

## 1. GENERAL

- 1.01 Appointment to a Distinguished Professorship is a special honor conferred upon active faculty in recognition of an extended period of service marked by unusual and exemplary contributions to the University community. These contributions may take the form of teaching, research, service, or a combination of these contributions.
- 1.02 The designations and titles discussed in this academic policy statement are not entitlements. The designation is not a next step of promotion in the faculty ranks beginning with assistant professor and ending with professor.
- 1.03 Upon the recommendation of the Provost and Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs (hereinafter Provost), the President may bestow the title of Distinguished Professor on a very select number of tenured faculty members.
- 1.04 The title of Distinguished Professor shall be retained for the remainder of the holder's tenure at Sam Houston State University. Upon retirement from the University, the holder will be designated Distinguished Professor Emeritus.

## 2. ELIGIBILITY

Any Sam Houston State University faculty member who holds the rank of professor and has been in this rank for at least five (5) years is eligible for a Distinguished Professorship.

## 3. CRITERIA

To be considered for the title of Distinguished Professor, the faculty member must have compiled an outstanding record of performance in teaching, research, and service, with widely recognized, sustained achievements in at least one of these areas. Examples of qualifying accomplishments include multiple teaching awards, exemplary stewardship of an academic program, an outstanding research record, exceptional service to students, the University, or the community, or other endeavors that mark an exceptional contribution.

#### 4. DURATION

Consistent with the Texas State University System (TSUS) policy, honorary titles are intended to be held in perpetuity. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in APS 860425, conferring any such title does not create a property right or entitlement in the holder, and revocation thereof is subject to TSUS Rules and Regulations.

#### 5. THE DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Distinguished Professor Review Committee is appointed by the President from nominations submitted by the Provost; the committee reports to the Provost. The Distinguished Professor Review Committee assesses the credentials of candidates for Distinguished Professor and makes the appropriate recommendations. The committee consists of at least three (3) TSUS Regents' Professors and at least three (3) Distinguished Professors. In the event that three (3) Regents' Professors and three (3) Distinguished Professors are not available to serve on the committee, members of the faculty holding the rank of professor with at least five (5) years in rank may be asked to serve. It is preferable that all colleges be represented on the committee. The Distinguished Professor Review Committee must be chaired by a TSUS Regents' Professor.

#### 6. REVIEW TIMETABLE AND PROCEDURES

- 6.01 Any tenured or tenure-track faculty member (including the department chair) may nominate another faculty member for a Distinguished Professorship. Self-nominations are not permitted. The nomination must be presented in writing to the appropriate department/school chair or director by the third Monday in October.
- 6.02 The department/school chair or director reviews the nomination to determine the nominee's eligibility (as described in Section 2) and informs the nominee about the nomination within 24 hours.
- 6.03 Any nominee, after consulting with the chair or director, shall, by the third Monday in November, compile a dossier. The dossier should include but not be limited to the following materials, in the sequence specified here (a–d). Note that

the nominee does not provide the letters of endorsement referenced in 6.03 d (i–v):

- a. A comprehensive professional curriculum vitae (maximum 50 pages).
- b. A statement of reasons for presenting the nomination, written by the departmental nominee and clearly referenced to the evaluative criteria as listed in Section 3 above (maximum ten [10] pages). Optionally, appropriate supporting data and documentation (maximum of an additional ten [10] pages) may be appended to the statement. (These optional appended materials could include, for instance, evidence of significant national or international awards or external funding; appointments for membership to scholarly societies or editorial boards; invitations to give keynote addresses in major conferences; recognitions for extensive service by professional organizations; major teaching awards; etc.). The maximum number of pages for the statement and the optional appendix is twenty (20) pages.
- c. Five to ten (5–10) samples of the nominee’s most important professional publications (articles or book chapters; for books, only a copy of the cover, title page, and copyright page should be provided). At least two (2) of these sample publications should be recent.
- d. Letters of endorsement:
  - i. Nomination and supporting letters from colleagues or DPTAC members (minimum three [3] letters, maximum five [5]) (will be added by department chair in negotiations with the nominee).
  - ii. A list of names and contact information, provided by the nominee, for five (5) potential external reviewers; these letters will be solicited later by the committee if the nominee’s candidacy is considered further. If the nominee’s candidacy is considered further, the distinguished professor review committee chair will ask the nominee’s department chair/director to provide five (5) additional names for external reviewers. At least one (1) external letter should come from the nominee’s list and at least one (1) from the department chair’s/director’s list.
  - iii. A summary letter from the nominee’s DPTAC chair, addressed to the nominee’s department/school chair or director. This letter will include the

DPTAC's vote count for the nomination (will be added at the departmental level if the departmental screening committee recommends the nominee).

- iv. A letter from the department/school chair or director (will be added at the departmental level if the departmental screening committee recommends the nominee).
- v. A letter from the dean (or administrative equivalent) (will be added after the dossier has been forwarded to the college-level evaluation).

The documentation specified in Section 6.03 a–d must be submitted in electronic form as one document (e.g., a combined reduced-size pdf).

- 6.04 All tenured faculty members of the nominee's academic unit, led by the unit's DPTAC chair, will serve as the initial departmental screening committee for the nomination. Once the dossier outlined in Section 6.03 is completed (except for the letters of endorsement that will be added later), the department/school chair/director forwards it to the departmental screening committee, and the committee reviews it based on the criteria in Section 3 above. The screening committee has until the fourth Monday in November to complete this task.
- 6.05 No later than the fourth Monday in November, the departmental screening committee, led by the DPTAC chair, will meet and conduct a vote by secret ballot either to support the nominee's recommendation or not to support the nomination. After the meeting, the DPTAC chair will provide the department/school chair/director with a written summary of the departmental screening committee's recommendation, including the vote total (Section 6.03 d iii).
- 6.06 If the nominee receives a negative recommendation from the departmental screening committee, there will be no further consideration of the nomination, and the nominee will be notified of this by the department/school chair/director, by the first Monday in December. The department/school chair/director will forward any positive recommendation of the departmental screening committee, along with a letter supporting or opposing the nomination and the dossier to the appropriate college dean, no later than the second Monday in December.
- 6.07 If the recommendation of the dean is negative, there will be no further consideration of the nomination. The dean's office will notify the candidate of

this outcome. The dean will forward all positive recommendations, along with a letter of support from the dean, to the Provost no later than the third Monday in January.

- 6.08 The Provost will forward the electronic file to the Distinguished Professor Review Committee by the fourth Monday in January.
- 6.09 By the second Monday in April, the Distinguished Professor Review Committee will forward its recommendation to the Provost.
- 6.10 The Provost will evaluate and forward all nominations and review materials, along with a written recommendation, to the President. The President makes the final determination regarding whether or not to bestow the title of Distinguished Professor upon the nominee(s).

APPROVED: <signed>  
Alisa White, Ph.D., President

DATED: 12/18/2025

### **CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

This academic policy statement (APS) has been approved by the reviewer listed below and represents SHSU's Division of Academic Affairs' policy from the date of this document until superseded.

Original: April 25, 1986  
Reviewer: Academic Affairs Council

Review Cycle: Five years\*  
Review Date: Fall 2030

Approved: <signed>  
Sumanth Yenduri, Ph.D.,  
Provost and Sr. Vice President  
for Academic Affairs

Date: 12/10/2025

\*Effective January 2018, Academic Policy Statements will be reviewed on a rotating 5-year schedule. To transition to a distributed review load, some policies may be reviewed prior to the 5-year timeframe, with subsequent reviews transitioning to the 5-year schedule.