

2024-2025 UNIVERSITY DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR (UDP) NOMINATION GUIDELINES:

I. Selection Process Annual Timeline

May 2024	Deans will circulate to all faculty a document outlining college procedures to be used in selecting UDP nominees
May-September 2024	Candidate selection proceeds within the colleges and schools
September 2024	The Faculty Affairs office requests that deans formalize nomination proceedings within their college
October 2024	The Awards Selection Committee members are nominated by the Executive Committee of the Distinguished Professors and approved by the Provost.
November 17, 2024	Deans submit their nominations to the selection committee through Faculty Affairs. Deans must seek the advice and include a written evaluation from a body representing UDPs of the nominee's college/school; UDPs external to the college may participate as needed in candidate evaluation. See specific dossier requirements and procedures which follow.
End of January 2025	The UDP Awards Selection Committee evaluates the candidates and makes its recommendations to the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and the Provost.
February 2025	Faculty Affairs announces UDP award recipients.
Spring 2025	University Distinguished Professor installation ceremony.
September 2025	University Distinguished Professor honor for new awardees becomes effective. Disbursement for UDP bursary/discretionary funds are transferred.

II. Entitlements

- A. Award recipients will be named *University Distinguished Professors* but will also keep their current titles and ranks; i.e., *Professor of 'Academic Department.'*
- B. The UDP honorific title is bestowed in perpetuity, including in retirement, so long as the faculty member remains in good standing.
- C. University Distinguished Professors receive an annual bursary/discretionary fund of \$5,000 for five years. The first distribution will occur in September. There is no time limit for expenditure of the bursary/discretionary funds so long as the recipient is employed by Texas A&M University. Any balance remaining in the account five years after a retirement or departure from Texas A&M will revert to Faculty Affairs.
- D. University Distinguished Professors are eligible for one month of summer salary for any two of the first three years after receiving your honor. Faculty Affairs will fund the second year after

appointment, with the college of the recipient funding either the first or third year. This request will need to be made to Faculty Affairs in the spring semester prior to the summer for which you are requesting funding. Access to this support is available after September 1st, following the announcement of University Distinguished Professor status being awarded.

- E. As a supplement to an existing Texas A&M University, College Station parking permit, a 1AM parking tag is provided.

Qualification & Eligibility Criteria

- A. Only tenured full professors active at Texas A&M University for a minimum of one year are eligible for nomination and consideration for the title of University Distinguished Professor.
- B. To be eligible for the title of University Distinguished Professor, the candidate will have made one or more original or transformational contributions that are widely recognized to have significantly advanced or redirected scholarship and had notable impact in the relevant field. **Transformational** implies that the work was a substantial intellectual leap forward, rather than an incremental extension of existing knowledge.
- C. The impact of the candidate's contribution should have resulted in the candidate being recognized as a pre-eminent authority in their field. At a minimum the nominee shall be considered in the top 2% of their peers in the relevant field.
- D. UDP level accomplishments are likely to be exemplified by major national and international awards. When citing awards, indicate the level of the award and the stature of the granting organization or entity. For example, "This is the highest technical award granted by the ACME Professional Society". It is recognized that individuals with unique career paths, or fields with few or no awards, may provide other indicators of intellectual leadership and/or recognition within their field.
- E. Candidates must be recognized by peer statements to be among the most pre-eminent active individuals worldwide in their area of research or scholarship. A minimum of seven (7) letters of evaluation from leaders in the field are required. Letters may be written by distinguished researchers from academia, national labs, research institutes, industry, or similar entities. At the minimum, three (3) letters must be from non-US references. The letters shall confirm that candidates meet the meritorious standards set forth above and must strongly endorse the University Distinguished Professor designation.
- F. Candidates may hold administrative assignments, but administrative competency will not be evaluated as a basis for qualification.
- G. The following, in themselves, are insufficient to qualify for the University Distinguished Professor designation:
 - a. A substantial and sustained record of high-quality research productivity.
 - b. Testing, applying and/or implementing original work done by others.
- H. University Distinguished Professor nominees are typically excellent teachers, mentors, and involved in service to the country, their profession, and the university, but these meritorious contributions will not be considered and should not be included in the nomination dossier.

III. College Nomination Process for Candidate Selection

The process of candidate selection within each college or school shall have as a minimum the following features.

- A. Nominations of candidates to their respective dean for consideration may be originated by one or more of the following:
 - 1. Department or unit head
 - 2. Distinguished Professors within the college
 - 3. Department or college awards committee
 - 4. By petition from three or more faculty
- B. All nominations will be submitted through the head of the department or unit of the nominee. The head of the department or unit shall forward the nomination to the dean with an independent evaluation of the candidate.
- C. Final selection of one or more candidates as the nominees of a college is the sole prerogative and decision of the dean.
- D. Each candidate shall be evaluated by a representative group of University Distinguished Professors as described in **Section V, Item 5**.

IV. Dossier Organization, Preparation, and Submission

- A. Fill out a [Dossier Cover Sheet](#) for University Distinguished Professor Nomination. The Dossier Cover Sheet can be found on the Faculty Affairs website.
- B. The nomination dossier *pdf* should include all of the material, including a Dossier Cover Sheet for Nomination for University Distinguished Professor, and all the items on the checklist for the Dossier Cover Sheet. Please do not scan incomplete files.
- C. Supporting materials, such as copies of articles should not be included in the electronic copy.
- D. Submit an electronic copy ([PDF format on the required template](#)) to awardsprograms@tamu.edu by the designated deadline.

