

UNC School of Medicine

Guidelines for the Nomination, Selection and Announcement of Named Distinguished Professorships

Overview

The designation of a named distinguished professorship is the process by which a faculty member is awarded an honorary title with additional salary stipend and research funds either through retirement or for a fixed period of time, depending on the funding source. In the School of Medicine, both tenured faculty and full-time fixed-term clinical faculty may also be awarded Distinguished Professorships. Distinguished Professorships for clinical fixed term faculty are awarded for a specified term, through the Distinguished Professors Endowment Trust Fund Program.

Nominations are reviewed by the Dean's Advisory Committee (DAC), the University's Health Sciences Advisory Committee (HSAC), and the Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure (APT) Committee. Conferral of this honor requires approval by the Board of Trustees. Upon approval of the Board of Trustees, the Office of the Provost issues the appointment or reappointment letter for Distinguished Professorships and Distinguished Term Professorships to the faculty member, the department chair or center director, the dean, and the School of Medicine Human Resources Office.

Nomination

As named professorships bring honor and prestige to the holder and the department or center, the nomination letter should reflect both the individual's accomplishments that merit this recognition and also the future impact of his or her continued work to further the department or center's mission. This letter should include: specific areas of excellence upon which the appointment is being based (i.e., research, clinical scholarship, educational scholarship); the specific contributions made by the individual to the teaching mission of the School; and, if the individual is a new faculty member, a description of the ways he or she will enhance the department or center's strengths. See the template for the nomination letter below.

Implementing Permanent and Term Distinguished Professorships

The title, "Distinguished Professor", when awarded to an active tenured faculty member, becomes the faculty member's primary rank and is conferred for the duration of the tenured appointment. A "Distinguished Term Professor" holds that title and appointment for a specified period of time with an assigned end date (normally through the end of a current fixed-term faculty appointment end date).

Distinguished Term Professorships are awarded for a specific period of time and should be reflected on the faculty member's record as the primary rank during the term of that appointment. The Distinguished Term Professorship rank will have a beginning and ending date equal to the term of a new appointment, or a current begin date with an existing contract end date for appointment during an existing term appointment.

Procedure Checklist

1. The Department Chair or Center Director should first review the professorship gift agreement and approved state professorship plan to ensure no restrictions exist that would conflict with the potential appointment.
2. The Department Chair or Center Director verifies with the department or center business manager for School of Medicine funds or the Vice President for Finance for Medical Foundation funds, if the fund will have sufficient endowment income to cover the expected award. Note that if the fund is “under water” (the market value is less than the original donor contribution value), no income will be generated and the department or center should have identified an alternative source of funding for the recipient until the fund is “above water.” Business managers should contact the Vice President for Finance at the Medical Foundation regarding underwater status or if they have questions.
3. The Department or Center should follow its own procedures for recommending current faculty to named professorships, including applicable committee reviews, or if the named professorship is to be filled by an individual outside of the University, the department or center should follow the procedures for hiring tenure-track or fixed term faculty as directed by the School of Medicine Human Resources Office, including the applicable committee reviews and recommendations.
4. Once the candidate has been identified, the Chair or Center Director should work with their department or center HR Facilitator to complete the required HR forms. The EPA faculty representative in the School of Medicine Human Resources Office can advise regarding questions and the necessary HR procedures and forms required. Contact the EPA Personnel Manager, or the EPA Faculty/Non-Faculty Coordinator.
 - * Letter of Justification from Dept Chair/Center Director/Dean
 - * AP-2
 - * Curriculum vitae
 - * EPAWeb Job Change Action
 - * Committee Report (if applicable)
5. Once all forms and documents are complete, the originals should be sent to the EPA Faculty/Non-Faculty Coordinator in the School of Medicine Human Resources Office. The Coordinator routes the materials to the Dean’s Advisory Committee for their review and recommendation. The Coordinator then prepares and delivers the application to the Provost’s Office for review by the Health Sciences Advisory Committee (HSAC).
6. After the application is reviewed by the HSAC, the paperwork is then submitted to the APT Committee.
7. The APT Committee reviews and submits the application to the Board of Trustees for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for the final step in the approval process. The Board of Trustees votes on the professorship.
8. The Board of Trustee’s approval is communicated by letter from the Office of the Provost to the faculty member, the department chair or center director, the dean, and the School of Medicine Human Resources Office.

