

MEMORANDUM

Office of the Provost

C. L. Max Nikias
Provost and
Senior Vice
President for
Academic Affairs

To: Academic Deans & Faculty

From: C. L. Max Nikias



Date: March 19, 2007

Subject: Recognition of USC Faculty

USC's outstanding faculty are increasingly being recognized through national and international prizes, prestigious fellowships, memberships in national academies and learned societies, and other major awards. I call on all faculty to expand our efforts to nominate colleagues for well-deserved national and international recognition. These efforts, facilitated by new committees at both the departmental/school and university level, will bring the achievements of our colleagues to the attention of wider circles, and thus will support the ongoing recruitment by all departments of additional excellent faculty and graduate students.

University Committee

President Sample has appointed a University Committee on Faculty Recognition whose members will put forward candidates for the National Academies and similar highly-competitive memberships and awards, and which will coordinate recommendations to President Sample when he is asked to submit nominations. The members of this committee are Solomon W. Golomb (chair); Michael A. Arbib; George A. Bekey; Alexander M. Capron; Geoffrey Cowan; Rob Cutietta; P. Daniel Dapkus; Richard A. Easterlin; Percival Everett, Thomas Jordan, Francine R. Kaufman; Marsha Kinder; Sanjit K. Mitra; Phil E. Muntz; Steven J. Ross; Stephen Ryan; F. Stan Settles; Leonard M. Silverman; Kevin Starr; Peter Staudhammer; Richard F. Thompson; Michael S. Waterman; and Martin Levine. This effort is so important to the University that I will support it through designation of a full-time staff person within the Faculty Affairs office.

Departmental or School committees

Some departments and schools already have highly successful committees on faculty recognition. For academic units that do not yet have such a committee, I ask deans to assist every department in establishing one, unless a single school-

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wide committee is more appropriate. The department/school committee will put forward names for awards appropriate to the field, so that they can be considered through the external peer review process. It is often true that the key to winning big awards is by first winning the smaller ones, so each committee would need to trace a path appropriate to that discipline. I recommend that departmental committees regard themselves as matchmakers rather than gatekeepers, and I suggest they undertake the following functions:

- compile a list of disciplinary awards and recognitions and circulate the list to departmental faculty
- familiarize themselves with the relevant nominating processes, criteria, and composition of the voting committees.
- periodically canvass the department faculty to solicit nominations as well as self-nominations, to supplement the committee's own proposals on candidates for awards.
- arrange that names of faculty be put forward for consideration for external awards, through the process appropriate for each award. For some recognitions, it seems that success requires that the nominee have a champion in the deciding committee.

I ask that deans provide administrative support to department and school committees, and help in appropriate arrangements to put forward the candidates' names externally, such as support for solicitation of letters. Deans should also ensure that names of potential nominees are not overlooked, and publicize faculty honors on school or departmental web sites. I would like to be informed of the efforts of the departmental committees so that we can continue to improve the process, so I also ask deans to report to me through Marty Levine, at the close of each academic year, on the efforts made as well as the faculty recognitions awarded.

cc: President Steven B. Sample