

Distinguished University Professorships

Effective Date: June 27, 2024

Supersedes: June 28, 2022; May 6, 2004

Objective: To honour and celebrate outstanding scholarly careers at Western by conferring on a select group of the best scholars the title of “Distinguished University Professor”.

Program: Award includes:

- Honorary title of “Distinguished University Professor” while employed at Western. This will change to “Distinguished University Professor Emeritus” at retirement from Western.
- A one-time award of \$20,000 to be used for scholarly activities at any time.
- A citation presented at an appropriate occasion.
- The Distinguished University Professor will be asked to use the title in official documents, including papers, business cards and similar venues.
- The total number of ‘active’ Distinguished University Professorships at any given time is capped at 3% of the full-time probationary, tenured or continuing status faculty members at Western.

Rationale: The University is served well by recognizing the most outstanding members of their community. This award will recognize sustained excellence in scholarship over a substantial career at Western, as well as contributions to service to the community.

Scholarship is broadly defined to include research and teaching but cannot exclude either. Thus, this is not a recognition solely of research excellence, which is the purpose of the Western Research Excellence Awards and the Hellmuth Prize, nor is it a recognition solely of teaching excellence, which is the purpose of the Edward G. Pleva Award for Excellence in Teaching. The Distinguished University Professorship recognizes sustained excellence as a complete scholar and fulfills the commitment in the 2001 University Strategic Plan “Making Choices” to develop a program of recognition for faculty.

Process:

- There will be an annual nomination and selection cycle.
- A Distinguished University Professor Selection Committee will be created. This committee will consist of the following members:
 - The Provost or designate,
 - The Vice-President (Research) or designate,
 - One senior scholar from another research-intensive university or institution, appointed by the Provost,
 - Four senior scholars at Western, elected by Senate.
- The Selection Committee will be chaired by the Provost or designate. Members will be appointed for two-year terms (once renewable) commencing July 1.
- The Selection Committee will make recommendations to the President based on the criteria:
 - Outstanding and sustained record of scholarship that has had international impact in the field and that identifies the individual as a leader, and
 - A sustained record of excellence in teaching of undergraduates and/or supervision of graduate students and training of highly qualified personnel, and
 - A demonstrated history of service to the University and the research community in general through serving on committees, participating in governance and contributing to peer review at the local, provincial, national or international level, and
 - A demonstrated ongoing commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in their scholarship, teaching and/or service.

Restrictions:

- To ensure excellence in these select awards
- The selection criteria must be strict.
 - All nominations may be rejected in any given year.
 - The total number of active Distinguished University Professors may be less than 3%.
 - Awards can be made to other award holders – including Canada Research Chairs, Western Research Excellence Awards, Hellmuth Prize Winners, Edward G. Pleva Award for Excellence in Teaching Winners, Industrial Chairs, Endowed Chairs and named Professors.

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- Decisions will be made without consideration of the relative distribution of the Distinguished University Professors across the disciplinary units of the University.

Impact:

Awards of Distinguished University Professors will

- Reinforce a culture of recognizing and celebrating excellence.
- Celebrate the achievements of individuals who balance their scholarly activities while managing to be excellent at each activity.
- Promote the spirit of participation in all activities of importance to the function of a healthy, research-intensive University.
- Provide a vehicle for demonstrating the success of Western's faculty internally and externally.

Note: These awards are available for Constituent University Faculty.