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Parent Policy: [Awards for Teaching Excellence Policy](#)

## Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching Procedure

<b>Office of Administrative Responsibility:</b>	University Governance
<b>Approver:</b>	Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
<b>Scope:</b>	Compliance with University procedure extends to all members of the University community.

### Overview

The Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching was instituted at the University of Alberta in 2011.

### Purpose

To provide the selection process, eligibility requirements and adjudication criteria for the Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching at the University of Alberta. This award is intended to recognize graduate-level teaching excellence by **full-time continuing** academic staff (regardless of seniority), to publicize such excellence to the University and the wider community, to encourage the pursuit of such excellence, and to promote informed discussion of graduate teaching and its improvement at the University of Alberta

## PROCEDURE

### 1. ELIGIBILITY

Any individual who teaches graduate students at the University of Alberta as a full-time continuing member of the academic teaching staff (Category A1.1 or A1.6) is eligible. Nominees must have taught graduate students within the last 24 months of the date of nomination. If an eligible individual takes on a new position that places him/her in a different staff category, that individual will remain eligible for nomination for 24 months after his/her reclassification. Retired members of the teaching staff remain eligible for nomination up to 12 months following retirement from the University of Alberta.

Staff and students in any department that teaches graduate students are encouraged to submit nominations to their department Chair. Each department is allowed one nomination. The resubmission of nominations in subsequent years is welcomed.

### 2. NOMINATION

The documentation accompanying a nomination should provide specific supporting information addressing each of the criteria set out below (under the heading "Criteria for the Award"). In particular:

- a. Student assessments are required for evaluation of adjudication criteria 3.c, d, e, f, i and j. Student assessments should provide information about the quality of graduate teaching over a period of years. Letters from graduate alumni, trainees or other learners are also valuable and provide information on the long-term effect of the nominee's teaching.
- b. **External peer** evaluations must be included with the nomination (see criterion 3.b). A minimum of two are required. Only the department Chair or Dean may solicit external evaluations. At least one such evaluation must come from a peer in a related field at another academic institution; only one such evaluation may be from a former trainee or learner. Letters to external evaluators must advise such evaluators that their assessments will be kept confidential and that only the department Chair or Dean

and the GFC UTAC will be privy to the information provide. The external peer evaluations should be submitted in the original and must be current; they must not be excerpted or abridged.

GFC UTAC feels that assessments by external evaluators are limited only by the amount of graduate teaching-related information submitted to them. Nominators are encouraged, therefore, to compile comprehensive graduate teaching materials for their candidates (e.g., course outlines, samples of handouts, examinations, assignments) so that external evaluators have adequate information to assess the nominee.

- c. Letters from colleagues regarding graduate teaching, course materials, range of graduate courses and activities related to teaching, are valuable for evaluation of adjudication criteria 3.a, g, h and j.
- d. A statement by the nominee explaining his/her graduate teaching philosophy is required. When preparing the graduate teaching philosophy statement, nominees are encouraged to describe not only the 'what' but especially the 'how' and the 'why' of their teaching.

The nomination, including documentation, must not exceed 20 pages. The pages GFC UTAC will consider must be consecutive and numbered 1 through 20 in the bottom right-hand corner; the Award Nominator's checklist (see link provided under FORMS below) must be included with the nomination as an unnumbered first page to each of the twelve (12) copies submitted. A title page and a table of contents must be submitted as unnumbered pages to each of the twelve (12) copies submitted. Nominations and all supporting documentation must be in a 12-point font. (NOTE: Anything more than 20 pages will be removed prior to distribution to GFC UTAC members. Any page where two pages have been reduced to one page will be counted as two pages.) Back-to-back copying of material is encouraged. The nominee's name must appear on the first page of the nomination. Nomination packages must be stapled in the top left-hand corner. Do not use cerlox binding, binders, or report covers.

Supporting documentation submitted to GFC UTAC must be in English. Letters must be signed. Electronic signatures are acceptable. If material has been translated, please include the original document(s) as appendices. (These appendices will not be included in the total page count.)

Nomination packages must not include extensive course outlines, bibliographies, examinations, papers, etc. This is a graduate teaching award, so detailed information about graduate teaching and research publication is relevant; a very brief curriculum vitae is invited to be included within the 20-page limit. The package must include a brief executive summary prepared by the nominator(s) that outlines (preferably in point form) the key points upon which the nomination is based; this summary is a self-standing document and it is included, as well, within the 20-page limit.

**Twelve (12) copies of each nomination package must be submitted. The deadline for receipt of complete nomination packages is 4:00pm on the last Friday of February. There will be no discretion to extend the deadline.** Please submit nominations to GFC UTAC, c/o Strategic Initiatives Manager, Centre for Teaching and Learning, 5-02 Cameron Library.

GFC UTAC recognizes that nominations from different departments and Faculties might vary considerably and takes this into account during its deliberations. Nominators requiring assistance and advice to prepare their nominations should consult the Strategic Initiatives Manager, Centre for Teaching and Learning.

### 3. CRITERIA FOR THE AWARD

The adjudication criteria for the Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching are set out below (not necessarily in order of importance) and nominations and documents should address these criteria as much as possible:

- a. Exhibits a consistently superior command of the subject matter.
- b. Demonstrates excellent planning and organization in graduate course outlines and objectives, reading and laboratory assignments, handouts, projects, grading schemes, examinations and all other material associated with graduate teaching.\*
- c. Instills vital interest in and enthusiasm for the subject on the part of students.
- d. Strongly encourages and fosters independent study.

- e. Generates a desire for continued learning.
- f. Strongly encourages students to be critical, to think independently and to solve problems.
- g. Presents the subject matter at an appropriate level of rigor.
- h. Demands that students have a comprehensive, coherent understanding of the subject matter.
- i. Consistently demonstrates a concern for student progress and is available and approachable for out-of-classroom consultation.
- j. Is a valuable resource for both students and colleagues.
- k. Contributes to curriculum development for the graduate program.
- l. Promotes and contributes to excellence in graduate teaching by collaborating with others within the University and/or with communities at large.

It is suggested that all nominees ensure all material submitted to support the application is current and pertains to the award the nominee is seeking.

\*External peer evaluations of criterion b are to be submitted with the nominations.

#### 4. ADMINISTRATION OF THE AWARD.

The GFC UTAC will adjudicate the award.

Each year, up to three awards will be funded; at least one award will be given annually. No one individual is to receive the award more than once.

Following the GFC UTAC adjudication meeting, the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) or delegate will notify recipients by telephone call. Recipients will then receive formal written notification from the Chair of GFC UTAC.

Individual award recipients will be publicly recognized at a special reception, at *Celebrate! Teaching. Learning. Research.* and shall receive an appropriate memento.

## **DEFINITIONS**

Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use. [[▲Top](#)]

<b>Full-Time Continuing</b>	Full-time academic staff (Categories A1.1 or A1.6) as defined in <i>Recruitment Policy (Appendix A) Definition and Categories of Academic Staff and Colleagues</i> in UAPPOL.
<b>External Peer</b>	A peer from an academic institution OTHER than the University of Alberta.

## **FORMS**

Should a link fail, please contact [uappol@ualberta.ca](mailto:uappol@ualberta.ca). [[▲Top](#)]

[Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching Nominator's Checklist](#)

## **RELATED LINKS**

Should a link fail, please contact [uappol@ualberta.ca](mailto:uappol@ualberta.ca). [[▲Top](#)]

[Recruitment Policy \(Appendix A\) Definition and Categories of Academic Staff and Colleagues \(UAPPOL\)](#)