

# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

December 16, 2024

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Deans, Directors and Chairpersons  
University Distinguished Professors, Named/Endowed Professors  
and Chairs

**FROM:** Thomas D. Jeitschko, Ph.D.  
Interim Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

**SUBJECT:** University Distinguished Professor Nominations

Nominations are invited for individuals to be designated as Michigan State University Distinguished Professors (UDP). Important UDP eligibility criteria include: candidates must be a member of the MSU faculty, hold the rank of full professor with tenure, and must have a record of distinguished achievements in teaching, research, and public service. While first consideration is given to other nominees, individuals currently holding named professorships or chairs are eligible to apply for the UDP designation as long as they have completed five years of service at MSU at the time of application deadline (Wednesday, April 2, 2025).

College-level nominations may be made and should be vetted per college procedures set for awards, which may include peer review. In addition to college-level nominations, each current named professor and University Distinguished Professor may submit nominations independently to the Office of the Provost. Nominations submitted directly to the Office of the Provost by a named professor or University Distinguished professor will be submitted to the appropriate college(s) for comment and returned to the Office of the Provost in a timely fashion for referral to the standing Advisory Committee to the Provost. The standing Advisory Committee provides advice on UDP nominations and makes recommendations to the Provost for transmittal to the President. The Committee is appointed by the Provost and is composed of four faculty members and three deans.



### OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

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University Distinguished Professor nominations will be reviewed for misconduct and violations of University policy to ensure alignment with the [University's Mission and Values](#) prior to being advanced for committee review. UDP designation is subject to MSU's [Revocation of Honors and Awards Policy](#).

Up to ten faculty members will be selected as University Distinguished Professors from the group of nominees. Nominations must be submitted **no later than 5:00 pm, Wednesday, April 2, 2025**. Please send completed PDF nominations to Katie Rundblad at [rundblad@msu.edu](mailto:rundblad@msu.edu). Questions may be directed to Marilyn Amey, Assistant Provost for Faculty and Academic Staff Development, ([amey@msu.edu](mailto:amey@msu.edu)) or Katie Rundblad ([rundblad@msu.edu](mailto:rundblad@msu.edu)).

The list of faculty members recommended by the selection committee for this designation will be submitted for approval to the Board of Trustees at the June 2025 meeting. A reception to recognize the faculty members selected for UDP will be held in fall 2025.

This memorandum, and the information below are available on [the Office of the Provost honorifics webpage](#).

## University Distinguished Professor

The title University Distinguished Professor will be conferred on selected members of the Michigan State University faculty to recognize distinguished achievement in teaching, research, and public service.\* A University Distinguished Professorship will be held for the remainder of the recipient's active service at Michigan State University; the title University Distinguished Professor Emeritum can be conferred, consistent with the [Emeritum Policy](#). Individuals holding a University Distinguished Professorship will receive, in addition to salary, an average stipend of five thousand dollars for five years to support professional activities. Assignments for University Distinguished Professors will be arranged with the dean, chairperson/director, and the Provost. The designation will be highly honorific and consequently very exclusive. Membership in this category will reflect the diverse scholarly dimensions of Michigan State University.

### Criteria for Selecting University Distinguished Professors

In general, University Distinguished Professors will have been recognized nationally and usually internationally for the importance of their scholarly achievements. They will also have demonstrated the breadth of interest characteristically encompassed by the traditional role of professor as teacher and public servant. In addition, they will have brought distinction to Michigan State University as a result of their activities.

Specifically, a University Distinguished Professor will have achieved a record judged by peers to be superior and outstanding in preferably all but in at least two of the following areas: superior teaching skills of recognized breadth and depth in their discipline; scholarly, creative, and artistic achievements; and a distinguished record of public service exemplified by the application of scholarship and/or creative and artistic endeavors in addressing the needs of one or more external publics.

University Distinguished Professors will have already achieved an outstanding record comparable to that of scholars awarded named professorships at MSU and elsewhere. That record will have been recognized by the University at previous opportunities where merit is rewarded—such as salary increases.

University Distinguished Professorships will be conferred on members of the Michigan State University faculty whose achievement has already been recognized by the University with the rank of full professor; the title is not to be used for recruitment purposes.

### Selection Process

University Distinguished Professorships will be awarded by the Board of Trustees upon recommendation of the Provost and President. A committee of faculty and deans will advise these officers.

- A. From time to time the Provost will request nominations for University Distinguished Professorships from members of the faculty, deans, directors, and chairpersons. Nominations may be submitted and reviewed at any time.
- B. Written nominations will be submitted to the Provost. Any supporting materials which are *recycled* (whether submitted for internal or external awards) should be updated according to the explicitly addressed University Distinguished Professor criteria above. The strong preference of the review committee is to receive support documents clearly linked to University Distinguished Professor selection; failure to do so will likely impact the nominee's candidacy.

- C. A standing advisory committee of four faculty members and three deans, appointed by the Provost and serving four-year terms on a staggered basis, will review nominations and make recommendations to the Provost for transmittal to the President. Nominations for committee members will be obtained from both the University Committee on Academic Governance and the Council of Deans. Committee members must be tenured professors who have outstanding records of teaching, research, and/or outreach and engagement and are committed to the multi-dimensional concept of excellence valued by Michigan State University. The selection of the committee's membership must ensure the inclusion of women and minorities.

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\*It is expected that in time, as a result of Development Fund efforts, endowment support will be obtained for many University Distinguished Professorships resulting in the addition of a name to the title.

APPROVED

Faculty Council 4/11/89

Academic Council 5/16/89

Board of Trustees 6/9/89