January 16, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO:    Deans
       Director, Center for Teaching Excellence
       Student Body President
       President, Graduate Student Council

SUBJECT: Presidential Professor for Teaching Excellence Awards

In 2003, Texas A&M established a University-level award for teaching excellence. Each year, two faculty may receive this award, the “Presidential Professor for Teaching Excellence.” Presidential Professors receive an after-tax stipend of $25,000 in addition to salary, and awardees bear the designation “Presidential Professor for Teaching Excellence” for the remainder of their careers. The awards are announced and presented at the spring commencement ceremonies.

I ask that the dean and faculty of each college, using the criteria and selection process in the attached document, nominate one member of the college faculty for these awards, making provision for taking student views into account. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee has recommended that each college nominate only one faculty member, given the burden of reviewing voluminous material for each nominee. The Center for Teaching Excellence, Student Government, and the Graduate Student Council each may nominate one member of the university faculty in addition to those nominated by the colleges. I ask the Speaker of the Faculty Senate to appoint a committee to select four members of the faculty from among the nominees submitted by the colleges, the Center for Teaching Excellence, Student Government and the Graduate Student Council. These four nominees will be forwarded to me for my selection of the two awardees.

All members of the faculty, both tenured, tenure track, and those who are not, teaching either or both undergraduate and graduate students are eligible for these awards. The most important criteria are commitment to and excellence in teaching in all its dimensions.

I ask that each Dean, the Center for Teaching Excellence, Student Government and the Graduate Student Council forward nominees to the Speaker of the Faculty Senate, Room 205 YMCA Building, 1225 TAMU by March 5, 2015, so that selections can be made in time for our commencement in May 2015. Details about the nomination process and the selection criteria are attached. These documents can also be found on the Senate web site (www.facultysenate.tamu.edu).

Mark A. Hussey
Interim President

Attachment

cc:    Executive Vice President and Provost
       Speaker, The Faculty Senate
       Chair, Distinguished Professors
       Chair, Council of Principal Investigators
2015 Presidential Professor for Teaching Excellence Awards
Criteria and Selection Process

Announcement:
Two Presidential Professor for Teaching Excellence Awards will be presented at Commencement exercises in May, 2015. To be eligible for the award, nominees must be full-time faculty and hold the rank of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor or Distinguished Professor. Each college on the College Station campus, the Center for Teaching Excellence, Student Government Association and the Graduate Student Council may each submit one nominee. The nominating units may determine their own processes for selection of nominees, and should communicate these procedures widely throughout their units. The Nomination Packet, along with an electronic copy of the Nomination Packet to senate@tamu.edu, are due no later than March 5, 2015 in the Faculty Senate Office, Mail Stop 1225, 205 YMCA Building.

The President shall appoint a Selection Committee, chaired by the Speaker of the Faculty Senate and Representatives of the nominating units, to make final recommendations to him by April 9, 2015.

Timeline:
Call for preliminary nominations
Preliminary nominations due to College/CTE/SGA/GSC
Final Nomination Packets due to Selection Committee
Selection Committee recommendations due to President

January
Determined by unit
March 5
April 9

Nomination Packet:
Nominees are asked to prepare a portfolio that provides evidence of outstanding work with respect to the criteria outlined below. The portfolio must include the following items in this order:

1. a cover letter from a colleague, department head, dean, CTE or SGA official that gives an overview of accomplishments,
2. a CV
3. a separate "Teaching CV" highlighting courses taught; numbers of students; teaching awards; publications and conference presentations related to teaching; professional development related to teaching; university, college and national service related to teaching,
4. a statement of teaching philosophy,
5. a description of teaching practice, highlighting innovations in teaching, learning, and assessment,
6. a summary (quantitative and qualitative) of student course evaluations,
7. supporting letters- a maximum of six to include: 2 peers, 2 former students, and 2 current students, and
8. other evidence as needed to document outstanding accomplishment based on the criteria below.
Criteria:

I. General
The Selection Committee will emphasize the quality of the nominee's contribution to the Scholarship of teaching and learning in his/her academic discipline. The nomination packet should clearly distinguish between scholarships designed to improve college teaching of the discipline from that which is directed primarily to an audience of other discipline-related researchers. However, the documentation of discipline-related research will be considered by the Committee, because the integration of academic research into the classroom is an important characteristic of a research institution.

II. Dissemination of Knowledge
A. Leadership/Scholarship
*Does the teacher share innovations in teaching with colleagues through conference presentations, publications, workshops, etc.? Does the teacher mentor junior faculty and graduate students in teaching? Has the teacher developed methods or materials that others may use or build upon?*

Possible kinds of evidence: Publications; conference presentations; grants to support pedagogical or curricular innovation; letters from junior faculty and/or graduate students; evidence that teacher-developed material is being used by others; evidence of leadership in teaching at the department, college, university, or national level;

B. Recognition
*Has the teacher been recognized for teaching excellence by peers, student groups, and professional organizations?*

Possible kinds of evidence: Awards for teaching

C. Mentorship
*Has the teacher had a lasting influence on students because of his/her mentoring or advising of students outside the classroom?*

Possible kinds of evidence: Advising awards; letters from students; student success after graduation

III. Classroom Practices
A. Teaching and learning goals
*Does the teacher clearly communicate the goals and objectives of his/her teaching? Does the teacher's stated goals align well with the goals of the department, college, university? With the goals of the discipline? Are the goals realistic?*

Possible kinds of evidence: Syllabi (annotated to show importance and appropriateness of goals); Evidence from student evaluations that course goals are understood; evidence of "evolution" of course goals with time and advances in scholarship.

B. Preparation and methods
*Does the teacher show an understanding of existing scholarship related to teaching/learning? Does the teacher bring the necessary skills to his/her teaching? Does the teacher use pedagogical and assessment methods that are appropriate to his/her goals? Does the teacher use a variety of methods to address diverse student learning needs as well as the needs and backgrounds of diverse student populations?
Possible kinds of evidence: Participation in professional development activities; description of literature that has influenced one's approach to teaching; evidence from student evaluations or letters/emails that the teacher possesses skill in presenting material, motivating student learning, etc.; description of methods with rationale for their use; sample course materials; peer commentary on course materials and classroom methods

C. Presentation

Does the teacher communicate effectively with his/her students? Does the teacher share innovations in teaching with colleagues through conference presentations, publications, workshops, etc.? Does the teacher demonstrate an awareness of his/her audience? Does the teacher demonstrate an awareness of the diversity of his/her students?

Possible kinds of evidence: Evidence from student evaluations and comments that the teacher is effective in reaching students in and out of class; evidence that the teacher has made efforts to know, understand and account for the backgrounds, interests, and needs of students; publications and conference presentations

D. Results

Does the teacher achieve the goals he/she articulated? Is there evidence of student growth and learning?

Possible kinds of evidence: Aggregated information showing student accomplishment with respect to course learning goals; sample student work over the course of a semester; evidence that students succeed in subsequent courses, career, graduate school; evidence that the teacher is looked upon as a role model by students.

E. Reflection

Does the teacher evaluate his/her own work? Does the teacher seek feedback from multiple sources as a means of improving his/her work?

Possible kinds of evidence: Evidence of changes in teaching made in response to constructive critique from students or peers, or as a result of assessment data collected; statement of teaching philosophy

Criteria adapted from: