

**Agendum
Oakland University
Board of Trustees Formal Session
February 10, 2020**

**APPOINTMENT OF KAREN SHERIDAN 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, Karen Sheridan, 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.

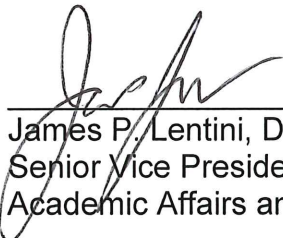
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7. **University Reviews/Approvals:** A selection committee of her peers recommended Karen Sheridan, Professor of Music in the School of Music, Theatre and Dance in the College of Arts and Sciences, for approval to Dr. James P. Lentini, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, to the appointment of Distinguished Professor.

8. **Recommendation:** RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees approves the appointment of Karen Sheridan, Professor of Music, to the rank of Distinguished Professor, effective August 15, 2020.

9. **Attachment:** Biography of Karen Sheridan.

Submitted to the President
on 1/24, 2020 by


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

Recommendation on 1/24, 2020
to the Board for Approval by


Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D.
President

Attachment A

Karen Sheridan, joined the faculty of Oakland University in 1991 as an assistant professor, she was promoted to associate professor in 1997 and to full professor in 2008. She holds her Master of Fine Arts from the Goodman School of Drama. She has also studied mime at Ecole de Mime Etienne Decroux in Paris. In addition to her experience at Oakland University, she has taught at the Ringling Brothers Clown College, the New Haven Playhouse, Columbia College, and Loyola, Webster and DePaul universities. Her 40-year teaching and professional career exhibits preeminence and excellence in scholarship, teaching and service.

Karen Sheridan's primary scholarship area is theatre performance and she has performed and directed nationally and internationally. For over 20 years she has been invited to act and direct with the Peninsula Players in Wisconsin, she also regularly performs at the Williamston Theatre, the Detroit Public Theatre, the Meadow Brook Theatre, and the Jewish Ensemble Theatre. Nationally she has performed with Big League Theatricals in New York City and the Cit Lit Theatre Company in Chicago as well as other venues. She has been invited to share her scholarship and to guest lecture at the University of Michigan, Northwestern, University of Chicago, Loyola, among other universities and she has appeared on many panels and presented at numerous workshops. Her acting has garnered critical praise and she has received over 30 honors and awards over her career. In addition to her active stage career, Professor Sheridan has also worked in television, film, commercials, is a well-known dialect coach and has given live readings, narrations and voice overs. Finally, she has written six plays.

Professor Sheridan's teaching is closely intertwined with her work as a performing artist. As a professional who auditions, rehearses and performs, she brings valuable insights and credibility to her instruction. She has taught a wide variety of courses and has outstanding student evaluations. She was instrumental in developing the Classical Theatre Study Abroad Program in Greece and many of the students who have participated in the program say it has been transformative. Despite her performance and directing schedule, Sheridan is a notable mentor to students who is generous with her time and noted for having an open door. One measure of her success as a teacher and mentor is the large number of students who have gone on to their own successful careers in theatre. Her students note that she inspires them and her colleagues note that it is rare to walk by her office when a student is not present.

Professor Sheridan has deep service within her department and the university where she has served on numerous committees. She is a valued mentor to young faculty as they navigate the early years of their careers and the promotion and tenure process. Her work in the community includes the Meadow Brook Theatre season planning committee, acting as a liaison for the American College Theatre Festival and as a member of the Advisory Board for Stone's Throw Theatre Company in Lapeer. She tirelessly advocates for theatre and theatre education and offers herself to local and regional schools for performing, acting, directing, and dialect workshops, further inspiring middle and high school students on the art of acting and theatre.

Professor Sheridan is a notable advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion. As a director, she has included sign language interpreters to her productions making her shows accessible to the deaf community. The sign language professionals are often in costume and integrated into the performance itself. She has pursued funding to get every performance signed and the signers have used her productions as training for their own students and as examples for the rest of their industry. Oakland University students are used as examples in their conferences. Professor Sheridan has also advocated the need to provide more opportunities for students of color and has demonstrated her commitment through her casting and production decisions. In recognition of her efforts, Professor Sheridan was selected to receive the 2018 Monica E. Emerson Diversity Award that recognizes achievements, creative programming efforts or innovative diversity and inclusion concepts in developing a culturally diverse, compassionate university community reflective of inclusive excellence.

Professor Karen Sheridan's contributions to acting, directing, and dialect coaching, teaching and service have met the standard of preeminence and are worthy of the title of Distinguished Professor.