

CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY

Department of Chemistry

Inter-Office Correspondence

TO: Provost Nathan Urban
FROM: Guy C. Berry
DATE: January 20, 2015 **RE: Recommended changes in the Call for University Professor nominations**

A copy of the call for University Nominations issued last year is attached, along with the list of current University Professors per my files.

The practice followed leading to the recommendations to the President for appointments to University Professor rank has been stable for at least the preceding decade, differing in some ways from that procedure stated in the call. The relevant three paragraphs from the current call are reproduced below, followed by a revised version of those paragraphs with changes that would better reflect the process in practice. In part, the process in use reflects the time available for the required steps, including the gathering of the nominations, the selection of subcommittees for the evaluation of each nomination and the meeting of the UPs for their evaluation and vote on the nominations.

Two changes are involved:

- (1) Since the "letter of intent" has almost always been adequate for a letter of nomination (to be expanded in a very few cases in consultation with the proposer), it is suggested that the Call be for a "letter of nomination", not for a "letter of intent", and
- (2) Since there has been no interest in convening (or by the UPs in serving on) a committee that could reject nominations from the persons receiving the Call, the provision to preview the nominations to select those to be considered is softened to have such a review be the responsibility of the Provost and such University Professor assistance as might be desired by the Provost. It is anticipated that this would at most be a recommendation to the nomination requires two proposers if only one has been named, or that the nomination should be clarified or expanded by the proposers, a step now taken in a few cases before, or more often after, the nominations are under consideration by subcommittees of University Professors for their evaluations and reports to the "committee of all the University Professors" for their consideration, discussion and vote.

The final three paragraphs of the call from the Provost for "University Professor nominations" used in recent years read as follows:

"Thus as has been the case in recent years, it would be appreciated if in preparing the letter of intent, you would please restrict the two proposers to the addressees on this letter. At that stage all we need is a one page letter of nomination and the candidate's C.V

Following review of all submissions, the Provost on the advice of a committee of University Professors will select candidates for whom a full nomination is to be prepared.

Each candidate will be evaluated by a carefully chosen University Professor committee using either their own expertise, or by seeking external letters in consultation with the proposers.

In order to reflect the practice over the past decade, and remain within the context of the preceding, these paragraphs could be revised as follows:

*"Thus, as has been the case in recent years, **the two proposers of the letter of nomination should be restricted to the addressees on this letter.** At that stage all we need is a **one-two page letter of nomination as would be appropriate for consideration by the University Professors and the candidate's C.V.***

*Following review of all submissions, the Provost on the advice of **one or more** University Professors will select candidates for whom the nomination **should proceed to the next stage.***

*Each **selected** candidate will be evaluated by a carefully chosen University Professor committee using either their own expertise, or in consultation with the proposers by seeking **additional information, which could come from the proposers, or could comprise confidential internal, or if necessary, external letters.***

If you decide to "leave well-enough alone", we can work with the Call as it is, and as in the past, I would plan to advise proposers if it appears to me that their letter should be expanded or otherwise amended before it passes to the subcommittees. Of course, your input would be welcome (or you may want to take a more direct role in the process in that stage than has been the case in the past, e.g., by convening the committee called for in the second paragraph of the Call as it has been issued). I will be happy to discuss or clarify the preceding if you wish.

END gcb