

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

MCKNIGHT LAND-GRANT PROFESSORSHIPS FOR 2010-12 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND NOMINATING INSTRUCTIONS

Nomination Deadline: October 1, 2009

This is to announce the annual competition for the McKnight Land-Grant Professorships, a program of career development awards for junior faculty. The recipients named to this two-year endowed professorship will begin their appointments July 1, 2010.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Purpose — The major purpose of the McKnight Land-Grant Professorship program is to strengthen the University's faculty for the future. The program is designed to advance the careers of the most promising junior faculty members who are at the beginning stages of their professional careers, and who have the potential to make significant contributions to their departments and to their scholarly fields. The program is also intended to help build loyalty to the institution.

Terms of Award — The McKnight Land-Grant Professorship is a two-year appointment to begin July 1, 2010, and extend through June 30, 2012. The Professorship includes a research grant of \$32,500 in each of the two years, to be used at the recipient's discretion for expenditures related to the recipient's research/scholarly work.

In addition, in the second year of the award, each Professor will be given either a year's leave with full pay to pursue scholarly work, or an additional research grant of \$32,500. Those who opt for the leave will have half of their salary paid by the Professorship, and half by the department. This leave will not affect sabbatical leave eligibility. For recipients on nine-month appointments who do not have research or other funds that pay their summer salaries, the Professorship will provide up to two months' summer salary in each of the two summers (2010 and 2011).

Recipients may not accept other University-funded appointments or leaves, such as the single semester leave, during the two-year period. In accepting a McKnight Land-Grant Professorship, a faculty member will agree to remain at the University for the full two years of the Professorship, plus one year. If this condition is not met, the recipient will be required to repay the value of the Professorship in full.

ELIGIBILITY

Each tenure-granting unit (usually a budgetary department, in some cases a college) may nominate one faculty member, and faculty must be nominated by the unit in which their tenure resides (i.e., the unit that votes on their tenure). Units with six or more eligible candidates, not counting any current McKnight Land-Grant Professorship holders, may submit **two** nominations.

Nominees must hold a tenure-track position, usually at the Assistant Professor rank. They must have been appointed no earlier than Fall 2006 — i.e., a nominee will have completed no more than three years at the University of Minnesota by the end of the 2008-09 academic year, and could be in the beginning of the fourth year at the time of nomination in Fall 2009. Because the emphasis is on faculty in the early years of their professional careers, nominees must have received the Ph.D., or the terminal degree, such as the J.D. or M.F.A., within the past seven years — i.e., *the degree must have been awarded after January 1, 2002*. A nominee from a clinical medical field whose terminal degree is the M.D., rather than the Ph.D., is eligible within seven years of completion of the required advanced specialty residency training (usually three years) that follows the award of the M.D.

Faculty are not eligible if they are not yet resident at the University by the fall nomination; nor are they eligible if they are being recommended for tenure in the year of their nomination (2009-10). Departments are welcome — and even encouraged — to re-nominate unsuccessful nominees from past years who remain eligible.

Departments are advised that, because many beginning faculty have not yet established an independent research track record that is distinct from their doctoral dissertation research, preference normally will be given to nominees who have completed a minimum of one year in residence at the University, or who have held a faculty position elsewhere before coming to Minnesota.

Eligibility Exception — In rare instances, departments may consider nominating an individual with a degree awarded *before 2002 — but not before 2000* — whose professional life was interrupted by non-professional events or circumstances (e.g., child-rearing or military service) such that, despite an earlier degree award, the individual is still considered junior in terms of professional accomplishment. Likewise, the temporary holding of non-academic positions unrelated to the discipline, in which it is not possible to publish or participate in any way in the life of the discipline, might be considered an “interruption.”

Any such nomination that is an exception to the 2002 degree award date must be accompanied by a separate definitive explanation from the nominator, demonstrating clearly that the individual's professional career is at the junior level for which this program is intended.

Otherwise, individuals with degree award dates between 2000 and 2002 who have had relevant productive professional experience in the broader discipline, inside or outside of academia — e.g., employment in a private corporation or nonprofit organization or government agency, work as a consultant, accomplishment as an independent scholar, or prolonged appointment as a postdoctoral fellow — are not considered junior faculty, *for purposes of this program*.

NOMINATION PROCEDURES

All nominees should be apprised of the program's **Purpose** and **Terms of Award** (preceding page). In preparing their nominations, departments should be mindful of the fact that the materials will be reviewed and rated by a selection committee composed of faculty members from across the University, with all reviewers having an equal voice on each nomination. Departments should assume, therefore, that most reviewers will be unfamiliar with the nominee's particular area of scholarly work, and should take care to present the nomination in plain English using non-specialized terms that are clear and unambiguous.

