BYLAWS OF THE
DISTINGUISHED PROFESSORS COMMITTEE
NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

As Approved by the Committee, 13 December 2007

With Amendment approved by the committee, 9 April 2012

With Amendment approved by the committee 6, February 2014

With Amendment approved by the committee 17, April 2014

With Amendment approved by the committee 24, March 2016

I. MEMBERSHIP
The active membership consists of all NJIT faculty holding the rank of Distinguished Professor, exclusive of the President and Provost. Only active members may vote or participate in committee discussions. This provision is not meant to exclude non-voting participation by invited guests.

II. ADMINISTRATION
A. The Chair
   1. Role of the Chair. The Chair of the Committee is responsible for administering the Committee, including appointing subcommittees, setting meetings and agendas, and communicating with the Provost and President on behalf of the Committee.
   2. Term of the Chair. The term of the Chair shall be one year, beginning on 1 September.
   3. Selection of the Chair. The Chair for the following year shall normally be the Vice Chair for the current year. In any case the person serving as the new Chair shall be determined at the last meeting each spring. The most senior member of the Committee who has never served as Chair before and who is not on leave during the designated year of service shall be the Chair. In the event that two or more individuals who are not on leave have the same level of seniority, the order shall be determined by a random selection procedure. In the event that every member of the Committee has already served once as Chair, the sequence shall begin over again.
   4. Emergency Succession. If the Chair of the Committee cannot perform the duties of the office, either at a particular meeting or for a longer period, the Vice Chair shall assume the duties of Chair of the Committee.

B. The Vice Chair
   1. Role of the Vice Chair. The Vice Chair of the Committee assists the Chair in the administration of the Committee. The Vice Chair also replaces the Chair in the event that the latter cannot perform the duties of the office. The Vice Chair normally succeeds the Chair at the end of the Chair’s term of office.
   2. Term of the Vice Chair. The term of the Vice Chair shall be one year, beginning on 1 September.
3. Selection of the Vice Chair. The Vice Chair for the following year shall be determined at the last meeting each spring. The second most senior member of the Committee who has never served as Vice Chair before and who is not on leave during the designated year of service shall be the Vice Chair. In the event that two or more individuals who are not on leave have the same level of seniority, the order shall be determined by a random selection procedure. In the event that every member of the Committee has already served once as Vice Chair, the sequence shall begin over again.

4. Emergency Succession. If the Vice Chair becomes Chair before the end of his/her regular term, a new Vice Chair shall be selected in the same manner as described above.

C. The Committee Administrator

1. Duties of the Committee Administrator. The Committee Administrator shall assist the Chair in administering the Committee.

2. Selection of the Committee Administrator. The Committee Administrator shall be appointed by the Provost to provide administrative support to the Committee.

3. Temporary Replacement of the Committee Administrator. If the Committee Administrator is unable to attend a meeting or perform other duties, the Chair of the Committee shall either arrange for a temporary replacement with the Provost or provide one from the Chair’s own department. This person would be designated as the Acting Secretary.

III. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

A. Frequency of Meetings. The committee normally holds three meetings in the fall and two meetings in the spring, but additional meetings may be called as necessary.

B. Quorum. The quorum for such meetings is a majority of the voting membership of the Committee, exclusive of those on leave and those who have not attended any meetings in the previous two academic years. However, members of the Committee who are on leave or have not attended any meetings in the previous two academic years may attend meetings and take part fully in the Committee’s business, including voting, if they wish to do so.


D. Voting. Only members of the Committee who are present when votes are taken can vote on matters relating to the evaluation of nominees for promotion to Distinguished Professor (sections IV.A.2.c and IV.A.3.b below) and amendments to the bylaws (section VI.B below). At the discretion of the Chair, proxy, mail, or electronic voting (including email) may be used for voting on other business.

E. Secret Ballot. At the request of any voting member, a vote shall be taken by secret ballot during such meetings.

F. Agenda. The agenda at meetings shall be set by the Chair and circulated among the members in advance of each meeting by the Committee Administrator.

G. Minutes. Minutes shall be taken at every meeting by the Committee Administrator or the Acting Secretary. After consulting with the Chair, the Committee Administrator will distribute the minutes to all members of the committee (including those on leave) in a timely fashion.

