

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE

GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSORSHIPS

I. Introduction

The University awards professorships to distinguished faculty members¹ whose accomplishments advance the reputation of the University as an outstanding research, teaching, and service institution. Professorships are used both to recognize current faculty members who have established national reputations in their disciplines and to attract distinguished scholars to the faculty.

The vast majority of professorships are awarded on a competitive basis to current faculty members. The tenure of such an award is three years; an incumbent may apply for subsequent terms. A limited number of professorships are awarded non-competitively to retain or recruit outstanding faculty members; these awards may be continued for so long as regular review every three years concludes that the incumbent demonstrates a continuing high level of performance judged against the criteria of these guidelines. In exceptional cases of distinguished achievements, a faculty member may hold more than one professorship simultaneously. The University has designated a few professorships as “Vermilion Professorships”; these professorships are reserved for faculty whose research, scholarship, or creative endeavors mark them as exceptional among their peers. Faculty members holding Endowed Chairs are not eligible for professorships.

A professorship award carries a supplementary stipend, the amount of which is determined annually based on the investment experience of the University’s endowment. The professorship stipend may therefore change during the term of an award. Vermilion Professorships carry a significantly larger stipend than other professorships. In certain cases, as determined by the Provost and approved by the Selection Committee, revenues produced by an endowed professorship may be used for a faculty member’s research or travel expenses or for graduate student support.

II. General Criteria

The recipient of a professorship must hold a full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty appointment or continuing senior research appointment. Professorships may be awarded to department heads or other academic or research administrators; however, department heads and other academic administrators who do apply for the awards are held to the same standards of evaluation as all other faculty applicants. In any case, the holder of a professorship who is appointed to such an administrative post may complete the term of the award.

A few professorships are established with specific selection criteria and expectations for their holders, such as exceptional teaching or contributions to a particular program, research center, or other constituent unit of the University. Except for such cases, professorships are awarded primarily on the basis of research and scholarship during the previous three years, with teaching, service, and other listed factors being important additional criteria.

¹ In some cases, professorships are available to distinguished senior researchers who are not faculty members. For those professorships, the term “faculty member” refers to these researchers as well.

Excellence in research and scholarship is evidenced primarily by publications: articles in strong refereed journals; conference proceedings of national scope; books or creative works by major publishers; exhibitions or performances at major venues; and other sorts of significant publications commonly recognized within the academic community. Externally funded research grants, especially those awarded competitively by federal agencies or major foundations, are taken as evidence of the merit of research activities. Screening and review committees will also consider factors such as outstanding effectiveness in teaching, in attracting students, and in supporting student success in learning and research; honors and awards from, and leadership positions in national or regional professional organizations; contributions to the University's economic development initiatives; and active University citizenship (not just membership on committees, but other substantial positive contributions to a department or college², or to the institution).

III. Linked Professorships

At the request of an academic dean, the University may approve the linkage of two otherwise distinct professorships for awarding in a given three-year period. The linked professorships would be awarded to faculty who meet a higher standard of performance established by a college and/or who are charged with overseeing a particular project of importance to the college, whether it be pedagogical, scholarly, or administrative. Annually in the Fall Semester, a college dean could request of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs to couple two available professorships and offer them together. The dean would have to explain in writing the specific criteria or performance expectations of the newly linked professorships. Faculty holding linked professorships would receive the stipends attached to the individual professorships that are combined.

The linked professorships would be offered for a three-year term. The linked professorships could be disaggregated at the end of the award period or before that if the faculty member holding the award gave up the dual award for any reason.

Should the dean and Provost decide to continue to link two professorships for another three-year term, that award would be open to competition among all eligible faculty members. The assessment of whether an incumbent would be eligible for re-awarding of linked professorships would be largely contingent upon his/her research productivity and accomplishment of the additional tasks and goals articulated in the guidelines.

Screening and Selection Committees for linked professorships should include the donors or donors' representatives from both of the two professorships being linked, if they want to participate.

IV. Vermilion Professorships

The University has designated several professorships as "Vermilion Professorships." These professorships—formed from aggregating three to five single professorships—are reserved for faculty whose research, scholarship, or creative endeavors are exceptional, even among professorship holders. The stipends awarded with Vermilion Professorships are significantly larger than those awarded standard

² Because of the nature of some professorships, the director of a center or institute will be involved instead of a dean. For those professorships, when this document refers to "dean" and "college", it shall mean instead "director" and "institute" or "center."

professorships. Vermilion Professorships may also provide funds supportive of research and creative endeavors, including, for example, hiring graduate assistants, traveling, and purchasing needed equipment.

V. Committees and General Procedures

For each professorship, a University-level Selection Committee reviews applications and makes a final recommendation to the President. The deliberations of the Selection Committee are informed by the recommendations of a college-level Screening Committee charged with determining which applicants are qualified and ranking the qualified candidates.

