In an edge-colored graph $G$, a path is said to be a rainbow path if no two of its edges share a color. The rainbow connection number of a connected graph $G$, denoted by $rc(G)$, is the minimum number of colors needed to color the edges of $G$ in such a way that there exists at least one rainbow path between every pair of vertices.

We introduce an additional condition involving a distinguished color. It is not always possible to satisfy both this new condition and rainbow connectedness with just $rc(G)$ colors; this leads to the definition of the distinguished-color rainbow connection number of a graph $G$, denoted by $drc(G)$. We present results for $drc(G)$ for several specific classes of graphs and look at general relationships between $drc(G)$ and $rc(G)$. We also investigate related questions involving path length. (Received September 17, 2013)