

4.12 Professorships

Endowments or trusts are established to support professorships for senior faculty in academic departments of the university. The term, professorship, refers to an appointment which carries a salary supplement and may also provide funds for appropriate expenses related to teaching and/or professional activities. Criteria for selection, terms of appointment, and other details vary and are established for the specific professorship involved. A professorship usually is named in honor of an individual, business firm, or organization.

A. The Creighton Sossomon Professorship

The Creighton Sossomon Professorship was established for the purpose of strengthening the faculty in the Department of History by assisting Western Carolina University in attracting and/or retaining outstanding scholar-teachers in American, English, or European history. Appointments to the professorship are limited to specialists in these fields and are intended to recognize and encourage superior teaching.

B. The H. F. and Catherine P. Robinson Professorship

The H. F. Robinson and Catherine P. Robinson Fund was established by the Robinsons' families and friends to honor their memories and their substantial contributions of their lives and career to higher education, to North Carolina, and to Western Carolina University. The professorship seeks to fulfill Dr. Robinson's wish to encourage and inspire faculty members in their quest for quality instruction, research, and service.

Specifically, the professorship recognizes and rewards a faculty member in the Department of Biology whose contributions in teaching, research, and service to the people of Western North Carolina mountain area exemplify the goals and dreams of Cotton Robinson.

C. Adelaide Worth Daniels Professor of Special Education

The Daniels Professorship is designed to provide expert training and instruction to students in Western's teacher education programs so that they may better serve children with special educational needs, and to serve current teachers of students with special needs.

D. Carol Grotnes Belk Distinguished Professorship in Commercial and Electronic Music

A legendary North Carolina philanthropist with an extensive record of supporting higher education in North Carolina provided a gift to Western Carolina University to establish the Carol Grotnes Belk Professorship. The professorship is designed to benefit students seeking basic backgrounds in commercial and electronic music through study in its

composition, arrangement, production and design. With its emphasis on commercial and electronic music, the professorship is tying the traditional music performance programs to trends in the entertainment industry, marketing and public relations.

E. Jay M. Robinson Distinguished Professorship in Educational Technologies

Endowed with a combination of financial contributions and matching state funds, the Jay M. Robinson Professorship enables WCU to bring to the campus experts from the corporate or educational sectors who are using electronic technologies to enhance the teaching and learning process.

F. Blanton J Whitmire Distinguished Professorship in Environmental Sciences

A lifelong dedication to environmental stewardship and desire to see development in Western North Carolina proceed without negatively impacting the region's environment led Drs. Blanton J. and Margaret S. Whitmire to present a gift to Western Carolina University, creating a distinguished professorship in environmental science. Their gift in 1997 was combined with matching state funds to create the professorship, continuing the Whitmire family's longstanding tradition of supporting education – in particular, education at Western Carolina University. The professorship is designed to be filled by a scholar who can provide expertise in the most critical areas of environmental science in the mountain region.

G. Sequoyah Distinguished Professor in Cherokee Studies

Western Carolina University's Sequoyah Professorship is named in honor of a revered figure of Cherokee history and culture who devised the Cherokee syllabary, the first written Native American alphabet. In addition to helping WCU build a true academic program in Cherokee Studies, the Sequoyah Professorship is designed to bolster the scholarly relationship between the university and the Eastern Band and create opportunities for collaborative research.

H. Carolyn Plemmons and Ben R. Phillips Distinguished Professorship in Musical Theatre

Established in 2000 as the first such commitment to musical theatre in the University of North Carolina system, the Phillips Professorship focuses on an interdisciplinary area of study anchored in the departments of communication and theatre arts, and music. The program is designed to provide students with practical work-related experiences, build skills needed in both music and theatre, and provide an interdisciplinary foundation.

I. John A. and Dorothy Luxton Parris Distinguished Professorship in Appalachian Culture

The professorship was established in the summer of 2002 through the estate of John and Dorothy Parris, augmented with a \$100,000 grant from the C.D. Spangler Foundation and matching state funds. Spangler, a former banking executive and education leader, served as president of the UNC system from 1986 through 1997. The professorship in the interdisciplinary area of Appalachian studies was designed so that it could be anchored in the departments of anthropology, art, communication and theatre arts, English or history.

J. Taft B. Botner Distinguished Professorship in Elementary and Middle Grades Education

The Botner professorship is endowed through gifts from the Botner estate, combined with matching funds from the state. The professorship is intended to attract an expert in

education with expertise in an area specifically related to the preparation of teachers of children in kindergarten through ninth grade.

