

**Notes from February 25 Meeting with Distinguished Professors Working Group
2-3pm 239 Tigert Hall (Provost's Conference Room)**

Distinguished Professors Working Group includes (meeting attendees in bold):
Barry Ache, **Kenneth Berns, Daniel Cantliffe, Hartmut Derendorf, Ben Dunn, Sheila Eyberg, Jimmy Jones,** Satya Kalra, **Michael Moseley, Ramachandran Nair, Vasudha Narayanan,** Neil Opdyke, Scott Powers, Mohan Raizada, **Sartaj Sahni, Pamela Soltis,** Walter Weyrauch, **and Robert Zieger.**

Distinguished Professors Working Group website is being developed. More information will be made available online soon.

The meeting was a follow-up to address issues raised by the University Academic Personnel Board (APB) and President Machen in the nomination and evaluation process for Distinguished Professors. The working Group received copies of the following documents:

- Notes on "Distinguished Professor" prepared by Angel Kwolek-Folland
- Appendix A Draft of Description of Distinguished Professor Title, Process and Eligibility
- Appendix B comparison of Procedures for Distinguished Professor title among other universities

The issues include:

- The process for awarding of the title of Distinguished Professor (DP) is currently a cumbersome process
- Review and award of the DP title is currently done by people some of whom are not themselves Distinguished Professors
- Narrowness of the nomination pipeline
- Relationship between Distinguished Professors, the university, departments and disciplines. Intellectual core is within the department/discipline, however there is also a university role for Distinguished Professors.
- Currently a diverse group of Distinguished Professors, which needs to be maintained.

Once this working group formulates suggestions, if any, to the current process for the awarding of the title, the suggestions will be brought before the Faculty Senate. This Working Group at this time is asked to focus on the process and provide suggestions.

General discussion amongst the working group included:

- How and when does the vetting come into play in the process of evaluation? Early vetting seems to be desired. Much time and energy in putting together the packets. Would be good to know early on if the endeavor is worthwhile. Vetting process at the university level was not effective in identifying which candidates would ultimately be selected, but vetting could take place at the college level, especially if guidelines were clearer. Distinguished Professors could help in the vetting process. Engineering has DPs look at the candidates at the college level to provide some internal college vetting. Noted that smaller colleges would not have many if any DPs to assist with this within the college; for that purpose, perhaps a group of DPs could vet.
- How does teaching fit into to the DP package? Teaching should be a mandatory part of the package, along with research and service. A candidate should be exceptional in research and distinguished in teaching and service.

- What role do outside letters play? Letters should play an important role. But at what point should the letters become part of the candidate's packet? At the departmental level? College level?
- Does a CV alone provide enough information to evaluate a candidate? It would be difficult as it does not include an evaluation of teaching abilities.
- What does it mean to be distinguished? Should try to keep the distinctions from becoming too rigid.
- Outside letters: Sensitivity to when outside letters are included in the process.
- Since the DP title is an award, should the DP title be taken out of the APB? Is the APB the appropriate group to provide the recommendation to the President? APB has advantage of just having looked at all the P&T files across the university and having a university-wide perspective. There are DPs on the APB.
- Guidelines and cues: To help clarify the process, it would be helpful to have a set of guidelines or cues established, perhaps in a matrix, to assist evaluators in picking up on the notable accomplishments and affiliations in the various disciplines.
- Some places use outside panels to review awards such as this.
- Faculty need to be educated on what the expectations are for being awarded the title. Chairs and deans must be more proactive in bringing forward qualified candidates.
- Look at what colleges on campus are not represented or perhaps underrepresented and see what can be done to correct any imbalance.
- Observed that a cap on the number of DPs awarded would not be helpful and might lead inadvertently to quotas.
- Look at the Engineering process as a model. At the college level, CVs are reviewed along with any votes held by the department. External letters are not yet included.

Specifics tasks for the working group:

- Make the DP process clearer and more explicit. Streamline the dossier (perhaps a modified version of the P&T dossier?). Provide guidelines for evaluation.
- Get input and feedback and more college interaction: how do the colleges handle this now? Create a set of "best practices"?
- Once clarified, make the information on the process more readily available to everyone.
- Urge chairs and deans to nominate qualified candidates.
- Encourage creation of standard questions to be included in letters that go to outside evaluators, and that could also guide internal evaluation.
- Create smaller working group tasked with developing a set of guidelines and creating a matrix of professional cues.