

Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

Complete Policy Title:

Distinguished University Professor

Policy Number (if applicable):

Approved by:

Senate

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Responsible Executive:

Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Enquiries:

[University Secretariat](#)

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1.0 POLICY

1.1 Rationale

Academic life involves achievements in many domains, including the discovery, communication and preservation of knowledge, excellence in education and pedagogy, as well as a commitment to the communities that we serve, from local to global. The ranks that are held by members of faculty represent an acknowledgement of the levels of achievement that each member of the community has attained in their academic life. High accomplishment is prized here; thus it is not surprising that our professoriate includes individuals whose achievements are extraordinary. It behooves us to recognize our most distinguished members by conferring upon them a title that represents the highest honour the University can bestow. To that end, McMaster University has established the title **Distinguished University Professor**, with the following terms, criteria, and nomination and selection procedures.

1.2 Title

The title of the category shall be Distinguished University Professor.

1.3 Terms

The title is awarded by the Senate only to full-time members of the faculty and is held for life, subject to Article XIV, clause 180 of the Senate By-laws.

1.4 Criteria

This title will be conferred only on faculty members who have demonstrated distinction and impact well beyond McMaster in one or more fields of endeavour, sustained over a period time, with a particular emphasis on success achieved while on faculty at the university. In keeping with McMaster's position as a research-intensive university of global repute those holding the title of Distinguished University Professor must have demonstrated an outstanding and sustained research record that demonstrates international impact and recognition. However, this award is also meant to recognize the complete scholar. Thus, the ideal candidate will have additionally demonstrated a sustained record of excellence and/or innovation in teaching and learning, including the supervision of emerging scholars along with a demonstrated history of service that has had an impact on the community, whether within or without the university.

In assessing candidates the selection committee will strive to understand and incorporate how impact is determined and communicated in different domains and fields of scholarship.

1.5 Number of Distinguished University Professors

- 1.5. a. The number of Distinguished University Professors shall be restricted to no more than 2% of all full-time members of faculty, including tenure-stream, teaching-stream, CAWAR and Special (with the latter stream counted using a weighting factor of 0.2). The maximum number of positions will be re-evaluated every three years. No more than five new titles will be conferred in any given year.
- 1.5. b. A vacancy among the Distinguished University Professors shall occur when any retires.
- 1.5. c. The title of Distinguished University Professor will continue to be held after retirement.

2.0 PROCEDURES

2.1 Nominations

The nomination procedures for Distinguished University Professors will take place on an annual cycle as follows:

- 2.1. a. A Distinguished Awards Committee will be created, composed of outstanding scholars with as broad a membership as possible, taking into account the need for balance and inclusion, the composition being constituted as follows:
 - The Provost or designate (chair)
 - The Vice-President (Research) or designate
 - The Associate Vice-President (Faculty)
 - One senior scholar from another university, appointed by the Provost

Five senior McMaster scholars, appointed by the Committee on Appointments upon the recommendation of Provost's Council

- 2.1. b. By the second Monday of September each year, the Provost shall invite nominations to the rank of Distinguished University Professor from the McMaster Community.

Anyone intending to nominate a colleague should inform the relevant Dean of their intention to do so by October 1, or as soon thereafter as possible.

- 2.1. c. The selection process shall occur in two phases. In the first phase nominations shall consist of the following:

A letter of nomination (maximum 3 pages) signed by four individuals, at least two of whom must be McMaster professors. (Self-nomination is not acceptable). The letter should outline why the nominee is deemed to fit the criteria for this title.

The nominee's CV.

Nominations will be due on November 1.

- 2.1. d. The selection committee (less the external member) will meet to select the most suitable nominees to move forward to the final selection process. The nominators of those candidates will then be asked to obtain at least 2 but up to 5 letters of reference attesting to the individual's global impact and standing to support the nomination. They will be due by February 1.

- 2.1. e. The full selection committee will then meet to develop a slate of candidates to be recommended to the Senate Committee on Appointments, no later than March 1. Upon ratification by this body the slate of candidates will be forwarded to the Senate for final approval.

- 2.1.f. In any given year when the number and calibre of candidates so warrants, the selection committee can recommend to the Provost a list of unsuccessful nominees whose names will be automatically included in the first phase of the selection process for the next competition. At the appropriate time, the nominators of any such individuals will be given an opportunity to update their nomination package.

3.0 CONFERRING OF THE TITLE OF DISTINGUISHED UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR

The title shall be conferred by the Chancellor at Convocation.

4.0 THE COLLEGIUM OF DISTINGUISHED UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

All Distinguished University Professors at McMaster including those who have retired will constitute a collegium. The intent is to provide a forum that will enable Distinguished University Professors to raise the level of academic discourse within the institution, particularly amongst McMaster students. The collegium will be provided with funding each year by the Provost to offer a symposium on a topic having both academic and societal interest. It may also be called on from time to time to offer advice or support. The operation and effectiveness of the collegium will be assessed after 5 years of operation and its continuation will be at the discretion of the President upon the advice of the Provost and the Vice-President (Research).