



The State University
of New York

Office of the Chancellor

State University Plaza
Albany, New York 12246

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June 12, 2019

Dr. Gwen Kay
President, University Faculty Senate
State University Plaza
Albany, New York 12246

Dear Gwen:

Thank you for your letter sharing resolutions adopted at the University Faculty Senate (UFS) Winter Plenary in Cobleskill. I was glad to be able to join you in person and always appreciate your feedback on the presentations made by System staff. My responses to the two adopted resolutions follow:

- **181-01-01; Resolution to Change Length of Service for Distinguished Professorships**

This resolution calls for an amendment to the years of service required at the nominating institution before an individual professor or librarian would be eligible for any of the Distinguished Ranks. In the case of the Distinguished Professor, the resolution proposes *adding* two years of service at the nominating institution for a total of three years. For Distinguished Service Professors, Distinguished Teaching Professors and Distinguished Librarians, the resolution proposed *reducing* the years of service at the nominating institution from ten to three years.

My thanks go out to the Awards Committee for their service and recommendations here. As you know, I am eager to see more of our faculty recognized for their outstanding achievements and for the Distinguished Academy to grow and become an ever-more vibrant part of our System.

Consistent with the category descriptions excerpted here from the *Distinguished Ranks Policies and Procedures (2017-18 and 2018-19)*, it is clear that Distinguished Service, Distinguished Teaching and Distinguished Librarian all place specific emphasis on the individual's contributions to the awarding campus:

- A Distinguished Librarian is expected to have made contributions to their campus and SUNY System, the community, the state or nation.
- A Distinguished Teaching Professor is expected to have demonstrated outstanding teaching over multiple years at the institution where the professorship is bestowed.
- A Distinguished Service Professor is expected to have a distinguished reputation for service at the issuing institution and the SUNY System, and the community or State of New York or the nation.

After careful consideration, I agree to a reduction in the years required at the nominating institution from ten to three years and will ensure that this is appropriately phased into the program guidelines.

Regarding the service requirements for Distinguished Professorship service, I again turn to the description:

- A Distinguished Professor is expected to have achieved national or international prominence and a distinguished reputation within their chosen field through significant contributions to research, scholarship and/or creative works.

The above description, which I support, recognizes that this level of achievement necessarily extends well beyond an individual institution.

As you know, we have previously considered UFS's advice to lengthen the period of required service for Distinguished Professors; we have already conferred with our presidents and provosts, and I have once again conferred with Provost Laursen. Together, we agree: SUNY must put itself in the most competitive position possible in order to recruit and retain outstanding research scholars, consistent with our research and diversity goals.

As a result, I am opposed to adding additional years of campus service for Distinguished Professor candidates.

- **181-03-01: New Deal for SUNY and CUNY**

I appreciate the work of the UFS to keep its members informed of key SUNY and CUNY legislative and budget priorities and the manner in which you encourage individual faculty to have their voices heard.

My thanks to you for your continued leadership and service.

Sincerely,



Kristina M. Johnson, PhD
Chancellor

Cc: Tod Laursen, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor