University of Toronto Distinguished Professor Awards

1. Background and Rationale

The University of Toronto competes for new faculty and the retention of current faculty in an international academic marketplace in which some universities, particularly those with large endowments within the US, provide particularly strong competition. Often successful recruitment depends on a number of factors beyond the salary offered, including the quality of graduate students, the level of intellectual leadership and excitement in the department undertaking the recruitment, as well as the visible "prestige" attached to a position. In order to allow us to compete for the best scholars with peer institutions on an international basis, Companion Paper 4 on Faculty support and renewal in Stepping Up recommended that the University develop a program of Faculty Professorships (in addition to the current University Professors program) to attract and retain faculty. Approximately 15-20% of faculty members in the best U.S. public research universities hold named Chairs or Professorships.

A further factor which has the potential to impact on our recruitment and retention efforts stems from the national re-allocation of Canada Research Chairs. As a result of this, the University has had to reduce its current allocation of CRCs by 11 chairs with effect from 31st December 2008. Some of this reduction may be achieved through attrition - i.e. by giving up unfilled CRCs, but additional reductions have to be realized through terminating current CRCs or not allowing current incumbents to be nominated for renewal. This may present a significant retention issue for some faculties. At the present time it is likely that future reductions in the University's CRC allocation may be required.

Although the University currently has the ability to recognize exceptional scholarly achievement and pre-eminence in a particular field of knowledge through the designation of University Professor, under the Policy and Procedures on Academic Appointments, the number of these appointments is limited to two per cent of the tenured faculty. In order to address the issues of recruitment and retention of outstanding faculty, it is proposed that the University will establish a new program of distinguished professor awards.

2. Purpose of the Program

The purpose of the program is to advance and recognize individuals with highly distinguished accomplishments and those who display exceptional promise, who maintain an extraordinary level of activity in their research and scholarly work and have achieved pre-eminence in their field in line with the University's stated objectives and emerging priorities. It will assist faculties to retain key individuals working in areas of strategic importance. The program is open to those holding a tenured or tenure-track position at the University of Toronto. Exceptionally, the awards may be granted to new recruits. The number of Distinguished Professor Awards will be limited to no more than three
3. **Nomenclature**

The generic name for these awards will be the University of Toronto Distinguished Professor Awards, however, individual faculties and departments will be able to propose a title for the award, and may wish to recognise distinguished alumni or past faculty members in so doing. For example, the Department of English may wish to name the award as the Northrop Frye Distinguished Professor.

4. **Conditions of eligibility**

Nominees for the Distinguished Professor Awards will hold a tenured or tenure-track position at the University of Toronto. The award will be held for a 5 year term and incumbents may be re-nominated on one occasion by their faculty one year before the end of their term. Applications for renewal will be carefully evaluated in terms of the award holder's achievements over the previous term of the award.

Faculty members who hold a Canada Research Chair, an Endowed Chair or named Professorship are not eligible for these awards.

5. **Approval for the Awards**

Faculties may apply to create an award and then nominate individuals who meet the criteria for a Distinguished Professor Award. Nominations will be considered by a small committee convened by the Vice-President and Provost. The committee will meet to consider nominations from divisions on an ad-hoc basis in order to be responsive to divisional requests.

6. **Level of Support for the Awards**

Faculties will be responsible for providing the funding to support those successfully nominated for the awards. It is anticipated that this would include a stipend comparable to other chair holders in the university, however, divisions may wish to provide an additional research support allowance to holders of awards at their own discretion.

Teaching, research and administrative duties of holders of distinguished professor awards will be established by their unit head. It is expected that all faculty at the University maintain involvement in each of these three areas.
Appendix A: University of Toronto Distinguished Professor Awards
Process for Nomination

Process

Deans will make a request to the Vice-President and Provost to create one or more Distinguished Professor Awards in their Division. The reason for creating the award, the source of funds to support the award, and the process to be taken in identifying a nominee should be indicated. A response will normally be made available within 48 hours of receipt.

If the request is approved the Dean will then submit a formal nomination for the award through the Office of the Vice-President and Provost. Nominations should address the following criteria:

- integration with the Faculty's overall academic plan
- excellence of the candidate

The nomination file should include:

- A curriculum vitae
- A 500-750 word biography written in plain language highlighting the nominee's education, career history, key achievements and awards
- An outline of the nominee's scholarly achievements and the scholarly research activities to be undertaken during the term of the distinguished professor award
- A description of the nominee's contribution to teaching
- The proposed title for the award if the candidate is successful if not the generic title

The nominations will normally be reviewed within two weeks of receipt.