

*University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee*

**ACADEMIC STAFF DISTINGUISHED PREFIX  
POLICY AND PROCEDURES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE**

**I. DEFINITIONS**

***Distinguished prefix is defined as follows in Unclassified Personnel Guideline 1:***

A Professional, Instructional or Research Academic Staff member with a Distinguished prefix performs at a level of proficiency typically requiring extensive experience and advanced knowledge and skills. The expertise of an Academic Staff member at this level is commonly recognized by her/his peers and through a reputation which extends beyond her/his work unit.

A Distinguished Academic Staff member is expected to develop new approaches, methods or techniques to resolve or prevent problems with little or no expert guidance and to cope independently with new, unexpected or complex situations. At this level, an Academic Staff member can be expected to guide or train other Academic Staff or to oversee their work. Currently, only Academic Staff in the Professional title series and selected Academic Staff in the Instructional and Research title series are eligible for the Distinguished prefix.

***A work unit is defined as follows:***

All University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Departments, Centers, Programs, or department-like bodies within a School, College, or Division.

(AS Doc 117, 11/2018)

***Peer recognition is defined as follows:***

Peers are defined as "colleagues" on campus or within the UW System, and other higher education institutions. An employee may be recognized for excellence, achievement, or exceptional skill by colleagues within the institution. "Peer recognition" may include a reputation of excellence in a profession that is recognized by individuals or groups in the same profession normally found or organized outside the institution.

***Employment promotion is defined as follows:***

Change in status from probationary to indefinite or promotion/change in prefix within a title series.

(AS Doc 117, 11/2018)

**BACKGROUND**

- Promotion to the rank of Distinguished is reserved for a small number of Academic Staff (typically at the senior level or top level of their title series) whose accomplishments are evidenced by widespread peer recognition.
- Candidates for the Distinguished prefix are expected to have at least ten years of increasing responsibility during their employment at UWM.
- *Attainment of the Distinguished prefix is not the end-result of normal career progression.* Neither seniority nor longevity is sufficient for award of this designation.
- Candidates will be evaluated using the criteria described in Section II "Qualifications."

- Although the candidate may initiate the application process, it does not preclude the immediate supervisor and/or Dean/Division Head from suggesting that a prospective candidate initiate the procedure.
- The candidate has the right to withdraw from the process at any point during the review.

## II. QUALIFICATIONS

It is expected that candidates for the Distinguished prefix will be outstanding compared to their peers in areas such as: teaching, research, clinical activities, outreach, service and administration. These areas are intended to be suggestive rather than definitive, and applications should include any relevant activities (see Appendix). The candidate must also have consistently demonstrated exceptional performance both inside and outside of their work unit.

**Provide documentation of your extensive experience and advanced knowledge and skills. Include any and all of the following items that may be applicable, but is not limited to:**

- Receiving outstanding performance evaluations, since your most recent employment promotion.
- Serving in leadership positions within the candidate's field and its professional organizations that can influence the direction of the profession and the organization.
- Promoting activities that expand the scope and sphere of influence of UWM and sharing the expertise of UWM faculty and staff with citizens of the world.
- Developing innovative methods, techniques, or professional skills that are recognized or applied beyond the work unit.
- A record of obtaining intramural or extramural grants.
- Serving as a consultant for professional organizations, agencies, or other constituencies beyond the work unit.
- Receiving an award for excellence in the field.
- Service to the University (e.g., advising student organizations, training others, chairing cross-campus committees).
- Providing expert advice or testimony in field of expertise.
- Being invited to moderate or participate in workshops, meetings, or collaborative projects outside the work unit.
- Serving as an author of or a reviewer for scholarly or professional publications.
- Serving as a reviewer for granting organizations.
- Community engagement (e.g., serving on local boards, charity work, volunteering, working with public and private organizations).
- Service to a professional organization.

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## III. APPLICATION

Before a candidate begins to assemble documentation, it is recommended that the candidate initiate a discussion with the supervisor regarding support for attaining the Distinguished prefix.

### 1. Format

The following materials are to be provided as a single electronic PDF file. The file must include the following sections in order, and pages must be numbered sequentially. You will

be expected to explain the reason for any missing documentation in Section 7.

Section 1	Cover letter from supervisor(s)
Section 2	Job description
Section 3	Resume or curriculum vitae
Section 4	All evaluation materials since your most recent employment promotion
Section 5	Personal statement
Section 6	Letters of recommendation
Section 7	Explanation of omission of materials
Section 8	Additional materials

(AS Doc 117, 11/2018)

## 2. Section Requirements

**Section 1:** A cover letter from the candidate's supervisor(s) or departmental chair(s), including an indication of the vote of the Executive Committee or equivalent, if applicable. The letter must describe the candidate's distinctive capabilities, performance, and contributions, including contributions to the department, unit, or program.

**Section 2:** All official job descriptions, including the nature and scope of the duties and responsibilities, since your most recent employment promotion.

**Section 3:** A detailed resume or curriculum vitae indicating background and experience, including your most recent employment promotion.

**Section 4:** All evaluation materials since your most recent employment promotion. This should include self, supervisor, and peer evaluations.

**Section 5:** In addition to the other items included in this file, provide a personal statement that includes evidence of excellence inside and outside of your work unit and describe your professional goals. Think about what sets you apart from your peers, what shows distinguished level of commitment to the university and highlights your role as an ambassador to the community. Where do you see yourself going forward? How can you impact your environment/area? Limit your statement to no more than five pages.