IV. FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

A. Evaluation of Nominees for Distinguished Professor

1. Criteria for Promotion to Distinguished Professor.
a. At all levels of deliberation by members of the Committee, the ultimate criteria for promotion to the rank of Distinguished Professor shall be defined by section III.D. of the NJIT Faculty Handbook:

“III.D. Distinguished Professor. This position is intended for individuals with terminal degrees in their fields who have achieved such a record of extraordinary accomplishment in teaching and in scholarly research as to mark them as preeminent leaders in their area of academic specialization. Their work is known and respected throughout the international academic community.”

[Note: All references to the NJIT Faculty Handbook in these bylaws are to the November 2006 edition. In the event of alterations to the Faculty Handbook after that time, all references in these bylaws will automatically be changed to conform to the latest edition.]

b. In order to determine whether the credentials of nominees meet the criteria stated in section III.D. of the Faculty Handbook, the Committee will conduct a two-stage evaluation process.

1. Stage I consists of a Subcommittee report and recommendation, general discussion by the entire Committee, and a vote by the entire Committee on whether or not to advance the nomination to Stage II of the process. The credentials under review at this stage are the quantity and quality of a nominee’s academic accomplishments, based on factors such as publications, citations, research and teaching awards and distinctions, and grants. In order to receive positive action at this stage, the record of accomplishments in these areas must be judged “extraordinary” in the sense of (a) exceeding significantly the standard level of achievement for a full professor at NJIT; (b) equaling or exceeding the standard level of achievement for a comparable rank at other research universities; and (c) demonstrating preeminent leadership and international respect in the nominee’s area(s) of academic specialization.

2. Stage II consists of consideration by the full Committee of reference letters received from external experts in a nominee’s area(s) of academic specialization, followed by a final vote on whether or not to recommend the candidate to the President for promotion to the rank of Distinguished Professor. In deliberations at this stage, the criteria remain the same as in Stage I, but the credentials under consideration are focused on the reference letters.

2. Stage I of the Evaluation Process

a. Formation of Subcommittees. At the first Committee meeting in the Fall semester after the deadline for submission of nominations for promotion to Distinguished Professor, the Committee Chair shall appoint Subcommittees to conduct preliminary evaluations of the nominees.

1. Each Subcommittee shall normally consist of three members of the Committee and be charged with the evaluation of a single nominee.

2. No more than one member of a Subcommittee shall be a Committee member with a primary appointment in the same academic department as the nominee.
(3) At least one member of each Subcommittee shall be a member of the Committee whose primary appointment is in a college other than that of the nominee.

(4) If an individual has been nominated by a member of the Committee, the nominator may not be a member of the Subcommittee charged with reviewing the credentials of that individual. Such a Subcommittee may, however, consult with the nominator if its members wish to do so.

(5) The Chair of the Committee shall appoint one member of each Subcommittee to serve as its Chair.

(6) No member of the Committee shall normally serve on more than one Subcommittee each year.

b. Procedures of Subcommittees

(1) Subcommittees must carefully consider the quantity and quality of a nominee’s publications, citations, honors and distinctions, grants, and other appropriate credentials.

(2) It is the responsibility of the Chair of each Subcommittee to arrange for the Subcommittee to meet and to assign specific tasks to the Subcommittee members, if appropriate.

(3) At a designated meeting of the Committee in the Fall semester, the Chair of each Subcommittee shall present its report, along with its recommendation on whether or not to advance a nomination to Stage II. The report and recommendation should be supported with evidence based on the candidate’s credentials, according to the criteria defined in section III.D. of the Faculty Handbook. The Subcommittee Chair shall report the numbers of the Subcommittee vote for and against the recommendation, and all members of the Subcommittee shall be given an opportunity to explain their support or opposition.

c. Preliminary Vote of the Committee. Following each Subcommittee’s report and recommendation, and full debate by the Committee, the Committee shall vote on whether or not to proceed with the nomination in question. If the vote is negative, consideration of the nomination is ended for the current academic year. If the vote is positive or tied, the nomination moves to Stage II.

3. Stage II of the Evaluation Process

a. Reference letters. Each Subcommittee shall determine the names and addresses of appropriate individuals to serve as references for any nominee who has received a majority of the votes or a tie in the preliminary vote.

(1) The Chair of the Subcommittee shall ask the nominee to provide the names, addresses, and qualifications of 8–12 people in the nominee’s field(s) of academic specialization.

(2) The Subcommittee shall determine the names, addresses, and qualifications of 8-12 people in the nominee’s field(s) of academic specialization who are not on the nominee’s own list.

