April 29, 2020

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Thomas C. Katsouleas

RE: Recommendations for Designation as Board of Trustees Distinguished Professors, Academic Year 2019-2020

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees accept the recommendation of the Distinguished Professor Review Committee and designate the following faculty members as University of Connecticut Board of Trustees Distinguished Professors: S. Pamir Alpay (Department of Materials Science and Engineering), Katharina von Hammerstein (Department of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages), and C. Michael White (Department of Pharmacy Practice).

BACKGROUND:

On November 10, 1998, the Board of Trustees voted to establish the title of Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor. This designation is the University’s highest academic honor.

Pursuant to the By-Laws of the University of Connecticut, the Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor award is reserved exclusively to recognize faculty who have achieved exceptional distinction in scholarship, teaching, and service while at the University of Connecticut. Faculty chosen must have distinguished themselves in all three of these categories. The designation process occurs annually, as a result of a peer review process.

After careful deliberations, the Review Committee recommended the three individuals named above. I am recommending that the Board of Trustees designate these faculty as its Distinguished Professors.
S. Pamir Alpay

Pamir Alpay is the General Electric Professor in Advanced Manufacturing in the Department of Materials Science and Engineering and the Executive Director of UConn Tech Park, where he serves as UConn's chief ambassador to industry and government agencies in building industry-responsive and economically important initiatives based on UConn's strengths in applied research. In this role, he has excelled in outreach, having hosted workshops and symposia connecting over 500 professionals and government leaders on current topics ranging from sustainability, cybersecurity, energy, advanced manufacturing and support for small/medium size businesses.

In research program development, Dr. Alpay has led efforts to establish centers that offer infrastructure to support, develop, and expand research and has secured external funding of over $16M, as PI or Co-PI, for multidisciplinary initiatives supporting dozens of faculty and students. Prof. Alpay’s research focuses on discovering new phenomena in diverse material systems. Prof. Alpay employs tools from quantum mechanical computations to basic thermodynamic models to advance understanding of materials properties across multiple length scales. In recognition of his contributions, Dr. Alpay has been elected to the rank of Fellow of the American Physical Society and American Ceramic Society. He has over 200 publications which are internationally recognized and extensively cited.

Prof. Pamir Alpay is a committed teacher and advisor to both graduate and undergraduate students. He has excelled at graduate student advising, particularly in mentoring minority students and women, and over half of his advisees have received awards either from the University and/or from national and international organizations. Consistent with UConn’s vision to provide experiential learning opportunities for undergraduates, Prof. Alpay has been exceptionally effective at connecting students with research and hands-on experiences. He is the recipient of the NSF CAREER Award, UConn School of Engineering Outstanding Faculty Advisor Award, and the AAUP Excellence in Career Research and Creativity Award. He received his PhD in 1999 from the University of Maryland. Dr. Alpay joined UConn’s Materials Science and Engineering (MSE) in 2001 and from 2013 to 2017 he served as the Head of the Department.
Katharina von Hammerstein

Dr. von Hammerstein (Ph.D. UCLA) is Professor of German Studies in the Department of Literatures, Cultures and Languages and member of the Human Rights Institute’s leadership team at the University of Connecticut. For her scholarship on German literature in Europe and Africa as well as on interdisciplinary curriculum development in the United States she received national and international grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the American Council on Education (ACE), the U.S. Department of Education’s Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), the German National Research Foundation (DFG), the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Ministry for Science, Research and the Arts of the State of Baden-Wuerttemberg, Germany. At UConn, she received numerous large and small grants to support curricular innovation and her scholarly production.

Professor von Hammerstein’s interdisciplinary and international research is located at the intersections of Literary Criticism, Postcolonial Studies, Gender Studies, War Studies and Human Rights. Her twelve book publications and more than seventy articles about German, Austrian and Namibian literature between the late 1700s and early 2000s analyze textual representations of human rights issues, autobiographical writings as political voices, and questions of gender and “race”. Currently she is investigating diverse testimonies on Germany’s first genocide (1904-1908) in the former colony of German Southwest Africa (today’s Namibia). She has given numerous presentations in the United States (incl. Harvard), Canada and Germany as well as the UK (incl. Oxford), France (incl. the Sorbonne), Austria, Italy, Spain, Romania, Russia, Namibia, and South Africa.

