impact on professional standards and practices in her field, the Library and Information Technology Association and the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS), including service as editor the latter organization’s journal, ALCTS News.

A copy of the nominating letter from the campus president is attached. The complete dossier is available in the Office of the Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor.

Attachment
January 12, 2020

Dr. Tod A. Laursen
Senior Vice Chancellor and Provost
State University of New York
State University Plaza
Albany, New York 12246

Dear Dr. Laursen:

On behalf of the University at Albany, State University of New York, it is my great pleasure to nominate Ms. Rebecca Mugridge for promotion to the rank of Distinguished Librarian. Evidence for the case is presented in the accompanying dossier. As required by SUNY Guidelines, we have marshalled testimony from external and internal sources. The commentary is extensive and consistent in identifying Ms. Mugridge as a nationally known and highly respected leader in her profession. Her contribution to both the theory and practice of her field is celebrated for its timeliness, rigor, and creativity. While her leadership has been instrumental in advancing the University at Albany’s academic and research programs, I am especially impressed with her achievement and impact beyond our institution, indeed beyond the State University of New York. The profile, in short, is marked by excellence in every way, making her a fitting candidate for elevation to the State University of New York’s highest academic rank.

Ms. Mugridge joined the University at Albany in 2013, as Librarian and Associate Director for Technical Services and Library Systems. She served subsequently as Interim Dean and Director of the Libraries from 2015 to 2016, and was appointed Dean in 2016. Her professional career prior to joining the University at Albany spans more than 25 years and includes appointments at the University of Pittsburgh, where she earned her MLS degree in 1991; Robert Morris University, where she earned an MBS in 1998; Yale University; and Pennsylvania State University.

Ms. Mugridge has compiled a record of distinguished achievement and expertise in the critical library area of cataloging and metadata. Ms. Mary M. Case, University Librarian and Dean of Libraries at The University of Illinois at Chicago, provides a succinct summary of the scope, complexity, and importance of this theme, as follows: “[Cataloging and metadata is] the critical underlying knowledge infrastructure that allows users to search and find library resources. This area of practice involves multiple sets of international standards, cataloging rules, systems, external agencies, and potential partners requiring constant monitoring. Throughout her career, Ms. Mugridge has focused on how libraries can increase quality and efficiency by examining such efforts as improved workflows, better training, reorganization and the use of digital tools and cooperative networks. Grounded in actual experience, she shares lessons learned and offers thoughtful insights for others exploring options for process improvement. As her
work has progressed, she has become a leading voice on the assessment of technical services functions, witnessed not only by her articles, but also by her numerous invited presentations on assessment at national and regional conferences, including several keynote presentations."

Several evaluators note that Ms. Mugridge’s contribution in scholarship is extraordinary, particularly given her very substantial administrative roles and responsibilities. In terms of numbers, she has published 15 peer-reviewed articles since 2002, edited five books, and written approximately 100 book reviews. Our reviewers attest that the work has been published in the field’s leading journals. Her most recent edited book, Assessment of Cataloging and Metadata Services (Routledge, 2018), is cited as a sign that she has a well-established international reputation. In addition to her publications, there is also a pattern of frequent professional presentations that further burnishes Ms. Mugridge’s stature as an important thought leader in the field.

Ms. Mugridge’s profile is also marked by an exemplary record of institutional and professional service. She has been elected for leadership roles in several major national associations. These include the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS), for which she served as a Director-at-Large of the ALCTS Board for a three-year term beginning in 2008, and subsequently as Chair of the ALCTS Cataloging and Metadata Management Section. She has also served on several committees of the Association of Research Libraries, a prestigious association of 124 research libraries serving universities in the U.S. and Canada. In addition, she has substantial engagement with the SUNY Library Consortium, the SUNY Council of Library Directors, and the SUNY Office of Library and Information Services. Like her scholarship, these opportunities have served to extend Ms. Mugridge’s visibility and impact on library practice in the context of academic and research institutions.

Ms. Mugridge’s success in scholarship and commitment to service are reflected in her participation as a senior academic leader at the University at Albany. Ms. Trudi Jacobson, Distinguished Librarian and Head of the Information Literacy Department, identifies her as a role model and strong advocate for librarians as academic faculty members engaging in scholarship. She has introduced several initiatives to support library faculty research, including a writing group for pre-tenure librarians, a research support group, and a grant program to participate in continuing education webinars and professional conferences. She has also supported efforts to create new modern library services that contribute to the institutional environment for our faculty and students to be successful in pursuing their academic careers and programs. The research consultation service, information literacy instruction, and outreach to our academic departments are several examples. The innovative Make Create Center is a novel and useful resource for creating digital scholarly presentations and implementing these technologies in research and instruction. Her leadership has been essential and instrumental in helping to establish two new colleges at the University at Albany – the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences, and the nation’s first College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security, and Cybersecurity.
The attached dossier provides a more detailed portrait of Ms. Mugridge's substantial accomplishments. Included are statements from respected library faculty and leaders from other research institutions. Perspectives from several University at Albany senior librarians and senior academic officers describe her effectiveness as a leader and her impact on our institution. Lastly, we provide the candidate's detailed curriculum vitae.

After review of these materials, I trust you will agree that Ms. Mugridge possesses all the qualities and attributes that mark members of the State University of New York's Distinguished Academy. I look forward to a positive outcome for this nomination, and I hope you will contact me should you require additional information.

Thank you for your consideration of this exceptional library faculty member.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Havidán Rodríguez
President