

Distinguished Faculty Ranks

Distinguished Faculty Rank programs encourage ongoing commitment to excellence, kindle intellectual vibrancy, elevate the standards of instruction and enrich contributions to public service. They demonstrate the State University's pride and gratitude for the consummate professionalism, the groundbreaking scholarship, the exceptional instruction and the breadth and significance of service contributions of its faculty.

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 **Distinguished Professorship** is conferred upon faculty having achieved national or international prominence and a distinguished reputation within the individual's chosen field through significant contributions to the research and scholarship, or through artistic performance or achievement in the fine and performing arts.
- The **Distinguished Service Professorship** is conferred upon instructional faculty having achieved a distinguished reputation for service not only to the campus and the University, but also to the community, the State of New York or even the nation, by sustained effort in the application of intellectual skills drawing from the candidate's scholarly research interests to issues of public concern. It is bestowed on faculty in any of the disciplines or fields of study.
- The **Distinguished Teaching Professorship** is conferred upon instructional faculty for outstanding teaching competence at the graduate, undergraduate, or professional levels. Teaching mastery is to be consistently demonstrated over multiple years at the institution where the Distinguished Teaching Professorship is bestowed.
- The **Distinguished Librarian** is conferred upon librarians whose contributions have been transformational in creating a new information environment by providing access to information, sharing or networking information resources, and fostering information literacy. The Distinguished Librarian rank honors and promotes the achievement of personal excellence, groundbreaking professional progress, and wide-ranging benefit to the academic community.

REWARDS OF CONFERRAL

Rank

The Distinguished Faculty Rank is a promotion to a prestigious, tenured rank above that of professor. Individuals so appointed are at a professional level beyond that which can be attained at the campus level.

Salary

Appointment is a promotion that carries tenure in rank, if it has not already been attained, and a salary increase of up to \$2,500. (This is in addition to any negotiated general salary increase). Such increases will be funded from the campus budget through the normal process for funding promotions. The increase is built into the salary base of the appointee, and it must be included in campus budgets of ensuing years.

Other Commemorative – The Distinguished Faculty medallion, specifically commissioned to commemorate this distinction, is awarded to each newly promoted faculty member who obtains the Distinguished Rank.

Appointment to Distinguished designation carries with it an extraordinary responsibility. Distinguished Professors are expected to offer lectures and seminars for students and scholars on other campuses of the University, or other appropriate presentations the individual might bring to them. They may also be asked, by the Chancellor, from a member of the Chancellor's staff, or at the request of a campus President, to help raise or ensure academic excellence within the State University. Distinguished Service Professors are expected to function as role models and devote appropriate service to University-wide activities, both ceremonial and professional, on campuses other than their own when requested to do so by the Chancellor. Distinguished Teaching Professors are expected to devote a considerable proportion of their time to curricular reform and to the improvement of instruction on the home campus. Over and above this campus responsibility is a responsibility to the State University as a whole. During each ten-month academic year, Distinguished Teaching Professors will hopefully devote up to one full week in service to the University on campuses other than their own. Such service may come at the request of the Chancellor, from a member of the Chancellor's staff, or at the request of a campus President.

CAMPUS PARTICIPATION

All State-operated campuses may nominate faculty.

ELIGIBILITY

The individual eligibility criteria are detailed in the program-specific information below.

General Restrictions on Eligibility

The following are special conditions, applicable to all programs 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 that are preceded by the designation ...“visiting” or other similar designations) may not be nominated; ^[1]
- faculty holding a concurrent administrative appointment above the level of department chair for which they receive extra compensation are ineligible for the DSP;
- faculty who have retired or faculty serving in part-time capacities are ineligible; and
- posthumous nominations are not permissible.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Distinguished Professorship – DP

Academic Rank – Candidates must have attained the rank of professor.

Length of Service – Candidates must have held the rank of professor for at least five years and must have at least one year of full-time service at the nominating institution.

Criteria for Selection^[2] – To be nominated for the Distinguished Professorship:

- 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 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, beyond that which is expected for a professor.

- The individual must have obtained national or international awards that provide evidence of distinguished research, scholarship, or other creative activity.
- Individuals who are also inventors should have achieved prominence as assessed by the extent their discoveries have had measurable benefit to society.