There are three situations in which a Screening Committee is not formed: 1) when, with the approval of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the professorship will be used to recruit a new faculty member, in which case the departmental search committee will substitute for the Screening Committee; 2) when a dean or department head or the director of a center or institute reporting directly to the Vice President for Research is an applicant; and 3) when the renewal of a non-competitively-awarded professorship is being considered.

VI. Applications

Unless the professorship being applied for specifies other requirements, an applicant for a professorship should send the following materials to the dean of the college with which the professorship is associated:

- A cover letter briefly summarizing the applicant's qualification for the award.
- A curriculum vita *focused on the last three to four years* that includes personal data; educational background; employment history; publications in complete bibliographic form (denoting journals that are refereed and providing acceptance rates or other indications or evidence of journal competitiveness where possible); honors; professional activities; funded research and other grants; economic development successes; and university and community service. Works in progress should be included if they have been accepted in final edited form and documentation to that effect is included with the application materials.
- Copies of publications from the last three years.
- Other documentation of professional activities that the applicant wishes to provide.
- Two letters of recommendation, one of which must be from outside the University. (An incumbent applying for renewal of a professorship need not submit a new outside letter of recommendation as one of the two required letters.)

VII. Screening Committee

A. Membership of Screening Committee for Single or Linked Professorships

The Screening Committee shall consist of:

1. The head/director of the relevant department/school;
2. The dean of the appropriate college, who will chair the committee;
3. A tenured faculty member appointed by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs from a list of at least two nominees submitted by the dean; and
4. The donor or the donor's representative, if that person chooses to participate; if the donor

elects not to participate, no proxy is required, though in all cases the dean must document contact with the donor.

The dean shall ensure that there exist no conflicts of interest between Screening Committee members and the professorship applicants.

B. Alternate Screening Committee Formation

If multiple professorships in a particular discipline are open for application in a given year, the dean may elect to form one Screening Committee to consider all applicants for those professorships. In this case, the membership of the Screening Committee should include the same academic representatives itemized in section “VI. A” above. Donors must still be contacted to determine if they desire to participate in the screening process, and their participation must be diligently solicited in cases in which they make that desire known.

If multiple professorships exist that admit applicants from various disciplines within a college, the dean may elect to form one Screening Committee to consider all candidates and professorships in aggregate. In this case, the Screening Committee should consist of at least two department heads and two to five faculty members, to ensure the broadest possible representation of the college’s departments and faculty. As always, donors must be allowed to participate in the screening process for their respective professorships if they wish.

Faculty appointees to these Screening Committees must be selected by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs from a list nominated by the dean.

C. Procedures

The Screening Committee shall use the following procedures.

1. The dean shall review the applications to ensure that applicants have submitted all required documents.
2. The dean shall contact the donor or the donor’s representative to determine the donor’s desired level of participation, if any. This step is not necessary when the donor has previously declined future participation.
3. The dean shall then call a meeting of the Screening Committee to review the applications, determine which candidates are qualified, and rank the qualified candidates.
4. The committee shall vote by secret ballot.
5. The dean shall communicate the recommendations of the committee in writing to the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development. That communication shall include
 - a list of all applicants with an indication of those the Screening Committee has deemed qualified for the professorship;
 - the committee’s ranking of the candidates deemed qualified;
 - application materials from all candidates;
 - the ballots (including any proxy votes); and
 - a copy of the minutes of the committee’s meeting(s).

The committee shall keep information regarding its proceedings and decisions confidential.

VIII. Selection Committee

A. Membership

1. The Selection Committee is responsible for making a final recommendation to the President regarding filling the professorship. The committee is composed of four permanent members and additional members related to the specific professorship to be filled. The four permanent members are
 - The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs;
 - The Vice President for Research;
 - The Dean of the Graduate School; and
 - The Director of Academic Planning and Faculty Development, who serves as Chair.

The Director of Research and Sponsored Programs serves as a non-voting ex-officio member of the Selection Committee.

2. For any given professorship the committee is also composed of the following members who have voting privileges, except where noted:
 - The relevant dean, though, when the pool of applicants includes a department head, the dean may not vote, and when the applicant is the dean, the dean does not serve as a member;
 - A faculty representative, generally a member of the University's Graduate Faculty, who is appointed by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs to the Screening Committee, or when there is no Screening Committee, to the Selection Committee; and
 - The donor or the donor's representative.

B. Procedures

1. When only one candidate has applied for a professorship and the Screening Committee has unanimously found that candidate to be qualified, the Selection Committee may recommend that person to the President using the following **expedited procedure**.
 - The Director of Academic Planning and Faculty Development (which office houses the full application materials of the candidate) shall send each permanent member of the Selection Committee a copy of the minutes of the Screening Committee meeting and the candidate's CV, along with a form giving each member the option of approving the candidate for recommendation, or requesting a full meeting of the Selection Committee.
 - If all four permanent members approve the recommendation, the Director of Academic Planning and Faculty Development shall forward that recommendation to the President with a copy to the relevant dean.

