

SPP COMMITTEE REPORT
November 21, 2008

This report represents a general consensus of the Committee members. There was not unanimous agreement on any aspect. Those on the Committee were Henry V. Baker, Anthony B. Brennan, David A. Denslow, Jr., Steve M. Dorman, Kathleen Ann Long, Susan S. Percival, Pierre Ramond and K. Ramesh Reddy.

This report was prepared by Kathleen Ann Long with input from the committee members.

With regard to the Committee's charge, we have answered the two questions as follows.

#1 Is the program a valuable tool to reward senior faculty for outstanding achievement?

A clear majority of the committee members indicate "yes." **The Committee members (with one exception) strongly recommend its continuation.** The SPP program is seen as an important mechanisms to reward and provide incentive for full professors, and thus to ensure progress toward the University's goals. The historical context of the program was discussed, including that it was originally designed to mirror the California University model.

#2 Should the process by which people are considered for the award be "tweaked"?

Yes, and the following recommendations are offered for consideration: (These are not in priority order.)

A. Overall the procedures need to be clarified and more consistently and clearly communicated. Currently there are a few different "versions" of the procedure "out there" and some misunderstandings among faculty members.

In particular, clarify that EACH level of review: college P&T committee, chair and dean can endorse or not endorse an applicant. However, only those packets recommended by the dean will be considered by the APB for an SPP Award.

Clarify that full professors may apply AFTER seven years IN RANK. The SPP review occurs in the eighth year, and, if awarded, the SPP actually begins in the ninth year. Suggested wording is: SPP is awarded on an eight-year cycle. Seven years after promotion to rank of full professor or designation as a Distinguished Professor or award of an SPP, the candidate can submit an SPP application packet including work completed in the previous eight years.

B. The APB should place SPP candidates in three groups; upper third, middle third and lower third. **The President is requested to make every possible effort to fund the applicants ranked in the top two thirds**—unless for some reason he disagrees with the APB placement of the SPP candidate and ranks him/her in the lower one-third. (By way of suggestion only, those selected for an SPP award who are in DROP could possibly be funded from a separate pool, since non-recurring funds may be available for them.)

C. If, in a given year, there are not sufficient funds to actually award SPPs to all those ranked by the APB and the President in the top two-thirds, then those from the upper two-thirds who are unfunded should be permitted/encouraged to re-submit their packets for consideration in the next year. Those in the lower one-third, will continue to have the option to re-submit in three years.

D. Distinguished professors should be treated like all other full professors for SPP awards. Namely they are eligible to apply after seven years at the Distinguished Professor designation. (However, receipt of an SPP should not affect the timeline for Distinguished Professor application/consideration.)

E. The dean's ranking of candidates from her/his college was discussed at length. The committee recommends keeping dean's rankings—and has demonstrated that, in fact, it has been highly correlated with the actual ABP rankings in previous years.

In those instances where the APB elects to reorder a dean's ranking, and this reordering may actually change the funding status of the applicant, the APB Chair should be encouraged to contact that dean to discuss the matter, seek any additional information needed from the dean and insure that the dean is informed in advance of the outcome.

Notes:

One member of the committee wants to emphasize that his recommendations are predicated on continued funding at the two-thirds level as per #2 (B.) above and wants to clearly indicate that the President is urged to continue funding the SPP applicants at this level.

One member does not support continuation of the SPP awards and has several reasons for this. I believe he would share these reasons if requested to do so.