DOSSIER ITEMS

Item 1. Nominator's Statement on Quality and Impact of the Candidate as a Scholar

University Distinguished Professor nominations are the sole prerogative of the deans of colleges or schools. Each nomination must include a letter of affirmation and support from the nominee's dean. If the dean is the nominator, the dean's affirmation and the nomination statement may be combined in one document.

The nomination should convey in a concise way that the nominee:

- A. Is considered pre-eminent in their field. At a minimum, the candidate must be among the top 2% of active research peers in their area of research, creative work, or scholarship on an international level.
- B. Has made at least one well-documented transformational contribution (i.e. the work caused an intellectual leap forward in the discipline rather than an incremental extension of existing knowledge).
- C. Has had a major impact in their field (i.e., their work is central in any narrative of the field, and they are widely recognized to have redirected scholarship in the field).

The dean shall include a statement of the metrics of excellence that apply to the discipline of the nominee. How and by what criteria is the person in the nominee's area judged excellent by his/her peers?

Item 2. The Candidate's Complete Curriculum Vitae

- A. Refereed publications (or other types of creative works) should be listed separately from those that were not refereed, and the lists captioned accordingly.
- B. Complete documentation should be provided for each citation, including a date of publication and inclusive page numbers.
- C. Items that have been accepted but not yet published should be so labeled. Items that have been submitted, but not yet accepted, should not be shown unless they appear in a separately captioned list.
- D. It is strongly encouraged that if any coauthors are the candidate's graduate students (past or present), they are delineated in such a manner that this relationship is discernible.
- E. Amounts of funded research, where relevant as evidence of research performance, should be specified along with the role of the candidate in the project (e.g., principal investigator, co-principal investigator, etc.)
- F. List any major invited presentations and major awards received. For awards, include a brief description of the award stature, selectivity, and process for receipt of such an award.

Item 3. Candidate Transformational Contribution Lay Summary

- A. The candidate should provide a 250 word lay summary of the transformational contribution(s) they have made. Importantly this should be in the candidate's own words.

Item 4. Outside Reviewer Letters

Please carefully review the [external letter solicitation request](#) on the Faculty Affairs website. Nominating units should ensure that all elements noted in the sample letter are requested and gathered for the nomination file.

- A. The nominee may provide a list of individuals who might be solicited for recommendations.
- B. There should be a minimum of seven (7) outside reviews in the dossier at least three of which must be from non-US sources.
- C. Letters should be written by distinguished researchers from academia, national labs, research institutes, or industry, in the nominee's field of investigation. The credentials and qualifications of the outside reviewers should be discussed briefly in the Nominator's Statement on Quality and Impact of the Candidate as a Scholar.
- D. Academic reviewers should be individuals at universities of high repute, similarly ranked and distinguished scholars in the field of the candidate (or a closely related field). The preference is for letters from scholars who would be qualified to hold the same rank and distinction as the candidate if they were at Texas A&M.
- E. The external letters should specifically address the criteria set forth in Section III above.
- F. Each letter must specifically identify and discuss one or more original or transformational contributions of the nominee and the impact of those contributions.
- G. Copies of written requests made for outside reviews must be included in this section of the dossier. The letter should also include the following statement:

Your letter will be kept confidential; however, under Texas law your letter may be relinquished through an open records request.
- H. Letters written in support of a University Distinguished Professor nomination may be used for up to three contiguous selection cycles.

Item 5. College-Level Faculty Review (University Distinguished Professors)

Deans must seek the advice and a written evaluation from a body representing all University Distinguished Professors of the nominee's college. At least three University Distinguished Professors should evaluate a nominee. Those colleges with an insufficient number of active University Distinguished Professors should solicit University Distinguished Professors from other colleges to assist in evaluating nominees. The Distinguished Professor Executive Committee (ECPD) can assist with these evaluations. Deans may contact the Chair of the ECPD for assistance, if needed.

V. Submission of Biographical Materials

Please submit the following, to be used for the UDP award announcement, to awardsprograms@tamu.edu.

- A. Biographical Paragraph. A 250-word paragraph in Word format on each of the candidates being considered for recommendation for University Distinguished Professor. The paragraph should include the following information, in this order:
 1. Name
 2. Terminal degree, year, and institution
 3. Year they joined the Texas A&M faculty
 4. Area(s) of specialty
 5. Description of their transformational contribution to the scholarship in the candidate's field ("bragging points")
 6. Any notable honors or awards received
- B. Digital Photograph. For best results, the photograph should be a head or upper body shot in which the head is 1" high. Digital photos should be of high quality with a minimum of 300 dpi.

VI. UDP Award Selection Committee

- A. Constitution of the committee
 - a. The University Distinguished Professor Award Selection Committee is composed of nine University Distinguished Professors serving staggered three-year terms. The members of the award committee must be from a diverse set of colleges/schools. A member must not be reappointed for three years after their term is completed. The Executive Committee of Distinguished Professors will solicit volunteers from the full body of distinguished professors via an email sent by September 15th with responses due by October 1st and will nominate three members for the awards committee, subject to approval by the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs. The Provost may select alternative members if deemed necessary.
 - b. Deans of colleges and schools will be informed of the number of nominations allowed. The University Distinguished Professor Award Selection Committee will only consider that number of nominations.
 - c. The number of University Distinguished Professor awards shall not exceed **eight (8)** per year. The Award Selection Committee shall only select qualified candidates and may recommend any number from zero to eight individuals.
 - d. The sole criteria for selection shall be widely recognized and documented preeminence for transformational, impactful contributions, in a field of endeavor.