Distinguished Service Professorship – DSP

Academic Rank – Candidates must have attained the rank of professor.

Length of Service – Candidates must have held the rank of professor for five years, must have at least three years of full-time service at the nominating institution, and must have completed at least ten years of full-time service in the State University of New York.

Criteria for Selection – A candidate for Distinguished Service Professor must demonstrate substantial distinguished service **both**:

- A. At the local campus level and/or local community or regional level; and
- B. At the state-wide and/or nation-wide and/or international level.

Distinguished service must exceed the work generally considered to be part of a candidate's basic professional work (professional committees, etc.) and should include service that exceeds that for which professors are normally compensated. *Thus, faculty with a concurrent administrative appointment – above the level of department chair/director or equivalent – for which they receive extra compensation are ineligible.* Furthermore, it is not appropriate to build a nomination dossier of a former administrator based upon service while in an administrative appointment. Distinguished service must extend over multiple years and involve the application of intellectual skills drawing from the candidate's scholarly and research interests to issues of public concern, and may include, but not be solely based upon, exceptional leadership in local and system-wide faculty governance.

Distinguished Teaching Professorship - DTP

Academic Rank – Candidates must have attained the rank of professor.

Length of Service – Candidates must have held the rank of professor for five years, have completed at least three years of full-time teaching on the campus that recommends the appointment and ten years of full-time teaching within the System.

Nominations must be drawn from faculty members who have regularly carried a full-time teaching load, both in terms of the number of semester hours taught and the number of students served, as defined by the campus for full-time faculty. The definition of a full-time teaching load varies from campus to campus, but each campus should be satisfied that there could be no question that its nominee meets this criterion.

Department chairpersons/directors or equivalent may be nominated for the Distinguished Teaching Professorship contingent upon the individual's carrying the campus-defined full-time teaching load for all persons performing such administrative responsibilities (e.g., if a campus defines 15 hours as a full-time teaching load for full-time faculty and 12 hours as a full-time teaching load for department chairs, then an individual serving as a department chair teaching the 12 hours and meeting the other eligibility requirements would be eligible for nomination). Administrators with less than a campus-defined teaching load (e.g., dean, associate dean) are ineligible.

Criteria for Selection – The primary criterion for appointment to the rank is skill in teaching, with evidence that the nominee's work has elevated the standards of colleagues at their institution or the field in general. Consideration shall also be given to mastery of subject matter, sound scholarship, service to the University and the broader community, and to continuing growth. The following criteria are to be used in the selection of persons to be nominated for the Distinguished Teaching Professorship:

□ **Teaching Techniques and Representative Materials** – There must be positive evidence that the candidate performs superbly in the classroom. The nominee must maintain a flexible instructional policy that adapts readily to student needs, interests, and problems. Mastery of teaching techniques must be demonstrated and substantiated. Consideration should be given to the number of substantially different courses taught, the number of students per course, and the teaching techniques employed in the various courses.

When available, student evaluations (in the form of student questionnaires administered and compiled by persons other than the nominee) presented for several different courses over a period of several recent years may provide the local selection committee with a clear idea of the nominee's impact on students.

□ **Scholarship and Professional Growth** – The candidate must be a teacher/scholar who keeps abreast of and makes significant contributions in his or her own field and uses the relevant contemporary data from that field and related disciplines in teaching. Examples of evidence in this category may include publications or artistic productions, grant awards, and presentations at symposia in his or her disciplines.

□ **Student Services** – In relating to students, the candidate must be generous with personal time, easily accessible, and must demonstrate a continual concern with the intellectual growth of

individual students. For this category, consideration should be given to the accessibility of the nominee to students outside of class (e.g., office hours, conferences, special meetings, the nominee's responsibility in terms of student advisement, and the nominee's teaching-related services to students).

□ **Academic Standards/Requirements and Evaluations of Student Performance** – The candidate must set high standards for students and help them attain academic excellence. Quantity and quality of work that is more than average for the subject must be required of the student. The candidate must actively work with students to help them improve their scholarly or artistic performance. The local selection committee should consider the quality, quantity, and difficulty of course-related work. Evidence of academic standards and requirements may be assessed by the accomplishments of students, including placement and achievement level.

