

THE WILLIAM L. DUREN JR. '26

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PROFESSORSHIP

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P R O G R A M

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# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

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Dear faculty colleagues,

I am writing to solicit expressions of interest in and applications for **The William L. Duren '26 Professorship Program**. The program was established and endowed with a generous gift from Professor William L. Duren, A&S '26, M.A. '28, Ph.D., LL.D. honoris causa '59, professor emeritus of mathematics and former dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Virginia.

Each year, as many as four tenured faculty members in a liberal arts or science or engineering discipline will serve as Duren Professors. The terms and conditions of appointment, responsibilities of Duren Professors, and perquisites are described in detail in the accompanying text.

Duren Professors enjoy an especially close relationship to the college during their tenure in the program. They are provided with additional resources that permit them to adopt distinctive pedagogies (team teaching, use of auxiliary materials or electronic information technologies, and others) and to arrange for and facilitate distinctive kinds of meaningful interactions with students enrolled in the courses they teach as Duren Professors. Whenever possible, courses and related activities—supplemental lectures, dinners, and so on—should take place in Robert C. Cudd Hall, so as to strengthen Duren Professors' identification with the college.

I cordially invite—indeed, urge—tenured members of the faculty to consider participating in this program. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Trina Beck at ext. 2806 or [tbeck@tulane.edu](mailto:tbeck@tulane.edu). Additional information is also available on <http://college.tulane.edu/duren.htm>. Many thanks.

**James MacLaren**  
Dean of Newcomb-Tulane College

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## OBJECTIVE

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The objective of the Duren Professorship Program is to support professional activity that is less discipline specific and less oriented toward the traditions of graduate education and the scholarly activity of the disciplines, and more oriented toward the overarching purposes and values of undergraduate liberal arts education. The program is also intended to facilitate informal yet intellectually rewarding interactions between members of the faculty and students who participate in activities organized by Duren Professors.

Duren Professors are drawn temporarily from the tenured ranks of the faculty in the liberal arts and sciences on the basis of their appreciation for and sensitivity to collegiate values. They may have a pronounced interest in undergraduate teaching and unusual success as teachers of undergraduates, or research interests and writings that, at this point in their careers, are multidisciplinary or generalist in nature, or an unusual and interesting prospectus for use of the resources provided by the Duren Program that advances the program's objectives in other ways. Because Duren Professors are selected from the tenured ranks of the larger faculty, they have already demonstrated their qualifications as scholars and disciplinary specialists.

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## TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT

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Each year, as many as four tenured members of the faculty in the liberal arts and sciences may serve as Duren Professors. The term of service is normally one year but may be renewed. Duren Professors are selected on the basis of a proposal that is reviewed by a selection committee consisting of the dean of the Newcomb-Tulane College and other members of the college community. Each Duren Professor is provided with a \$4,000 account, to be used as suggested below. In addition, there is a supplemental fund from which Duren Professors may draw to support other activities related to their tenure as Duren Professors.

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## RESPONSIBILITIES OF DUREN PROFESSORS

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By intention, the responsibilities of Duren Professors are described only in general terms to allow faculty applicants maximum flexibility to design their involvement in varied ways that best fulfill the objectives of the program. The intention is to give the freest possible rein to prospective Duren Professors' imaginations in crafting their participation. The intention is also to respond to existing faculty interest in certain kinds of activity that is consistent with the program, for which there might not otherwise be adequate funding. The following list is intended to be illustrative, not prescriptive or exhaustive. Some of the following activities entail additional costs, which the Duren Professor's account and the supplemental funding is used to absorb. The account minimum is set at \$4,000 specifically to permit Duren Professors to secure partial release from their regular departmental teaching (for purposes of team teaching, for example) should they

choose to utilize the resources in that way; however, there is certainly no requirement that they do so. The resources might be used, alternatively, to secure the services of a graduate assistant, or to meet the costs of any of the supplemental activities envisioned in the following illustrative examples. Wherever possible, Duren Professors' activities take place in Robert C. Cudd Hall.

Duren Professors may

- *engage in team teaching, where the two members of the team represent different disciplines, thus demonstrating to students the integral nature of knowledge and the sometimes fluid, “constructed” nature of the boundaries among disciplines; offer courses of a generalist rather than a highly discipline-specific type; adopt a general “modes of inquiry” approach (“Humanists, Social Scientists, and Scientists Look at Language”) or an approach that addresses fundamental, global questions across a range of disciplines (“Democratic Institutions from Historical and Crosscultural Perspectives”), thus fulfilling the objective of course work that is more consonant with the traditions of collegiate education;*
- *offer methods courses (for example, courses on the nature of the source materials used by scholars in historical disciplines and the interrelationship between the sources utilized and the questions one can pose and address;*
- *arrange for supplemental experiences beyond the classroom that extend and enrich the formal classroom experience and are thematically and intellectually linked to the content of the course: field work, a related concert series, a related cocurricular lecture series, dinners with informal presentations by students in the class or visiting lecturers, travel to local archival collections or museums to consult primary materials, and so on;*
- *offer courses in the history and philosophy of science;*
- *enlist the participation of faculty members in activities that enrich the content of existing courses; for example, visits to regular courses from faculty colleagues representing a range of perspectives, supplemental informal gatherings and events, and so on;*
- *offer courses that demonstrate the applications and extensions of Duren Professors' previous research to new intellectual problems;*
- *offer courses that involve an unusual and distinctive pedagogy or an experiential component for which additional resources might be required; and so on.*

Courses taught by Duren Professors may carry the designation “Prerequisite: permission of instructor.” A limitation on class size is the prerogative of the instructor, particularly in those instances where class size is crucial to the nature of the pedagogy or the intellectual experience envisioned. If the course is to be taught in the classroom in Cudd Hall, the maximum possible number of enrollees is thirty. Where possible, Duren Professors meet with prospective enrollees prior to the beginning of the course for an introductory, private conversation, which sets an appropriate tone and establishes expectations as to the nature of the subsequent experience and to appropriate student motivation for it. Duren Professors are encouraged to offer courses that can be incorporated into regular departmental offerings, so that they fulfill major requirements, for example.

In addition, Duren Professors are expected to participate fully in the life of the college during their tenure. They are encouraged to attend the Dean's Coffees and other such activities, and in general make themselves available as mentors to undergraduates.

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# APPLICATION PROCEDURES

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By design, the application procedure is informal and relatively unstructured. Prospective Duren Professors may submit a proposal via e-mail to Trina Beck in the Office of Cocurricular Programs at [tbeck@tulane.edu](mailto:tbeck@tulane.edu) or via printed copy to the Office of Cocurricular Programs, Robert C. Cudd Hall, Room 204. The proposal should include the faculty member's (or members') department, e-mail address, mailing address, and telephone number. It should describe briefly (no more than two pages, typed, double-spaced) but precisely what activities the professor intends to undertake as Duren Professor (the nature of the course, supplemental activities, etc.) and, more importantly, how the proposed activities fulfill the special objectives of the Duren Professorship Program. A budget explaining how the resources (the \$4,000 award plus supplemental funds, if applicable) will be used should also be included, again emphasizing how the expenditures fulfill the objectives of the program and facilitate worthwhile professional activity that would not otherwise be possible. Proposals for the 2008/09 academic year must be submitted no later than 5:00 P.M. on Friday, February 15, 2008.

The prospective Duren Professor's department chair is required to approve the professor's participation in the program, to ensure that it is consistent with regular departmental activity.

*The William L. Duren Jr. '26 Professorship Program is administered by the  
Newcomb-Tulane College Office of Cocurricular Programs.*