K. Catherine Brewer Smith Distinguished Professorship in Communication Disorders

A gift from the estate of Catherine Brewer Smith, a Franklin resident who died in 2001 and whose father attended Western Carolina University, enabled WCU to create an endowed professorship in communication disorders. The professorship is designed to help serve the speech-language pathology needs of the Western North Carolina region, where above-average poverty levels and lengthy drives to service providers combine to hamper treatment for adults and children.

L. Mountaintop Distinguished Professorship in Advanced Optics Manufacturing

Developers of a lakeside golf club in southern Jackson County provided the funding to allow Western Carolina University to establish an endowed professorship in advanced optics manufacturing. This professor is expected to be a world-class applied research engineer who can help build innovative product capacity that is relevant to emerging economic sectors of the Western North Carolina region. The professor also is expected to integrate his or her teaching responsibility with the development of bio-adaptive rehabilitative medical devices leading to improved quality of life for people with disabilities.

M. Ambassador Jeanette W. Hyde Distinguished Professorship in Gerontological Social Work

Jeanette Hyde's contribution was combined with matching state funds to establish the professorship in social work. The professorship is designed to provide leadership for WCU's academic, service and applied research programs in gerontology – in particular, WCU's Gerontology Initiative, which supplies a range of programs and services that enhance the social, cultural, physical and economic well-being of older adults.

N. WNC Healthcare Organizations

Distinguished Professorship in Physical Therapy

Distinguished Professorship in Nurse Anesthesia

The creation of distinguished professorships in physical therapy and in nurse anesthesia at Western Carolina University are the result of partnerships involving the university and regional health care providers aimed at addressing critical personnel shortages in those two fields. The Physical Therapy position will be filled by a nationally recognized scholar with a specialty in human movement or gerontology, and that individual will lead the program as it makes an expected transition to the doctoral level over the next several years.

O. Gimelstob-Landry Distinguished Professorship in Regional Economic Development

Financial contributions to support an endowed professorship in regional economic development at Western Carolina University were provided by Florida real estate businessmen Herbert Gimelstob and Laurence D. Landry. Their gifts have been combined with state matching funds to create the professorship. A search is pending for an individual who will address core issues in education and regional economic policy development. In addition to teaching and conducting research in the College of Business,

the individual who fills the position will conduct targeted policy studies and analyses, and promote development and refinement of effective economic development policy for the region and state.

P. Joe and Cynthia Kimmel Distinguished Professorships in Construction Management

Western Carolina University's efforts to build one of the top construction management programs in the nation received a major boost in December 2005 when Kimmel & Associates, a construction industry executive search company based in Asheville, announced a pledge to the university.

In addition to providing an endowment for program operations and an endowment for scholarship support, the pledge from Joe and Cynthia Kimmel will provide for endowed professorships in construction management. Combined with matching state funds, Kimmel's contributions will possibly establish five professorships.

Q. Cass Ballenger Distinguished Professorship in Engineering

A professorship in engineering at Western Carolina University is being developed through a gift from Cass Ballenger, who served North Carolina's 10th Congressional district in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1986 to 2005. Ballenger's gift will be combined with matching state funds to establish the professorship, which is expected to add a nationally renowned expert in engineering to WCU's faculty.

R. Wesley R. Elingburg Distinguished Professorship in Business Innovation

An Asheville native who is an alumnus of Western Carolina University provided the financial contributions to enable the university to create an endowed professorship in business innovation. The professorship will enable the university to recruit a nationally recognized expert in a business discipline who will work closely with WCU's undergraduate and graduate programs in entrepreneurship.

S. Myron L. "Barney" & Mrs. Barbara Coulter Distinguished Professorship in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

This professorship is named in honor of Chancellor Emeritus and Mrs. Coulter. The individual who is chosen to be WCU's distinguished professor in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) will provide leadership to expand WCU's work in the scholarship of teaching and learning and for the SoTL field in general. The individual will play an active role in the publication of WCU's international peer-reviewed journal for the Scholarship and Teaching and Learning, *MountainRise*. The individual will teach courses in the traditional arts and sciences and engage in his/her own SoTL research. In addition, the individual will provide leadership for WCU's participation in the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

T. BB&T Distinguished Professorship in Capitalism

The BB&T Distinguished Professor of Capitalism will directly address core issues involved in establishing an ethical business culture that is an essential part of how our organization works. The person who holds the professorship will be expected to teach both undergraduate and graduate students and conduct applied research, and integrate,

consistent with the curriculum governance structure of the university, a discourse on the ethical, moral, and philosophical underpinnings of capitalism.