The nomination documents should be submitted on plain white paper, with a single staple in the upper left-hand corner, i.e., without special binders, hard covers, tabbed separator pages, and the like. *All documents must have*

margins of at least 1 inch, and type no smaller than 12 pt. The following materials should be transmitted *in thirteen sets*, in this order:

1. A nomination letter of not more than two pages from the department head/chair. The letter should affirm the nominee's eligibility by stating the degree award and hiring dates, faculty rank, and the likely year of recommendation for tenure. If nominating two candidates, the letter should contain a list of all eligible candidates and their degree award and hiring dates. The letter should declare the department's willingness to provide half-salary for the successful nominee's second-year research leave. With the award criteria in mind, the letter should address each of the following:

- A description of the structure of the discipline and of the nominee's work in this context. If the nominee's research is part of a larger research team, collaborative or interdisciplinary effort, the letter should be clear on the nominee's specific contribution to the group endeavor.
- A summary statement establishing for reviewers what is distinctive about the nominee's work. Specifically, in what ways are the nominee's theories, ideas, hypotheses or inventions original, innovative, and imaginative?
- A statement on the nominee's *promise*, and the potential importance of the nominee's research or scholarly work to the field. (Nominees, being junior faculty, will be evaluated as much on promise as on achievement.)
- A summary of the nominee's publication record *in the context of the norms for the discipline*; include comment on the reputation, quality, and selectivity of the journals—plus a description of the discipline's convention for publication authorship (e.g. authors listed alphabetically, primary author listed first).
- Comment on the relationship between any currently funded work and the research or scholarly activity described in this nomination.
- A description of the nominee's teaching and student advising experience, so that reviewers can evaluate the nominee's potential for training future scholars.

The selection committee prefers that the letter of nomination contain no quotes from the recommendation letters.

2. A layman's research title of up to 15 words, followed by a brief summary of the nominee's scholarly work — limited to 100 words. This summary should describe *in the broadest terms possible* the background, goal, and potential significance of the research or scholarly work in clear, concise language for the non-specialist. It must be written without jargon so that it is readily understandable to individuals entirely outside the field; *colleagues unfamiliar with the field should be asked to read the description, to see that it meets this wide-audience test.*

3. A broad non-technical description of the nominee's overall research or scholarly work — up to three pages. This description should lay out the nominee's own distinctive theories or ideas, in the context of the discipline; it should state the objectives and potential significance. (Any references are to be included in the page limitation.) This, too, should be written in a manner that is completely understandable to colleagues outside the discipline. A description that resembles a grant proposal submitted for federal agency peer review would not be suitable for this all-University competition.

4. A complete list of current and pending grants, internal as well as external, including sources of funds, amounts, and inclusive dates of awards.

5. The nominee's curriculum vitae, which may not exceed two pages. With respect to the publications section of the *c.v.*, the selection committee places particular emphasis on peer-reviewed items that have been published or accepted for publication. Other not-yet-published items would usually not be included but, if they are, the meaning of terms such as “in preparation,” “in press,” or “forthcoming” must be fully explained.

6. A single-page background statement on the reference writers to give framework to their recommendations. Begin this statement by explaining why these particular recommenders were chosen.

7. Three letters of reference. Letters (no more than three) should be from persons who can provide an *objective evaluation* of the nominee's scholarly record. Thus, it is generally inadvisable to secure letters from close collaborators, co-authors, fellow former students, dissertation advisers, and the like. If possible, all three letters should be from scholars outside the University; at a minimum, two must be. Letter writers should be apprised of the purpose of the program as well as the all-University nature of the competition, so that their letters will speak to the non-specialist. Reference letters should be sent to the nominating department for inclusion in the nomination packet. New letters should be obtained for a resubmission from a prior year.

No other materials, such as copies of course summaries, teaching evaluations, summaries of other research proposals, or the like, may be included. Any such extraneous material will be removed from the file before forwarding to the selection committee.

Review/Award Criteria:

The selection committee will choose the recipients on their merit, without regard to discipline or area, based on the following criteria:

- * The potential significance of the research or scholarly work and the clarity with which it is conveyed to the non-specialist;
- * the degree to which the nominee's past and present achievements demonstrate originality, imagination, and innovation;
- * the nominee's professional promise — i.e., the potential for significant contribution to the discipline and/or to any interdisciplinary or team research efforts;
- * the quality (not quantity) of the nominee's scholarly publication record; and
- * the nominee's potential for attracting and supporting outstanding students, our future scholars.

Deadline and Notification:

Nominations, *in thirteen sets*, are due by **October 1, 2009**, addressed as follows:

**McKnight Land-Grant Professorship Program
Office of the Vice President for Research
University of Minnesota
314 Johnston Hall—East Bank Campus
101 Pleasant Street S. E.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455**

Nominees' departments will be notified of the outcome in January 2010.

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