

Summary
ALUMNI DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR

June 7, 2022

The Alumni Distinguished Professorship (ADP) is a preeminent faculty appointment recognizing faculty members who demonstrate extraordinary accomplishments and academic citizenship through substantive scholarly contributions across all three of Virginia Tech's core mission areas of teaching, research or creative activity, and engagement. Each ADP is expected to make scholarly contributions in the three mission areas at the same high level evident at the time of appointment. 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 appointment as Alumni Distinguished Professor for a period of 10 years, at which time the appointment may be renewed. Currently 10 ADPs may be appointed and there is no quota by college or department (Faculty Handbook, Section 3.2.2).

Two Alumni Distinguished Professor appointments (ten-year appointments) have reached their completion this spring. In following with the established procedures, invitations were issued to Drs. Rosemary Blieszner and Y. A. Liu to seek reappointment. Both submitted personal statements and updated curricula vitae detailing their contributions and accomplishments as ADPs. These materials were reviewed by a small selection of current ADPs, and recommendations forwarded to the Executive Vice President and Provost, as well as the Executive Committee of the Alumni Association Board of Directors, for consideration.

Executive Vice President and Provost Cyril Clarke recommends the reappointment of Drs. Rosemary Blieszner and Y. A. Liu. These Alumni Distinguished Professor reappointment recommendations have also received the endorsement of the Vice President for Alumni Relations and the executive committee of the Alumni Association Board of Directors. The reappointments are effective for a period of ten years and carry with them a salary supplement provided by the endowment and an annual operating account for use by the professor.

RECOMMENDATION

That Drs. Rosemary Blieszner and Y. A. Liu be reappointed as Alumni Distinguished Professor effective June 10, 2022 for a period of ten years.

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ALUMNI DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR

Dr. Rosemary Blieszner, Alumni Distinguished Professor of Human Development and Family Science, is a truly gifted teacher, scholar, mentor, and administrator, recognized within and beyond the university for her writing accomplishments, outreach, and administration.

Since her initial appointment as Alumni Distinguished Professor twenty years ago and reappointment ten years ago, Dr. Blieszner has maintained a steady stream of journal articles, books, book chapters, and encyclopedia articles. Her research has been accepted for presentation at competitive scholarly conferences, as keynote addresses, as discussant comments for conference symposia, and as retirement community programs.

Dr. Blieszner has maintained an active teaching portfolio with graduate classes over much of the past ten years, all with very positive feedback from students in her course evaluations. She supervised an undergraduate research student, chaired two doctoral committees and a master's committee, and served on twelve other doctoral committees. She was named Teacher of the Week by the Center for Instructional Development and Educational Research in 2015. While maintaining a teaching load, she served as associate dean of the Graduate School and managed the Graduate Curriculum Committee, including assisting faculty with the development of proposals or new courses, graduate certificates, and graduate degrees. She broadened her instructional activities from providing traditional classroom instruction and student advising and mentoring to assisting faculty in their graduate mentoring roles, requiring a very different pedagogical style. She coached faculty who were serving on the Graduate Curriculum Committee and Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies on the shared governance system at Virginia Tech resulting in SCHEV-approved proposals and resolution of complicated situations to support graduate students.

For her excellence in scholarship, Dr. Blieszner has been recognized with the 2021 Alumni Fellowship from Pennsylvania State University, the 2016 Charter Fellowship from the International Association for Relationship Research, and a 2013 Scholar of the Week from the VT Office of the Vice President for Research. In concert with Virginia Tech's focus on interdisciplinary work, she has collaborated with sociologists, humanists, developmental methodologists, and gerontologists with multiple areas of expertise. She and colleagues have received funding from the Virginia Alzheimer's and Related Disorders Research Award Fund and the National Institute on Aging/National Institutes of Health to support research on caregivers for persons living with dementia for four years, and recently received funding from the Virginia Tech COVID Rapid Response Fund to extend that research for another year.

Dr. Blieszner provides significant service to the University; she served as Associate Dean of the Graduate School from 2012-2017 and concurrently, Assistant Vice Provost for Enrollment and Degree Management from 2015-2017. She served as the Interim Dean

and then Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences from 2017 to 2019, and currently serves as the Interim Dean of the College of Architecture and Urban Studies, beginning in July 2021. She has chaired the Sesquicentennial Steering Committee from 2018 to the present and served other various aspects of university governance such as the President's Council, Academic Affairs Council, Commissions on Faculty Affairs and Staff Policies and Affairs, Council of College Deans, and many other committees. She served on three Destination Area/Strategic Growth Area stakeholder committees and chaired or served on senior-level administrative search committees.