9. The HR Facilitator of the department or center will then generate an action in the system to change the rank/title to accommodate the professorship rank in effect once approved; they also attach the Provost's letter to the action.

Timeline

The Dean's Advisory Committee meets monthly and the Board of Trustees meets every other month. The calendar for the Provost Office, HSAC, APT, and BOT is located at the following website: <http://faculty personnel.unc.edu/faculty-policies-procedures/faculty-appointments/forms-and-templates/index.htm> and the earliest effective date for a professorship is the first day after the BOT meets. Depending on meeting dates, a typical timeline once candidate was identified might be:

DAC Cmte – April 12th
Provost Office – May 2nd
HSAC Cmte – May 20th
APT – June 6th
BOT – June 23rd
Effective date would be June 24th or later

Notification

Once the nomination has been formally approved by the University Board of Trustees, the Department or Center should utilize available communications to notify department or center members of the appointment.

Additionally, the notification should be sent to the Office of Public Affairs & Marketing to publicize on the main School of Medicine website.

Contacts

For questions on Named/Distinguished Professorships, appointments and other human resources issues, contact the School of Medicine Human Resources Office – Mike Mathews, EPA Personnel Manager or Angie Schmidt, EPA Personnel Coordinator.

For questions on established School of Medicine professorships – contact Dr. Amelia Drake, Executive Associate Dean for Academic Programs.

For questions on the Dean's Advisory Committee – contact Leeanne Walker, JD, Director of Compliance & Research Integrity and Operations Liaison to Executive Dean.

For questions on fund balances of endowed professorship funds – contact department business manager (for School of Medicine funds) or Betty Whichard, Vice President for Finance of the Medical Foundation.

Template for Nomination Letter

Date

William L. Roper, M.D., M.P.H.
Dean, UNC School of Medicine
CEO, UNC Health Care
School of Medicine Administration
CB# 7000
4030 Bondurant Hall
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-7000

Dear Bill:

I would like to formally nominate Dr. X to receive the "Name of Distinguished Professorship" in the Department/Center of _____. (This professorship was established through gifts from Mr. and Mrs. Kind Donor, and will be submitted to receive a match by the Distinguished Professors Endowment Trust Fund program (OR has received a matching grant from the DPETFP or was established in ____). (We are appreciative that this Professorship will enable us to retain one of our most productive physician/scientist/teachers). We have dedicated this Professorship to our efforts to recruit an outstanding faculty member of Dr. X's significant accomplishments and national reputation as an outstanding investigator in the field of X.

Dr. X is an internationally recognized researcher in ____ (accomplishments, clinical trials, awards/grants). He/She has published over X papers, reviews or chapters on his/her very important research on _____. Dr. X serves on these relevant committees (leadership positions on). Dr. X is an outstanding teacher and mentor to our students. He/she has garnered praise for his/her expert care to our patients and clinical scholarship at the School of Medicine and X Hospital. Dr. X is an excellent choice to hold this prestigious professorship.

Dr. X currently serves as Director of ____ and Co-Director of _____. He/She earned his/her undergraduate degree from X and medical degree from X. He/She was a resident at X in X in Year, and then joined the UNC faculty, where he/she has become a national leader and exemplary scholar for our institution. Retention of Dr. X is essential to our research and patient care in X, and vitally important to the area of X. (or Recruitment...)

I believe Dr. X is a highly meritorious candidate for receipt of the "Named Distinguished Professorship and I appreciate your consideration of this request. Upon discussion with _____ (tenured faculty members), Dr. X (depending on the number of votes) (1) was supported, strongly supported, or received unanimous support). Please let me know if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

Chair, Department, etc. or
Director, Center, etc.

Enclosure