If one or more members request a full meeting of the committee, that fact shall be communicated to the dean. The dean and committee then shall follow the procedures for the regular selection process, specified below.

2. The **regular procedure** involves the Selection Committee meeting to consider the recommendation of the Screening Committee and making its recommendation to the President. The following are provisions and requirements related to the regular procedure.
 - The dean shall arrange for the Selection Committee meeting.
 - As part of scheduling the meeting, the dean shall contact the donor or the donor's

representative if that person has not previously declined future participation in the selection process.

- When a member of the Selection Committee is unable to attend, he or she may, under certain circumstances, submit a vote by written proxy before the meeting. Proxies are allowed from no more than one permanent member of the committee, from either the dean or the faculty representative (but not both), and/or from the donor. No more than two proxy votes may be submitted for the Selection Committee meeting to be held.
- The Selection Committee shall study and discuss the credentials of the candidate or candidates recommended by the Screening Committee.
- The committee shall vote on its recommendation by secret ballot. If there is more than one candidate being considered, the committee shall vote in the following manner. Each committee member, including the chair, may vote in favor of at most two candidates by assigning scores of “2” and “1” to indicate priorities, in that order. If a candidate’s score is greater than 1.5 times the number of members voting (including those voting by proxy), then that candidate shall be recommended by the committee. If necessary, the committee shall conduct a second round of voting, using the same procedure (except that there will be no votes by proxy) between the two candidates with the highest scores. If no candidate has been selected after the second round of voting, the committee shall recommend that none of the candidates be awarded the professorship.
- If there is only one candidate under consideration, each member shall vote “yes,” “no,” or “defer”; the candidate will be recommended if a majority of the votes are “yes.” A vote to “defer” indicates that the member would encourage the candidate to apply again in the future after increasing accomplishments.
- All committee deliberations shall be kept confidential, except that the dean of the college should inform the candidate(s) of the Selection Committee’s recommendation (but not the actual votes), with the understanding that final decisions are the prerogative of the President and are subject to the approval of the Board of Supervisors.
- The chair is responsible for the minutes of the meeting, which are kept in a file in the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development.
- After the Committee’s decision, the Director of Academic Planning and Faculty Development shall then forward the name and curriculum vita of the recommended candidate together with the minutes of the Selection Committee meeting to the President who will make the final recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. As soon as the President and the Board approve the nomination, the President’s Office shall notify the relevant dean and faculty member awarded the professorship.

IX. Calendar for Selection

The following calendar applies to professorships that are already in existence in the Fall Semester of any given year and that are available to be filled **competitively** effective the Fall Semester of the following academic year. The dean of a college with professorships that become available later in the year shall make alternate arrangements with the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development.

- A. By **January 13, 2012**, the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development shall inform each dean about the status of each professorship available in that dean’s college. Similar information shall also be provided to department heads.
- B. On or before **February 17, 2012**, each dean shall notify all eligible faculty members in the college of the professorships that will be available in the college effective the following academic year. Each

dean shall invite applications for available professorships. Such applications must be received by the dean's announced deadline.

- C. The dean shall constitute a Screening Committee, as described in Section V above, by **April 5, 2012**.
- D. The Screening Committee shall transmit its recommendations to the Selection Committee by **April 27, 2012**.
- E. The dean shall schedule a meeting of the Selection Committee to occur as soon as practical after the Screening Committee makes its recommendation, but no later than **June 1, 2012**. Failure to schedule the meeting by such date shall result in a year's delay in filling the professorship.

X. Responsibilities of the Professorship Holder and the University

- A. The awardee shall participate fully in the academic activities of the academic unit in which the professorship is awarded, with particular emphases on conducting research and producing results that enhance the national visibility of the University.
- B. The recipient of the award shall furnish the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development, donor, department head, and dean with an annual report of academic activities undertaken under the professorship. The Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development will keep copies of the annual report on file for a period of at least five years.
- C. The University shall be responsible for publicity that will bring recognition to the work being done by the professorship holder and to the contribution made by the donor.
- D. The awardee shall thank the donor(s) in writing for making the professorship available.

XI. Declaration of Vacancy

A professorship that was previously awarded shall be declared vacant under the following circumstances and according to the following standards.

- A. In the event of the incumbent's resignation, removal, or change from full-time to part-time faculty status, the professorship shall become vacant as of the effective date of the decision.
- B. In the event that the incumbent has had tenure denied or revoked, the professorship shall become vacant at the end of the following academic year or at its scheduled expiration date, should that occur earlier.
- C. In the event that a faculty member resigns from a professorship, the professorship shall become vacant as of the effective date of the resignation.
- D. In the event that the relevant dean determines that an incumbent has failed to fulfill professorship obligations, has not maintained a sufficient level of service and activity comparable to that presented for selection, or has had an extended illness (beyond one year), that person shall request that the President of the University reconvene the Selection Committee to hold appropriate hearings in order to determine the proper course of action relative to the continuance or termination of the professorship.

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