The candidate's evaluation of students' work must be strongly supported by evidence. Expert teachers enable students to achieve high levels of scholarship. Consequently, it is possible that the candidate's marking record may be somewhat above the average of colleagues. There must be evidence that the candidate does not hesitate to give low evaluations to students who do poorly. Grading practices should be evaluated by the local committee. In particular, grade distribution for all courses in recent academic years should be reviewed and any seemingly unusual grading patterns explained.

In order to clarify the difference between the Distinguished Professorship and the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, the files for candidates must provide evidence that they are or have been involved for some substantial period of time in developing or promoting excellence in teaching through pedagogical methods and/or principles or in substantive educational enhancement either in their disciplines or to meet community needs on a regional, national, or international level.

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. *See Appendix for complete list and order of submittal.*

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 or as the basis for the Board of Trustees resolution, should the nomination be recommended.] The letter should be addressed to Dr. David Lavalley, Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost. A separate letter is to accompany each nomination.

- ***Nomination Abstract*** – Please provide a brief one paragraph 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 the rank of DP, DSP or DTP, 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 should have separate sections for educational background, academic/visiting appointments, honors and awards received, publications, external funding, invited/keynote presentations, other presentations, teaching accomplishments (including lists of graduate dissertations, theses and research directed and other mentoring), and service contributions to the University, the community, and the profession (work with learned societies, editorial boards, conferences organized, and other relevant activities). Entries for awards should indicate significance of each item. ***Specific data must include the date of the last update, the candidate’s department, the date of appointment to the SUNY system, highest rank attained and date of appointment to that rank.***

Distinguished Professor – Articles in refereed and non-refereed journals should be clearly distinguished from one another and, preferably, listed separately with full pagination and ordered by date of publication. Books should be listed separately from articles. Publications with multiple authors should indicate the senior author, if there is one, either by a note at the beginning of the publications list (if senior author position is consistent throughout) or by an asterisk indicating the senior author in each entry. External funding entries should indicate agency, amount, dates, and, if there are multiple named investigators, which is the PI.

- ***Internal Letters of Recommendation*** – Besides the President’s letter, at least four, but no more than six, letters are needed. Key Campus Nomination Letters -- Letters from the Provost (Chief Academic Officer) and candidate’s Dean/Division Head are to provide detailed information and the specific rationale – preferably in laymen’s terms – for the candidate’s nomination and justification for appointment.

Distinguished Teaching Professor – At least two of these letters should be from current students attesting to the candidate’s teaching ability, dedication and service to students.

External Letters of Recommendation – For state-operated campuses, at least five but no more than eight, current external letters of recommendation are needed to validate the stature of the candidate proposed for appointment to all Distinguished Ranks.

Distinguished Professor – These letters should be from individuals whose own status or accomplishment is appropriate to a promotion at this level. They should be persons sufficiently acquainted with both the candidate’s work and the profession to be able to write an informed letter specifically locating the candidate’s standing in and contribution to the discipline, and explaining the significance of the candidate’s awards and honors. Letter writers should be disinterested, that is, generally individuals who have not collaborated, co-authored, co-taught, or been in a student-teacher relationship with the candidate. If the letter writers have collaborated with the candidate in the past, they should pass the same distance test used by the major funding agencies in the candidate’s field: if the relationship is recent or close enough that the proposed letter writer would have to recuse himself/herself from a funding panel considering an application for that candidate, then the proposed letter writer is too recent or close for this

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

Distinguished Teaching Professor – 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 teaching techniques, catalog the candidate's most **important achievements, speak to the influence and impact of the candidate's contribution to teaching in general or in the discipline, and explain the significance of the candidate's awards and honors. At least two of these letters should be from former students of the candidate attesting to the candidate's teaching ability, dedication and service to students. Each external letter of recommendation should be accompanied either by the author's *curriculum vitae* or a description of the author's stature sufficient to provide review panelists a context for the recommendation submitted.**

Distinguished Service Professor – 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 profession and/or community, catalog the candidate's most important achievements, speak to the influence and impact of the candidate's contribution on the profession and/or community, and explain the significance of the candidate's service 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 stature sufficient to provide review panelists a context for the recommendation submitted.**

- ***Course Evaluations (Distinguished Teaching Professor only)*** – Numerical summaries of selected student course evaluations should be included if possible.