Bylaws of the Executive Committee of Distinguished Professors

1. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of nine Distinguished Professors. Each year, three are elected for terms of three years, effective at the start of the fall semester.

2. Elections of Members of the Executive Committee

In May of each year, the Chair of the Executive Committee shall invite all Distinguished Professors to submit nominations and self-nominations for candidates for the Executive Committee. All candidates must consent to serve if elected, and provide a statement (maximum of 300 words) regarding how their election will benefit the electorate. Emeriti are not eligible, although they may serve other functions (below).

The election shall be administered by office of the Dean of Faculties. A ballot with all candidates and their statements will be distributed, and each Distinguished Professor allotted three votes, with a maximum of one vote per candidate. The candidates with the three highest vote totals will become members of the Executive Committee.

In the case of a tie for third place, the candidate whose College has the lesser representation on the Executive Committee (calculated from the six members not standing for election and the two candidates with the highest vote totals) will be declared the winner.

Although the terms of the new Executive Committee members do not begin until the start of the fall semester, they may attend all summer meetings and activities.

3. Officers of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall include a Chair and a Vice Chair, and any other officers deemed desirable by the Committee. The Vice Chair substitutes for the Chair when the Chair is not available. The Chair and Vice Chair can divide various duties as they see fit.

4. Election of Officers of the Executive Committee

As early as possible in the fall semester, the Chair of the Executive Committee shall invite all members of the Executive Committee to submit nominations and self-nominations for (1) Chair, (2) Vice-Chair, and (3) any other offices deemed desirable by the Executive Committee. The Chair will submit the nominees to the Dean of Faculties, who will conduct the election.

5. Resignations and Substitutions

Should a member of the Executive Committee resign, the vacancy will be filled at the next May election, with the end date of the term of office corresponding to that of the person who resigned.
(in order to ensure a pattern of electing three new members each year). In a representative scenario, the three highest vote-getters would be assigned three year terms, and the fourth highest the shortened term.

If a resignation occurs far in advance of the May election, the Executive Committee can elect an interim voting member. The interim voting member may be a past member, although this is not a requirement. Attention should also be given to balance among Colleges.

If an Executive Committee member plans a sabbatical or leave lasting at least one semester, and plans to suspend his/her activities, the Committee should be notified so that an interim voting member can be elected.

An Executive Committee member who becomes an emeritus Professor may serve the remainder of his/her term.

In any Executive Committee activity, the Chair shall have the option of asking Distinguished Professors at large and emeriti to substitute in a non-voting capacity for absent Executive Committee members.

6. Plenary Meetings

The Executive Committee is responsible for holding a minimum of one plenary meeting per semester. On an annual basis, three-four meetings should be the norm. These may be combined with meetings with the President, Provost, and similar individuals.

Key activities of the Executive Committee should be summarized at the plenary meeting, or by regular written reports to the Distinguished Professors.

7. Evaluation of Nominees for Distinguished Professor

The Executive Committee participates in the evaluation of nominees for Distinguished Professor to the extent determined by the Provost and Dean of Faculties.

8. Changes to Bylaws

The Bylaws may be changed or amended by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee (six votes out of nine), or by a majority vote of all Distinguished Professors. The entire membership must be notified of any revision.
Appendix: Chair / Executive Committee Customs and Best Practices

(1) After a new Distinguished Professor has been approved by the Provost, Chancellor, or Regents, the Chair should send a brief congratulatory letter.

(2) The Chair should invite new Distinguished Professors to be guests at one "sample meeting" with the Executive Committee (e.g., a session with the President or Provost).

(3) The Chair should recognize and thank any Distinguished Professors moving to emeritus status at the last plenary meeting or reception of the academic year (insofar that this information is known or available).

(4) The activities of the Executive Committee typically include meetings with the President, Provost, Vice-President for Research, Dean's Council, Student Body President, Chancellor, Regents, other University and System officials, the Executive Committees of the Faculty Senate and/or Council of Principal Investigators, Texas State Congressmen/women, United States Congressmen/women, counterparts at the University of Texas, etc.