



# Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters

American Association of University Professors • American Federation of Teachers

**Rutgers AAUP-AFT**

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September 13, 2013

Dr. Ann Gould, Chair  
University Senate  
Professor, Department of Plant Biology & Pathology  
School of Biological and Environmental Sciences

Dear Professor Gould,

The Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters, AFT, requests that the Senate consider the following charge:

**Review of the Criteria for Promotion to Distinguished Professor and Its Impact on Faculty: Is the University, in evaluating faculty for promotion to Distinguished Professor, applying standards and/or criteria different from those previously applied to Professor II considerations?**

Background:

The University's November 24, 2009, "Review of the Promotion to Professor II, Report on Promotions" prepared by the Committee on Academic Planning and Review (attachment A) informed the University's decision to change the "Professor II" title to "Distinguished Professor". This change became effective July 1, 2013. The committee recommended, in part, that "guidelines be developed so that faculty and administrators have a sense of the level of achievement expected in order to be designated a Distinguished Professor." The committee also provided a "sample list of markers of distinction, based on interviews with the current and former members of the Promotion Review Committee" and noted that these were "not intended to be comprehensive, and no specific number of items on the list is intended to be either necessary or sufficient for awarding the title of Distinguished Professor." The Committee also noted that, "Dissemination of guidelines containing information such as that given above [the list of "markers of distinction"] would be helpful because it reveals to potential candidates some of the criteria used in the selection process and therefore may reduce the number of faculty who expect to be considered, but fail to receive, the title Distinguished Professor."

Richard Edwards, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, noted in an email message dated May 3, 2013, that, "The criteria for promotion to Distinguished Professor and the salary increase association [sic] with such a promotion will remain the same as currently for promotion to the rank of Professor II." (attachment B) In a Letter of Agreement with the AAUP-AFT, it was agreed that, "The standards and criteria applicable for promotion to this new title shall remain the same as promotion to Professor II." (attachment C)

continued

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The AAUP-AFT learned in April of this year that the Promotion Review Committee had, in at least three considerations for promotion to Professor II, denied candidacies on the basis that, "Dr. [X's] record does not reflect the major awards or elected honors that would indicate the level of impact or international recognition in his field expected for promotion at this level."<sup>1</sup> This raises, in our view, a question of whether the University has, without appropriate notice to faculty, changed standards or application of criteria in the assessment of promotion to the Distinguished Professor title.

Criteria for promotion are not negotiable subjects under New Jersey Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) Law. Therefore, the AAUP-AFT requests that the Senate take up this charge and explore whether, in fact, the University has or intends to apply different or elevated criteria and standards to the Distinguished Professor title that haven't been fully considered and/or disseminated to the faculty and, if so, the impact such a change has or will have on the University and its faculty.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa C. Klein, President  
Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters, AFT

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<sup>1</sup> This exact language appeared in the PRC's memorandum to each of the candidates and served as the primary explanation or criterion for denial of the promotions. An example is attached as "D".