In service to her field, Dr. Blieszner has held multiple leadership positions in the Gerontological Society of America: President-elect, President, and Past President; she now sits on the Past President's Council, which is advisory to the Executive Director. During her presidency, she launched a major, multi-year initiative to study the organization's structure, operations, and governance system which led to restructuring of the board, officers, and relationship of disciplinary sections to the organization as well as a revision of the constitution and bylaws. She chaired the GSA's Planning Committee to organize the 75th Anniversary celebration, which led to significant fundraising in support of new professional development training. In collaboration with Dr. Karen Roberto, she consulted for Routledge/Taylor and Francis and as an editor for the *Textbooks in Aging* series from 2010 to 2017.

Dr. Blieszner continues to be recognized among peers and university scholars as excelling in his scholarship and making ongoing contributions of excellence in the key areas of teaching, mentoring, research, administration, and outreach.

ALUMNI DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR

Dr. Y. A. Liu, Alumni Distinguished Professor of Chemical Engineering, is recognized for his research, outreach, teaching, and service within and well beyond the university.

In his time as Alumni Distinguished Professor, Dr. Liu has continued to teach the most difficult and time-consuming courses in the engineering curriculum; these capstone design courses typically have 80 to 110 graduating seniors. For these courses, he recruited industrial partners to develop hands-on design projects and provided experienced project advisors to work closely with graduating seniors each spring semester. His partnerships have been recognized twice by the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology (ABET) of the Engineering Accreditation Commission. In 2015, Dr. Liu became the first Virginia Tech faculty member to be honored as a U.S. Professor of the Year in 40 years. In the same year, he was recognized as Virginia Professor of the Year. He also earned The American Institute of Chemical Engineers' (AIChE) 2021 Outstanding Student Chapter Advisor Award. He has advised five Ph.D. graduates and two M.Eng. graduates; he is mentoring two current Ph.D. candidates. Dr. Liu has been the faculty advisor to winners of the AIChE's Outstanding Student Chapter Award in 2014-15, 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21 as well as the AIChE Process Development Student Paper Award in 2020.

Dr. Liu is an award-winning scholar, recognized globally for scholarly research contributions and impacts to industry. He has received the AIChE Professional Achievement Award for Innovation in Green Process Engineering in 2021, the AIChE Excellence in Process Development Research Award in 2020, and a fellowship to the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 2019. During the last ten years, he has published four ground-breaking textbooks on methodologies used for sustainable design. He is described as a pioneer in the area of sustainable engineering via process design, and the focus of his research on the education of engineering students and practicing engineers has been described as a singular distinction that is unique among chemical engineering faculty worldwide. He was granted a patent in 2020 for "Energy-Efficient Extraction of Acid Gasses from Power Plant Flue Gas." Dr. Liu directs the Center of Excellence in Process System Engineering, which is a multi-year agreement among China National Petroleum Company, Aspen Technology, Inc., and the Virginia Tech Foundation. Sponsors of this center provide annual educational grants at \$160K to \$220K and provide advanced tools, expert support, and training materials valued at \$6M. The center donates between \$12K and \$15K over the past ten years to provide rising seniors study-abroad scholarship to take chemical engineering lab courses at universities in Denmark and Germany.

Dr. Liu contributes to furthering diversity in the university by serving as the faculty advisor to the Association of Chinese Students and Scholars (ACSS) since 1995. He promotes cultural diversity by organizing the Mid-Autumn Festival Celebration and the Spring Festival (Chinese New Year) Celebration. Additional service to the university includes advising the Virginia Tech chapter of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, which

was named an “outstanding student chapter” four times in the past ten years. To serve his field, he is extraordinarily active in sharing insights in the field of petrochemical and sustainable energy and environmental work with Asian engineers during breaks from his teaching. He and instructors he has trained have worked with over 7,500 practicing engineers since 1997, an area of significant global outreach that has continued during the last ten years.

Dr. Liu is recognized by his peers, profession, and university as excelling in his scholarship and making ongoing contributions to the university, and his profession through his research work, teaching, advising, and service.