

Distinguished Teacher Award

THE AWARD

The Distinguished Teaching Award was established in 1987 at the University of Lethbridge under the auspices of the President. **The award is in recognition of the central importance of teaching to the philosophy and goals of the University of Lethbridge and to provide recognition to those members of the academic staff who excel in teaching.**

The award is open to all full and part-time members of the academic staff currently employed at the University of Lethbridge (i.e who have taught for the University since July 1, 2009 or, in the case of retired academic staff members, who have an agreement with the University to perform teaching duties in the near future). Each year the Selection Committee for Distinguished Teaching Award selects, from among nominees provided by members of the university community, usually one member of the academic staff for an award.

The award consists of a medal and a certificate presented to the recipient at Convocation, and the inclusion of the recipient's name on a list of Distinguished Teaching Awards published annually in the University Calendar.

SELECTION COMMITTEE

Members of the Selection Committee for the Distinguished Teaching Award are appointed by the President and normally consist of six faculty, two undergraduate students, one graduate student, one Senate and one Alumni Association representative. Faculty are chosen by the President to represent a broad range of disciplinary interests and, therefore, a broad range of teaching activities; students are appointed by the President following nomination by the Students' Union; Alumni and Senate representatives are selected by their respective bodies. To provide continuity, members are assigned to either a one-, two- or three-year term. In 2009/2010 academic year the Selection Committee members are Nancy Grigg (Chair), David Hay, Ruth Grant Kalischuk, Peter Visentin, Ken Vos, Susan Chomistek, Robert Christiansen, Alex Massé, Jason Pan, and Annabree Fairweather.

CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Teaching at the University of Lethbridge is defined broadly and includes some or all of the following activities: classroom instruction (including lecturing, small-group teaching, and laboratory instruction); consultation with students outside of class (including individual tutoring, advising, independent study, and other curriculum related activities); production of educational materials (including textbooks, audio/video materials, laboratory guides, and computer software); development of innovative teaching methods; and research on university teaching.

In choosing recipients for the award, the Selection Committee seeks from the nominators and other sources, sufficient evidence that the nominee's teaching reflects some combination of the previously mentioned activities and some combination of the following characteristics of excellent teaching:

1. Demonstrates consistently superior planning and organization for instruction.
2. Teaches clearly and at an appropriate level of rigour.

3. Uses effective methods of instruction (appropriate to content and student needs) and exhibits innovation and risk-taking in exploration and experimentation with instructional methodology.
4. Demonstrates consistently superior command of subject matter and of methods of inquiry in that subject.
5. Requires coherent and comprehensive understanding of subject material.
6. Instils vital and enduring interest in the subject matter and in further enquiry into it.
7. Fosters autonomous learning in students by encouraging critical and independent thinking and by being open-minded toward students' contributions.
8. Demonstrates concern for student progress; assesses student needs accurately, provides help effectively, and is available and approachable for out-of-class consultation.
9. Evaluates fairly and openly in accordance with course objectives.
10. Demonstrates concern for continuous professional growth as a teacher through reflection and other means of self and collaborative evaluation.

NOMINATION PROCEDURES

Nominator's Responsibilities:

Nominations of a member of the academic staff (faculty, academic assistants and professional librarians) may be made by any member of the university community (students, faculty, alumni, staff).

Nomination forms and information are available from either the Office of the President or the Students' Union. **Individuals contemplating developing a nomination in regard to a member of the academic staff may contact the Chair of the Distinguished Teaching Award Selection Committee for information. (Contact committee Secretary for details, 403-329-2482)**

The following guidelines for nomination should be followed carefully to ensure complete information is available to the Selection Committee.

1. The nominator is expected to provide written comment (usually in the form of a letter addressed to the Selection Committee) on the nominee's teaching activities. Nominators should also indicate the basis of their familiarity with the nominee's teaching.
2. The nominator is responsible to obtain from another **three** members of the university community additional supporting comments (letters) regarding the nominee's teaching. The nomination materials must include letters from **at least one student** and **at least one member of the academic staff**. **Please note:** The nominator should request and can only accept formal letters that have been signed and put into a sealed envelope by the additional three members. As the Committee will accept only the nominator's letter and three additional letters as part of the formal nomination materials, it is the nominator's responsibility to insure that:
 - all of the letters speak to the criteria described above;
 - all are submitted as one package to the Office of the President, addressed Attention: Distinguished Teaching Award Committee.
3. The nominator must complete the appended cover form and append it to the supporting documents.

4. The nominator must deliver the complete set of nomination materials in a sealed envelope to the Office of the President, addressed **Attention: Distinguished Teaching Award Committee**.

The deadline for receipt of nominations is **4:00 P.M., FEBRUARY 1, 2010**. Nominations which are incomplete as of this deadline will be returned to the nominator.

Please Note: Although the names and signatures of the three additional authors of supporting comments are required, they will not be provided to the nominees.

Nominee's Responsibilities:

1. The Committee strongly recommends that the nominee submit a Teaching Dossier that, at a minimum, includes representative recent student evaluation materials from a selection of courses and a selection of teaching materials such as course outlines, reading lists, and examinations or other evaluation procedures. When appropriate, information regarding independent studies and graduate studies supervised by the nominee should also be included.
2. Nominees whose names are standing for a second year are encouraged to revise their supporting documentation to ensure that the Selection Committee has current information on which to make decisions.

COMMITTEE ACTION FOLLOWING NOMINATION

Following receipt of the nominating materials, the Selection Committee seeks consent from each of the nominees to allow their names to stand for consideration of an award. Further, the nominees will be requested to provide consent to the committee to obtain additional evidence concerning their teaching activities from official records of such teaching that may reside in the offices of the unit head (department chair, school director), Deans of the Faculties within which they teach and/or the Vice-President (Academic). This additional information will consist of a curriculum vitae, available records (e.g., summaries of student teaching evaluations), and written comments from the appropriate unit heads, Deans and Vice-President (Academic). As well, in order to be considered for the Distinguished Teaching Award, the nominee must sign the Consent to Release of Personal Information.

The Committee will also invite the nominees to submit any additional materials considered relevant to the evaluation of teaching effectiveness. For example, any materials considered appropriate for inclusion in a Teaching Dossier (as recommended by the CAUT guidelines) are welcomed, as are further written evaluations by other students and members of the academic staff.

Nomination materials are retained for a period of two years from date of receipt, and are included in all deliberations during the subsequent two-year period. Thus, once nominated, a member of the academic staff is automatically considered for an award in each of two years provided that the member retains a teaching position at the University. Additional materials may be submitted by the nominee at any time during the two-year period.

Further, the Committee will invite nominators, if they choose, to replace a previous year's original nomination package if additional information has since become available that strengthens the nominee's case.

Finally, the Committee carefully reviews each nomination in respect to the Award criteria and through a fair process, selects the most worthy candidate. Usually, the Committee selects one nominee to receive the award each year.