

Agendum
Oakland University
Board of Trustees Formal Session
February 22, 2016

**APPOINTMENT OF MARIA M. BRYANT TO THE RANK
OF DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR**

A Recommendation

1. **Division and Department:** Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.
2. **Introduction:** In 1988 the Board of Trustees (Board) created the faculty rank of Distinguished Professor. Upon recommendation of the President and Provost, the Board may appoint individuals to the rank of Distinguished Professor for the duration of the individual's active service at Oakland University. Appointments to distinguished professorships are based on the candidate's efforts and accomplishments in the areas of teaching, intellectual contributions and service, giving consideration to the programmatic and institutional setting of the candidate's work at Oakland and the nature of the candidate's assignments and responsibilities, the quality of the candidate's accomplishments and the relation of all the foregoing factors to the objectives of the area or departments, the goals of the college or school, and the mission and long-range vision of the University.

A selection committee of their peers recommended the following faculty member, Maria M. Bryant, for approval to Dr. James P. Lentini, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, to the appointment of Distinguished Professor.
3. **Previous Board Action:** The Board has periodically appointed individuals to the rank of Distinguished Professor at Formal Sessions of the Board.
4. **Budget Implications:** A one-time salary stipend of \$2,500 plus an annual supplies and services allocation of \$1,500, up to five years, for the Distinguished Professor will be paid from the Provost's Discretionary Fund.
5. **Educational Implications:** Recognition of a distinguished faculty member's long-standing dedication to the mission of the institution reinforces a culture that is devoted to excellence in teaching, research, creative endeavor, and service.
6. **Personnel Implications:** None.

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7. **University Reviews/Approvals:** A selection committee of her peers recommended Maria M. Bryant, Professor of Chemistry, for approval to Dr. James P. Lentini, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, to the appointment of Distinguished Professor.

8. **Recommendation:**

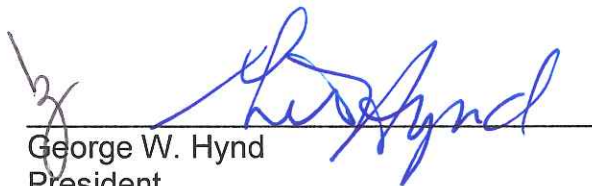
RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees approves the appointment of Maria M. Bryant, Professor of Chemistry, to the rank of Distinguished Professor, effective August 15, 2016.

9. **Attachment:** Biography of Maria M. Bryant.

Submitted to the President
on 2/16, 2016 by


James P. Lentini, D.M.A.
Senior Vice President for
Academic Affairs and Provost

Recommendation on 2/18, 2016
to the Board for Approval by


George W. Hynd
President

BIOGRAPHY

Professor Bryant received her Master of Science and Ph.D. in Chemistry at the University of Wroclaw in Poland in 1973 and 1978 respectively. She remained at the University of Wroclaw in a full time position in the Institute of Chemistry until 1984. Bryant spent 10 years at Southern Illinois University as a research professor and visiting assistant professor before joining Oakland University as an assistant professor in 1991. She was promoted to associate professor in 1994 and to professor in 1999.

Professor Bryant's impact on the scientific community has been enormous. She has published 138 journal articles in peer-reviewed publications and has 4700 citations with a Hirsch h-index of 36, which is designed to reflect the impact of recognition of work. Two of Professor Bryant's publications that appeared in the flagship journal of the American Chemistry Society, Chemical Reviews, stand out. "Origins of Structure and Energetics of van der Waals Clusters from ab Initio Calculations" (1994, 94, 1723-1765) and "State of the Art and Challenges of the ab Initio Theory of Intermolecular Interactions" (2000, 100, 4227-4252) have acquired 660 and 364 citations. Most papers in chemistry never accumulate 10 citations in total, even after many years. Seven of her publications have more than 100 citations and an eighth has 99. She has received more than 2.3 million dollars in grants, primarily from the National Science Foundation.

In addition to her outstanding scholarship, Professor Bryant is an outstanding teacher and mentor. Her primary teaching responsibility is physical chemistry which is an exceedingly difficult core course for chemistry majors. With support from the National Science Foundation, Professor Bryant developed one of the first computational chemistry courses in the nation directed to lower level chemistry students. Using computer modeling and visualization to help students understand complex concepts she has been successful in improving student learning and increasing their interest in chemistry. Professor Bryant is also a dedicated mentor to students. She has funded student researchers in her lab and engages them with topics that spark their imagination. Two undergraduate students contributed to Professor Bryant's 2011 publication on gold chemistry and three students wrote honors/capstone theses on gold clusters and their interactions. One of her first papers, coauthored also by an undergraduate student, has since generated 60 citations. She strives to provide inquisitive students the best experiences a college education can offer. She pushes her research students to excellence, to ensure that they will graduate from Oakland as outstanding chemists.

Professor Bryant contributes to Oakland University and her profession through her outstanding service. Here at OU, Professor Bryant serves on the Honors College Council and, as part of her duties, reviews Honors thesis proposals. She also is a member of the Provost Student Research Award Committee where she has reviewed many research proposals from both, undergraduate and graduate students. In service to the department, she has played a significant role in the acquisition and maintenance of computing infrastructure. The first high performance computer at Oakland University was acquired through an instrumentation grant written by Professor Bryant and funded by NSF. She also purchased and installed necessary software and interfaces to assure

the system could be used by faculty and students in the department. She later led an effort to double the system's computing power and continues to administer the system. Until 2015, she also managed the department's computer laboratory which consists of 25 desktop computers.

Nationally, Professor Bryant participates in NSF review panels and is a frequent reviewer of grant proposals. She has served on a number of these NSF review panels, to which only nationally-recognized experts are invited. She also co-organized four Telluride symposia on intermolecular interactions. The Telluride symposia are invitation-only gatherings of a few dozen specialists in a given field and she was successful in attracting the participation of prominent scientists. This national work brings recognition to Oakland University.

In summary, throughout Professor Bryant's 25-year career at Oakland University, her research has consistently been characterized by high scientific standards. She has reached across subdisciplines of theoretical chemistry for inspiration. She is teaching others how to investigate the realm of theoretical chemistry beneficial to real problems. Professor Bryant is a preeminent scientist who has brought much recognition to Oakland all the while remaining committed to her students and engaged with the OU community.