Professor von Hammerstein’s teaching is inspired by her scholarship and creativity and earned her the university-wide Faculty Teaching Award. Her courses range from large General Education lectures on German Film to upper-division and graduate courses on German Romanticism, German Culture since Martin Luther, and German-African Connections. She inspired many a student to add a global component to their studies, not least by introducing grant-supported programs to UConn (and other universities) to help students use their knowledge of second languages & cultures in their disciplinary majors and career preparation. She has been major graduate advisor to approximately 75 MAs and PhDs.

Serving her profession and the University, Professor von Hammerstein has contributed to UConn’s national and international reputation. In her capacities as member of the University Senate (1999-2021) and Senate Executive Committee (2016-2019), Chair of the university-wide Global Citizenship and General Education Oversight committees, and Chair and Graduate Director of German Studies, she has helped develop support for students’ and faculty’s needs in an ever changing world. At the (inter)national levels, she has served on editorial boards, organized conferences and was elected Delegate of New England and Eastern Canada at the National Assembly of the Modern Language Association. Most recently, she co-founded and is co-directing (w/UConn’s Sebastian Wogenstein) the interdisciplinary and inter-institutional transatlantic Connecticut/Baden-Wuerttemberg Human Rights Research Consortium.
C. Michael White

Dr. White is Chair and Professor of Pharmacy Practice at the University of Connecticut, Storrs. His previous awards include the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists Drug Therapy Research Award (2005, 2008, 2019) and the Award for Sustained Contributions to the Literature (2016), American College of Clinical Pharmacy Young Investigator of the Year Award (2004), and American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy Lyman Award (2008). He is a Fellow of the American College of Clinical Pharmacology (2006) and American College of Clinical Pharmacy (2005).

Professor White has been the Director of one of only 13 Evidence-based Practice Centers designated by the Federal Healthcare Research and Quality (2007-Present). His is a national authority on the prevention of post-cardiothoracic surgery complications and determining the safety and effectiveness of both medications and dietary supplements. His work has strongly influenced national coverage decisions and clinical practice guidelines. He has published over three hundred fifty peer-reviewed publications with almost 12,000 citations and delivered countless presentations before professional groups around the world. OpEds stemming from his research have over 735,000 views and his research has been covered by NBC Nightly News, Good Morning America, NY Times, Washington Post, the Today Show, and The Dr Oz Show. In the 2019-2020 time frame, he had three articles with Almetric Scores over 200 and three of the Top Ten Most Read articles in the Annals of Pharmacotherapy.

Professor White is an accomplished teacher. He was selected as a Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning Teaching Fellow (2006) and was a Finalist for the University of Connecticut Outstanding Advisor (2003). He was selected the School of Pharmacy’s Teacher of the Year four times in twenty years (2001, 2004, 2010, 2019) and featured in a Hartford Courant article on the use of comedy in instructional excellence (2006). He has mentored twenty-nine post-doctoral fellows, three visiting scholars and fifteen students who graduated with honors or distinction.

Professor White has a long history of public engagement and service to the University of Connecticut. He received the Provost’s Award for Public Engagement (2010) for his work with major media and underserved populations. He has been quoted in media articles for many major national and international media sites including USA Today, Huffington Post, BBC, CBS, NPR, LA Times, and Chicago Tribune in addition to a recurring TV segment (NBC30, 2004-2013 & FOX61 2013-Present) in Connecticut. He is on the national research advisory board of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, has reviewed grants for the NIH and VA, and was the Chair and Vice Chair of the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board. Since 2011, he has been the Head of the Department of Pharmacy Practice.