

Summary

ALUMNI DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR

The Alumni Distinguished Professorship (ADP) is a pre-eminent faculty appointment recognizing extraordinary academic citizenship and distinguished service within the Virginia Tech community. In recognition of the importance of alumni to the university, this rank is reserved for recognition of faculty members who, over time, have made outstanding contributions to the instructional program of the university and, in so doing, have touched the lives of generations of students and alumni. An extensive nomination and vetting process involves department and college honorifics committees, a specially convened university committee, the executive vice president and provost, and the president. The Board of Visitors confers upon an individual an appointment as Alumni Distinguished Professor for a period of 10 years, at which time the appointment may be renewed. In following with the established procedures, an invitation was issued to Dr. Gary Downey to seek reappointment. Dr. Downey submitted a personal statement and updated curriculum vitae detailing his contributions and accomplishments as ADP. These materials were reviewed by a small selection of current ADPs, and recommendations forwarded to the Executive Vice President and Provost for consideration.

Executive Vice President and Provost Thanassis Rikakis recommends the reappointment of Dr. Gary Downey as Alumni Distinguished Professor. This recommendation has the enthusiastic endorsement of Mr. Matt Winston, Senior Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations and the executive committee of the Alumni Association Board of Directors. Dr. Downey is a truly exceptional scholar and educator whose achievements have been recognized nationally and internationally. The reappointment is effective for a period of ten years, and carries with it a salary supplement provided by the endowment and an annual operating account for use by the professor.

ALUMNI DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR

Dr. Gary Lee Downey, Alumni Distinguished Professor of Science and Technology Studies is an internationally recognized scholar whose work makes significant contributions to the discipline of science and technology in society. Dr. Downey is particularly well known for applying innovations in his area of research to national and international settings.

Since his initial appointment as Alumni Distinguished Professor in 2007, Dr. Downey has received several prestigious honors and awards, including the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) Outstanding Faculty Award (2011), the Sterling Olmsted Award from the American Society for Engineering Education (2008), several keynote speaker engagements (2010-2015), and three named visiting professorships (2014-2016). His scholarship continues to receive broad recognition and support, as evidenced by eight National Science Foundation grants, one National Academy of Engineering grant, and one Boeing Company grant. He has been invited to and delivered numerous talks and lectures, domestically and internationally, and served as the elected president of the International Society for Social Studies of Science for two years (2013-2015).

Dr. Downey founded and co-leads “engineering studies,” a diverse, interdisciplinary arena of scholarship, research, and teaching built around the question: “What are the relationships among the technical and nontechnical dimensions of engineering practices, and how do these relationships change over time and from place to place?” He also organized the founding Virginia Tech workshop for this newly created sub-field, and created and organizes the International Network for Engineering Studies. In further support of this disciplinary innovation, he founded and edits *Engineering Studies: Journal of the International Network for Engineering Studies* and the *Engineering Studies book series*.

Dr. Downey is known for his dedication to excellent student mentoring. Since 2007, he has directed the work of 12 Ph.D. students as committee chair, co-chair, or committee member and he has guided 17 master’s students to completion. Dr. Downey contributes significantly to the university while continuing to build an international reputation for service and leadership not only in the field of science and technology and society, but for the disciplines and movements that he has created out of his work including engineering studies, engineering cultures, science and technology studies making and doing, and the problem definition and solution approach to engineering.

Dr. Downey has maintained a steady production of publications, grants, and invited lectures during his initial term as Alumni Distinguished professor. In addition to over \$650K in funded research, he has continued to implement curricular innovations, and is furthering scholarship in his field through the founding and advancement of highly prestigious journals and book series.

Dr. Downey continues to be recognized among domestic and international peers and university scholars for exceling in his research and making extensive, innovative contributions at the highest level of excellence in all of the key areas of scholarship, teaching, mentorship, leadership, and outreach.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Dr. Gary Lee Downey be reappointed as Alumni Distinguished Professor effective June 10, 2017 for a period of ten years.

June 5, 2017