Dear Colleagues,

I am delighted to announce that three of our faculty colleagues have been named *Distinguished University Professor* (DUP) for 2014. Being selected as a DUP involves an intensive internal and external review of the faculty member’s credentials that culminates in selection by the DUP Recommending Committee. These outstanding professors will have their titles formally bestowed at the Faculty Honors & Awards ceremony to be held during the Fall 2014 semester. With commentary provided by the DUP Recommending Committee, the faculty members named as this year’s Distinguished University Professors are:

**Carolyn Ellis, Department of Communication, College of Arts & Sciences**

Dr. Carolyn Ellis’s career at USF has spanned over 30 years, having joined the faculty in 1981 in the Department of Sociology as an Assistant Professor. She was promoted to tenured Associate in 1985 and then promoted to Full Professor in 1994. In 1996 she moved to the Department of Communication. She currently serves as Chair of that department. Dr. Ellis has been an outstanding teacher and mentor during her time at USF, having been honored at three different times (1987, 1990, and 1999) with USF’s “Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award.” In addition, she has received national recognition for her mentorship with the “Feminist Mentoring Award” in 2000 from the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction and with the “William R. Jones Outstanding Mentor Award” in 2013 from the McKnight Doctoral Fellowship Program and the Florida Education Fund. Since 2000, she has chaired or is chairing 17 PhD dissertations. In addition to the awards she has received for teaching and mentoring, she has also received national and international recognition for her scholarship. Among her nine awards are one for a co-edited book (*Handbook of Autoethnography*) from the Ethnography Division of the National Communication Association in 2013, the “Legacy Lifetime Award” from the same division, an award that honors a person whose “ways of performing have consistently and passionately personified the spirit of the division” (also in 2013) and a “Lifetime Achievement Award in Qualitative Inquiry” from the International Center for Qualitative Inquiry at the University of Illinois in 2012. These awards recognize a truly productive career. Dr. Ellis is the founder of autoethnography which, in her words, is a “reflexive approach to research, writing, and storytelling that connects the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social and
political.” She has four published books, five co-edited books, 47 journal articles, 41 book chapters, and many various other items. She has given 80 invited keynotes and workshops in 16 countries. Her work is widely cited and often reprinted. The outside reviewers testify to her impact on the field. One reviewer tellingly connects the scholarship of Dr. Ellis to the reputation of USF when she writes that the “productivity, visibility, depth, and originality” of Dr. Ellis’s scholarship has allowed USF to “become the premiere university for graduate students interested in pursuing qualitative research methods.” For such reasons, Dr. Ellis has the committee’s full support for the honor of “Distinguished University Professor.”

**Dmitry Khavinson, Department of Mathematics & Statistics, College of Arts & Sciences**

Dr. Dmitry Khavinson joined USF in 2006 as Professor of Mathematics, having been recruited from the University of Arkansas. His hire immediately raised the visibility of USF in the mathematical community as noted in the Chair’s Annual Evaluations. He is one of the most prominent and influential scholars in the field of mathematical analysis, widely known for his work in function theory, partial differential equations, harmonic analysis, and potential theory. His research record has been recognized by USF with the Theodore and Venette Askounes-Ashford Distinguished Scholar Award in 2010 and internationally through honorary appointments at the famous Mittag-Leffler Institute (Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences), the Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden), Bar Ilan University and Technion (Israel) and nationally by the universities of Michigan, Brown, and Indiana. His nine outside reviewers are distinguished scholars at nationally and internationally recognized institutions. A number of reviewers remark on Dr. Khavinson’s breakthrough result on the number of zeros of harmonic polynomials in the complex plane because the result settles a long standing question in astrophysics going back to Einstein, namely, how many images of a star one would observe due to gravitational lensing, that is, the curving of light near massive astronomical objects. The pertinent papers are but a small part of his overall output: 90 research articles, one book, and two co-authored books. His contributions to teaching and mentorship spring from his commitment to mathematics education. His course offerings are among the most diverse in the Department of Mathematics. He successfully mentors PhD students, all of whom including the most recent (2013) hold academic faculty positions. Finally, he has extensive service to the research community, having served two tours of duty as program director for analysis at NSF and as editor for four mathematics journals. As one of his reviewers summed up “[Dr. Khavinson] is a well-known and well-respected figure in the international mathematical community, thanks to his track record of publications, his extensive number of plenary talks, his contributions to the mathematics profession via his work at the National Science Foundation, his journal editorships, and his mentoring of graduate students.” We agree whole-heartedly with this assessment and so recommend him for the honor of “Distinguished University Professor.”

**Russell Kirby, Department of Community & Family Health, College of Public Health**

Dr. Russell Kirby joined USF in 2008 as a tenured Full Professor and the Marrell Endowed Chair in the College of Public Health’s Department of Community and Family Health. His previous position was Professor in the Department of Maternal and Child Health at the University of Alabama, Birmingham. Professor Kirby’s record at USF is distinguished in both teaching and research. On the teaching side, he was selected by students as the USF College of
Public Health Outstanding Professor of the Year for 2013. He has also received national recognition for his teaching. In 2007 he received the Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Award for Excellence in Teaching and Mentorship, sponsored by 16 national health organizations through the Coalition for Excellence in MCH Epidemiology and, more recently, he was elected in 2010 to a two-year term as President of the Association of Teachers of Maternal and Child Health. Dr. Kirby’s research record is equally compelling. His doctorate is in human geography from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and he has an MS from the same university in preventive medicine-epidemiology. This skill set is unique and has led him to diverse collaborations that advance a multitude of research interests such as, population health informatics, perinatal epidemiology, birth defects and developmental disabilities monitoring and epidemiology, and the application of spatial analytical techniques and GIS to public health issues and concerns. He has authored or co-authored over 200 publications, with at least 10 per year since 2004. Many of these papers are highly cited because his work has been seminal to understanding the epidemiology and surveillance of birth defects. As one of his reviewers points out “[Dr. Kirby] is one of the leading birth defects epidemiologists in the world.” He clearly merits the committee’s full support for the honor of “Distinguished University Professor.”

Being nominated for DUP status is a significant honor because it indicates that the individual has an outstanding scholarly record and has made significant contributions to USF and her/his profession. With this in mind, I wish to congratulate the following faculty members whose candidacy advanced to consideration by the DUP Recommending Committee, and to extend my admiration for all that they have accomplished: Alan Raymond Hevner (Information Systems/Decision Sciences, College of Business), Autar Kaw (Mechanical Engineering, College of Engineering), Kofi Marfo (Department of Psychological and Social Foundations, College of Education), Robert McCormick (School of Music, College of The Arts), and Joseph Moxley (Department of English, College of Arts & Sciences).

I must take this opportunity to acknowledge the dedication shown by members of the DUP Recommending Committee since they face the challenging task of making their selections from an impressive pool of worthy candidates. This year’s Committee consisted of Professors Roger Ariew, Julie Baldwin, Robert Byrne, Robert Deschenes, Walter Nord, and John Skvoretz (Chair). Moreover, Senior Vice Provost Dwayne Smith, along with Ms. Maryhelen Shuman-Groh from the Provost’s Office, are to be commended for facilitating and supporting the important work of the Committee.

Please join me in congratulating our 2014 Distinguished University Professors Carolyn Ellis, Dmitry Khavinson, and Russell Kirby.

Best regards,

Ralph C. Wilcox
Provost and Executive Vice President
University of South Florida