(3) In consultation with the other members of the Subcommittee, the Chair of the Subcommittee shall formulate a final list of twelve individuals (usually six from the nominee’s list and six from the Subcommittee’s list), to be solicited for reference letters by the Committee Chair, on behalf of the Committee.
(4) Care shall be taken to include a number of referees who have academic rank above the level of full professor, as well as a number of referees whose main academic affiliation is outside the United States.

(5) If one or more individuals decline to write reference letters, their actions and their justifications for them shall become part of the record. Other names from one of the lists should then be substituted, as appropriate, in an effort to receive a total of twelve reference letters.

(6) The solicitation of reference letters should be carried out as soon as possible after the vote to proceed to Stage II.

b. Discussion and Final Vote

(1) The Committee Administrator shall collect and copy the reference letters and distribute them to all Committee members as soon as possible after receiving them.

(2) At the designated meeting of the Committee in the Spring semester, each Subcommittee Chair (or the Subcommittee member in charge of arranging for the reference letters, if it is not the Subcommittee Chair) shall briefly report on the reference letters, followed by discussion.

(3) Discussion at this stage should focus on the following question:

Do the reference letters demonstrate that nominees have attained “such a record of extraordinary accomplishment in teaching and in scholarly research as to mark them as preeminent leaders in their area of academic specialization,” whose “work is known and respected throughout the international academic community” (Faculty Handbook, III.D.).

(4) After discussion, the Committee shall hold a final vote on whether or not to recommend each nominee to the President for promotion to the rank of Distinguished Professor.

(5) After this stage of the process has been completed, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee shall send a letter to the President reporting the results of the Committee’s deliberations on all nominees.

4. Exceptions to This Process

a. For faculty and administrators currently employed at NJIT, the only exception to the evaluation process stated above concerns administrators holding the rank of full professor who are nominated for promotion to Distinguished Professor by the President of the university. In such cases, the procedure defined in Section IV.A.4.b.(2) shall be followed.

b. Distinguished Professor at the Time of Appointment

(1) Faculty (non-administrative) positions

(a) The chair of the hiring department shall provide the Distinguished Professors Committee with

1. a written recommendation that details the reasons for making this appointment at the rank of Distinguished Professor and indicates whether the recommendation has the support of the department promotion and tenure committee

2. all relevant materials from the candidate’s application, such as c.v., publications, letters of recommendation, teaching credentials, and lists of article citations.
(b) At a timely meeting of the Distinguished Professors Committee, and after due deliberation, the Committee will decide among the following options:

1. Recommend for appointment at the rank of Distinguished Professor
2. Recommend against appointment at the rank of Distinguished Professor
3. Request additional materials (after which a new vote will be taken)

(2) Administrative positions at the rank of Dean or above
   (a) The Provost (or the President, in the event that the current Provost is the candidate) shall provide the Distinguished Professors Committee with
      1. a written statement that details the reasons for making this appointment at the rank of Distinguished Professor
      2. all relevant materials from the candidate’s application, such as c.v., publications, letters of recommendation, teaching credentials, and lists of article citations
   (b) At a timely meeting of the Distinguished Professors Committee, and after due deliberation, the Committee will decide among the following options:
      1. Recommend for appointment at the rank of Distinguished Professor
      2. Indicate that the Committee has no objection to an appointment at the rank of Distinguished Professor
      3. Recommend against appointment at the rank of Distinguished Professor
      4. Request additional materials (after which a new vote will be taken)

B. University Service
   1. The Distinguished Professors Committee shall determine ways to participate in the life of the university community. Although the specific forms of such participation may vary from year to year, the focus will always be on encouraging and maintaining the highest standards of excellence in research and teaching at NJIT.
   2. The Chair shall appoint a standing Committee on University Service to consider issues related to university service and to recommend appropriate action on such issues by the Committee.

V. CONFIDENTIALITY
   A. The deliberations of the Committee are confidential. Under no circumstances shall members of the Committee divulge to anyone outside the Committee any information about the composition of Subcommittees or the nature of their deliberations and recommendations, the results of voting by a Subcommittee or the Committee as a whole, or comments made by members of the Committee. This rule also applies to each Committee member’s own actions and comments in the Committee.

VI. APPROVAL AND AMENDMENT OF COMMITTEE BYLAWS
   A. Approval of these bylaws shall be by a two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Committee.
   B. Any proposed amendment to these bylaws must be circulated in writing to the voting membership of the Committee (including those on leave) at least ten working days before
the first Committee meeting at which the amendment is to be considered. Approval of amendments to these bylaws requires two-thirds-of the-votes cast at a duly constituted meeting of the committee.