

Duke University

Durham

North Carolina 27708-0005

Office of the Provost

220 Allen Building

Box 90005


Telephone (919) 684-2631

Fax (919) 684-4421

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Memorandum

To: Academic Council

From: Peter Lange 

Re: University Distinguished Professorships Committee

As you know, several years ago the Distinguished Professors process was expanded to include multiple committees at the school level to consider candidates for school-specific chairs. This not only seemed more consistent with the way the funding for chairs is raised and the recommendations about their potential holders are made, but it also relies more appropriately on the evaluations of faculty more closely related to a candidate's discipline.

Last spring ECAC and I discussed changing the Distinguished Professors process at the University level to better reflect the fact that very few university distinguished professorships are distributed each year (1-3 generally.) In most cases, with the new school chair process, much of the work on the evaluation of the qualifications of candidates for these is already done by the School Distinguished Professors Committees as part of their deliberations. Further, the Chair and members of the University Distinguished Professors Committee last year asked me to look into changing the process to make it more efficient and to place primary responsibility for evaluation at the School DPC level.

After discussion with ECAC, I am proposing a process that mandates that the School Distinguished Professors Committees provide the primary reviews of the qualifications of all candidates for chairs and that empanels the University Distinguished Professors Committee as an

advisory group to the Provost subject to the Provost's call to provide additional review when sought by the Provost.

I attach here the proposal developed for this new stage of the process. It has been extensively discussed with ECAC.

University Distinguished Professor Committee and Process of Selection

Each school has a Distinguished Professorship Committee (DPC) that considers the dossiers of faculty nominated from the school or from those being recruited to the school's faculty and recommended for consideration by the Dean or another faculty member.

Those who have been vetted and approved by the School DPC are in the pool of faculty from which the Provost will draw when awarding school distinguished chairs. Occupants of this pool are also eligible for University-wide chairs (e.g. JB Duke Chairs.) When considering the award of chairs of any type, the Provost will consult with the Deans of the appropriate schools.

The School DPC's or Deans may also petition the Provost to consider a school chair nominee's dossier for a University Professorship if deemed appropriate, after consideration and approval of the candidate for a school chair.

There shall also be a University DPC advisory to the Provost. The Provost will appoint members to this body after consultation with ECAC. This Committee will convene at the call of the Provost to advise on the naming of University-wide chairs including existing and new Distinguished Professorships and existing and new University Professorships.

The University DPC will consist of faculty from several schools within Duke who are themselves holders of distinguished chairs. As much of the consideration of faculty for distinguished honors will be carried out by the School DPC's, the University DPC will be a small group that likely meets irregularly. Additional members may be appointed by the Provost on an *ad hoc* basis to consider specific cases.

Faculty Handbook

Distinguished Professorship Committees

The School Distinguished Professorship Committees of the several Schools of the University consider the nominees who are faculty from within the respective school. Each Committee makes recommendations to the dean of the respective School regarding which nominees have passed the bar and are eligible for a distinguished professorship. The dean in turn recommends to the provost specific candidates from this pool for specific school chairs. From these pools of candidates advanced by the schools' committees, the provost may also draw candidates that are to be recommended to the Board of Trustees for University Professorships and other university-wide named chairs.

In addition to the School Distinguished Professorship Committees, there is a University Distinguished Professorship Committee advisory to the provost, consisting of no more than five members selected from multiple schools with no more than two from any single school. The members shall be recommended by ECAC and approved by the provost. If needed, the provost may seek additional ad hoc faculty advice upon consultation with the University Distinguished Professorship Committee. This committee convenes subject to the call of the provost to advise the provost on candidates for University Professorships and other university-wide named chairs.