**Section 6:** Between four and six letters of recommendation from diverse perspectives that can highlight the candidate's breadth and depth of commitment to UWM and the candidate's impact on the community. Describe and attest to candidate's talents and evaluate the candidate's performance. Letters should address the quality and productivity of the candidate, highlighting how the candidate is outstanding compared to peers. Letters may be supplied by the candidate or solicited by the supervisor. The candidate should not submit letters written by a member of the Distinguished Prefix Review Committee (DPRC).

**Section 7:** An explanation of the omission of any materials or information from this application.

**Section 8:** Any additional material the candidate believes will be helpful in the evaluation process, including, but not limited to, unsolicited communications from clients, patients, students, colleagues, peers, community members, or outside organizations.

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## IV. APPLICATION SUBMISSION

1. The candidate's supervisor forwards the completed nomination file to the unit personnel representative with a copy to the Dean/Division Head. Consult your Dean/Division Head to determine if hard copy is also required .
2. The unit personnel representative writes a cover letter and submits the complete file electronically to the Secretary of the University.
3. The Secretary of the University forwards the file electronically to the members of the DPRC and notifies the candidate the file has been sent.

(AS Doc 117, 11/2018)

## V. REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Distinguished Prefix Review Committee (DPRC) consists of seven members who have either served on a review committee for indefinite status or have been granted the Distinguished prefix. The committee shall be appointed by the Chancellor or designee upon recommendations made by the Academic Staff Committee.

## VI. REVIEW PROCEDURE

1. The DPRC reviews the file and determines if the candidate meets the criteria and makes a recommendation to the Dean/Division Head. The committee reserves the right to request more information if needed.
  - a. If the DPRC determines the file is incomplete, it will notify the candidate and the candidate's supervisor. The candidate will then have the opportunity to amend and resubmit the file for reconsideration.
  - b. Reconsideration of an amended incomplete file must be requested within ten working days of notice and the candidate must provide additional information to the DPRC. If no request is received in that time period, a negative recommendation shall be forwarded immediately to the Dean/Division Head. The employee would have the opportunity to submit a new file at a later date.
2. The Dean/Division Head will accept or reject the DPRC's recommendation within 20 working days of receipt and will notify the candidate in writing, with copies to the candidate's supervisor, the unit personnel representative, Secretary of the University, and the Chair of the DPRC.
  - a. If the Dean/Division Head **accepts** the DPRC's recommendation **to award** the Distinguished prefix, **the candidate receives it**. The Dean/Division Head will notify the candidate in writing, with copies to the candidate's supervisor, unit personnel representative, Secretary of the University, the Chancellor, and the Chair of the DPRC.
  - b. If the Dean/Division Head **rejects** the DPRC's recommendation **to award** the Distinguished prefix, **the candidate does not receive it**. The Dean/Division Head will notify the candidate in writing, which must include the rationale for the rejection of the DPRC's recommendation. Copies must be sent to the candidate's supervisor, unit personnel representative, Secretary of the University, the Chancellor, and the Chair of the DPRC.
  - c. If the Dean/Division Head **accepts** the DPRC's recommendation **not to award** the Distinguished prefix, **the candidate does not receive it**. The Dean/Division Head shall

notify the candidate in writing of the reasons for the decision. Copies must be sent to the candidate's supervisor, unit personnel representative, Secretary of the University, the Chancellor, and the Chair of the DPRC.

- d. If the Dean/Division Head **rejects** the DPRC's recommendation **not to award** the Distinguished prefix, **the candidate receives it**. The Dean/Division Head will notify the candidate in writing, which must include the rationale for the rejection of the DPRC's recommendation. Copies must be sent to the candidate's supervisor, unit personnel representative, Secretary of the University, the Chancellor, and the Chair of the DPRC.

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## **VII. REPORTING**

The chair of the DPRC shall provide an annual report to the Chancellor, Academic Staff Committee, and Secretary of the University. The report will include the number of initial requests, the number of nominees reviewed, the Committee's recommendations and the number of Distinguished prefixes awarded.

## ACADEMIC STAFF DISTINGUISHED PREFIX

### APPENDIX

#### Examples of Outstanding Experience and Advanced Knowledge

##### Examples that may be specific to administration/student services:

- Leadership in state, regional, national, or international projects, committees, or organizations
- Promoting administrative excellence within the department, division, or across campus
- Demonstrating the ability to consistently exceed the expectations of faculty, staff, and students with innovative service delivery
- Developing new administrative processes that are recognized or used beyond the work unit
- Developing new or creative collaborative programs (e.g., innovative efforts for underrepresented students, initiatives to improve the student experience)

##### Examples that may be specific to outreach/professional services:

- Gaining recognition of outstanding performance by colleagues or other members of the public
- Presenting at national or international meetings
- Contributing expertise that affects policy
- Serving as an editor for a professional publication
- Juried awards or other award from a professional association or outside organization

##### Examples that may be specific to teaching:

- Receiving outstanding teaching evaluations
- Writing articles, developing teaching materials or other tools that are recognized or used beyond the work unit
- Developing and teaching interdisciplinary, innovative course options
- Receiving teaching awards
- Providing extraordinary training and guidance to graduate assistants

##### Examples that may be specific to research:

- A strong record of receiving and managing exceptional, externally funded research programs
- Major management responsibility in a larger research project
- A significant publishing record in peer-recognized periodicals
- Major contributions to other disseminated materials and media
- Developing innovative research methods, techniques, or professional skills that are recognized or applied beyond the work unit
- Presenting at national or international meetings