

Dean's Award for Excellence in Teaching Terms of Reference

Online Nomination Package Submission

2023-2024 Deadline:

These awards have been created to celebrate and honour excellence in teaching in the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies and to recognize and promote faculty members' commitment to teaching, learning and student success. Exceptional teachers must be nominated by their teaching community (i.e. colleagues and students). In so doing, these awards recognize quality teaching as one of the reputational strengths of the Faculty.

Criteria

Listed below are the key principles on which we assess the strengths of nominations. The list is not exhaustive, and nominees may wish to include additional relevant elements in their file. The Adjudication Sub-Committee will also weigh these criteria differently, as appropriate, to the different categories: tenured or tenure-stream faculty, contract, and teaching assistant.

- i. Evidence of deep and sustained student learning;
- ii. Evidence of support for student growth and development, which may include support for Decolonization, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (DEDI);
- iii. Clear learning objectives and priorities, appropriately aligned with teaching methods, assessments, and assignments;
- iv. Engagement with and contributions to scholarship and/or a community of practice in the field of teaching and learning;
- v. Evidence of contributions to curricular development and/or leadership in teaching.

Eligibility

Each year, departments are encouraged to nominate candidates in each of the categories (faculty, contract faculty, teaching assistant) as follows:

- Large departments: up to three nominations per category;
- Medium departments: up to two nominations per category;
- Small departments: up to one nomination per category.

The total number of nominees should not exceed four across all categories per department.

One award will be offered in the following categories each year. All current teaching faculty and graduate students within the following categories are eligible:

- Faculty (tenured or probationary tenure-stream faculty) with four years of teaching experience in LA&PS;
- Contract faculty, adjunct faculty, or CLAs who have taught a minimum of 30 credits in LA&PS;
- Teaching assistants who have been in courses equal to or exceeding 6.0 credits in LA&PS.

Award winners become eligible again after six years. Members of the Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Success (CTLSS) and members of the Dean's Award for Teaching Excellence Adjudication Sub-Committee are not eligible to apply for this award during their year(s) of service. The Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Success looks forward to receiving nominations from all units.

Application Process for Teaching Assistants

The following components are welcomed:

1. Signed approval from the Chair of the Department or nominating faculty member. A template is available.
2. Statement of Teaching Philosophy (maximum 1000 words).
 - Statement of Teaching Philosophy should reflect on past teaching practices, effectiveness, and student feedback.
3. A letter of support from a course director who has supervised the nominee to provide context to their responsibilities as teaching assistant (maximum 500 words).
4. One or more letters of support from students and faculty (maximum 3 letters, 500 words per letter; at least one letter from a student).
5. Nominees are encouraged to include materials created for class such as slides, lesson plans, activities, and new resources (maximum 5 pages).
6. An Updated Curriculum Vitae (C.V.).

Course evaluations are not required for teaching assistants. Please note that application packages that exceed the maximum pages or word counts will not be considered.

Application Process for Faculty and Contract Faculty

The following components are welcomed:

1. Nomination letter from the Department or a nominating colleague (maximum 1000 words).
2. Statement of Teaching Philosophy (maximum 2000 words).

3. Letters of support from students and colleagues (maximum 5 letters and 1000 words per letter; at least two from students and one from a supporting colleague).
4. Summary of course evaluations presented using a summary form available from CTLSS.
5. Nominees are encouraged to include materials created for class such as slides, lesson plans, activities, and new resources (maximum 5 pages).
6. Updated Curriculum Vitae (C.V.)

Please note that application packages that exceed the maximum pages or word counts will not be considered.

Additional Information on the Application Process

Below are some suggestions on what might be considered within these categories:

Nomination letter

The Department or a nominating colleague may submit a nomination letter, outlining the nominee's particular distinctions in teaching within the unit. Teaching assistants only need to submit a template form signed by their Department Chair or nominating faculty member.

Statement of Teaching Philosophy

- Statement of Teaching Philosophy should reflect on past teaching practice, effectiveness, and student feedback, and
- Provide succinct examples of the methods used to achieve teaching goals relevant to the award (examples may include retention rates, course outlines, syllabi, assignments, tests, learning outcomes, etc.)

Contact CTLSS for information on additional resources to assist in creating an effective statement of teaching philosophy.

Letters of support from students and colleagues

a) Guidelines for students include:

- *In what capacity do you know this instructor (course, tutorial etc.)?*
- *Describe a significant learning experience you had with this instructor?*
- *What significance or impact has this learning had on you?*
- *How has this instructor guided, mentored or supported your learning?*
- *Are there any additional comments you would like to make about this instructor?*

b) Discipline Expert's Letter

A discipline expert (from York or from outside York) would focus on teaching and learning issues, which can only be addressed from the perspective of the discipline. Ideally, this person would be familiar with the course outlines, required readings and assignments in courses taught by the nominee and could comment on how well the nominee addresses unique challenges of the course.

c) Teaching Colleague

A teaching colleague could focus on pedagogical practices of the nominee, their strengths as an educator, the clarity of learning objectives, pedagogical tools used, and the effectiveness and creativity of teaching methods and assessments.

d) Undergraduate Director, or Program Coordinator, or Chair

This referee could provide context for the nominee's teaching with the overall program curriculum.

e) Other Letters

Other letters may be from teaching assistants or other colleagues who have worked with or are familiar with the nominee's work.

Summary of Course Evaluations

Course evaluations are best presented in a consistent fashion, using the summary form provided by the Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Success. Any missing course data should have an explanation detailing why the data is unavailable.

Tenured or probationary tenure-stream faculty would include summary data from the most recent four years of teaching, indicating the standard teaching load in the unit.

Contract faculty would include summary data for the most recent courses totaling 30 credits taught in LA&PS.

Curriculum Vitae (C.V.)

An academic CV is typically more extensive than a standard resume as it emphasizes your contributions to academia and showcases your expertise. An academic C.V. includes research experience, teaching experience (including teaching assistantships), academic appointments, grants and fellowships, awards, professional memberships, conferences and workshops, service, community outreach, languages, and technical skills.

Adjudication Process

The Adjudication Sub-Committee is appointed by the Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Success, and consists of faculty members who have distinguished themselves in teaching, to include:

- One YUFA colleague from the humanities
- One YUFA colleague from the social sciences
- One YUFA colleague from professional studies
- One contract faculty member
- One undergraduate student representative recommended by the LA&PS Student Council.
- One Teaching Assistant
- One *ex-officio* representative from the Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Success who will chair the Sub-Committee and report on the process of deliberation.

The Sub-Committee will review the nominations and recommend candidates to the Dean. The Sub-Committee may declare a failed process if its members judge that the nomination files in a category do not satisfy the criteria for the award. The Sub-Committee also reserves the right, in exceptional circumstances, to carry the nominations forward to a subsequent year. The Sub-Committee may also notify the unit Chair of nominations it judges to be ideal candidates for the University-wide teaching award and for other external awards to encourage wider recognition of the teaching excellence.

Timelines

- May – deadline for submission of nominations
- May/June – adjudication Sub-committee to make its recommendation to the Dean
- September/October – recognition and awards announced.

Recognition and Award

CTLSS recommends that:

- Awards be presented at Faculty Council with a reception to recognize teaching award winners.
- Award winner(s) receive funding to attend the STLHE conference, or an alternate teaching conference or to complete a teaching project.
- The names of winners be published on the LA&PS Teaching and Learning website and on University webpages (e.g. Y-File, Teaching Commons).