

TO: Dr. Amanda Nolen, President UA Little Rock Faculty Senate

FROM: Chelsea Bradley & Lindsey Baertlein, Co-Chairs Honors and Awards Committee

DATE: April 8, 2021

RE: Faculty Excellence Awards Process Review

CHARGE:

The Executive Committee of the Senate referred the matter of Faculty Excellence Awards (FEA) processes to the Honors and Awards committee (HAC) for review due to inconsistencies in required elements and page limits. Now that the university has reorganized to three colleges, Bowen School of Law, and Clinton School of Public Service, we have the same number of faculty competing for fewer college awards. This also excludes junior, non-tenured faculty. The Executive Committee proposed the opportunity for HAC to create additional awards to allow junior faculty the opportunity for recognition. Funding will need to be coordinated with Chancellor Drale and the Development office. Expected recommendation will be brought to the Faculty Senate April 2021 meeting.

REVIEW:

On February 26th, the HAC co-chairs met with Provost Bain to discuss the FEA eligibility and application processes. In February and March 2021, HAC reviewed the past two years' FEA nomination packets for accuracy and eligibility. HAC found the following:

- A. Discrepancies were found in the Membership in Professional and Honorary Societies. Candidates listed both their current and past memberships, making page lengths inconsistent among candidates.
- B. Inconsistencies were found in the Scholarly and Professional Accomplishments. Candidates listed all articles and books published. The process requests only the last five years of publication, making the application page length inconsistent among candidates.
- C. Inconsistencies were found in the Summary of Professional Accomplishments. Candidates listed accomplishments for their entire career. The process requests only the last five years of accomplishments, making the application page length inconsistent among candidates.
- D. Discrepancies were found in the Letters of Endorsement. Candidates submitted different amounts of letters- some had two letters and others up to five.
- E. Discrepancies were found in Personal Statements. In 2018, no teaching philosophies were included, but in 2019, several candidates included teaching philosophies.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

HAC proposes the following:

- A. Membership in Professional and Honorary Societies - Recommend including memberships held in the last five years for consistency.
- B. Scholarly and Professional Accomplishments - Recommend including accomplishments achieved in the last five years for consistency.
- C. Summary of Professional Accomplishments - Recommend including accomplishments achieved in the last five years for consistency.
- D. Letters of Endorsement - Recommend standardizing to three letters of recommendation for consistency.
- E. Personal Statements - Recommend changing from Optional to a one-page teaching philosophy for the Teaching category, a one-page research statement in the Research/Creative Endeavors category, and a one-page service statement for the Public Service category.
- F. HAC recognizes the importance of reinforcing the requirements already outlined in the Policy and Procedure section and enforcing the requirements for compliance. HAC recommends that nomination packets be screened by HAC and only accepted if they comply with the FEA requirements. Packets that do

not comply will be returned to the nominating college. Packets that do comply will be forwarded to the Board of Visitors for award selection.

- G. Creation of two new awards: Early Career Award and a Social Justice Award (see proposed awards and criteria below (underline indicates addition; strikethrough indicates deletion)).

Policy 403.8 Faculty Excellence Awards

The UA Little Rock Foundation Fund Board in 1988 instituted a series of annual awards to recognize and reward faculty excellence in three specified areas of performance: teaching, research or creative endeavors, and professional and public service. Recognition is accorded at the college level and at the University level. Each award consists of a framed certificate and a cash gift of \$1,000 at the college level and at the university level, \$5,000 each for teaching, research or creative endeavors, and public service. College winners are recognized and University winners are announced at the Faculty Excellence Ceremony each spring.

I. Nature and Categories of Awards

A. Award for excellence in teaching.

This award is to recognize, encourage, and reward superior classroom teachers—individuals whose command of their respective disciplines, teaching methodologies, communications skills, concern for student performance, and commitment to the learning process exemplify the teacher/mentor model. The award is not intended to be a popularity contest. It is designed to distinguish those teachers who maintain high expectations of their students and who ensure academic rigor in their courses.

B. Award for excellence in research or creative endeavors.

This award is to recognize, encourage, and reward those individuals whose research or creative endeavors have been particularly successful and are so recognized locally, regionally, and nationally. The results of these efforts should have contributed to the expansion of knowledge and/or the quality of life, and/or encouraged additional research.

C. Award for excellence in public service.

This award is to recognize, encourage, and reward those individuals who have brought credit to the UA Little Rock through their successful efforts in applying the content or skills of their academic disciplines in service to the community, state, or nation in areas of public interest. This award is designed to distinguish those persons whose achievements in serving the public interest by the application of their disciplinary expertise to problems and issues external to campus have been particularly successful and are so recognized locally, regionally, or nationally.

D. Award for excellence in early career.

This award is to recognize, encourage, and reward the contributions of any full-time faculty demonstrating exceptional promise in the beginning of their academic career in teaching, research or creative endeavors, or public service.

E. Award for excellence in social justice.

This award is to recognize, encourage, and reward the contributions of any UALR employee demonstrating exceptional work with social justice through his or her teaching, public service, or scholarship.

II. Number and Frequency of Awards

A. Award for excellence in teaching.

- There may be one award in each college/school¹ of the University annually.

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- There shall be one University-level award annually. The University-level awardee shall be chosen from the college/school-level award winners.
- The award for excellence in teaching may be shared when the achievements being recognized result from joint efforts.

B. Award for excellence in research or creative endeavors.

- There may be one award in each college/school of the University annually.
- There shall be one University-level award annually. The University-level awardee shall be chosen from the college/school-level award winners.
- The award for excellence in research or creative endeavors may be shared where the achievements being recognized result from joint efforts.

C. Award for excellence in public service.

- There may be one award in each college/school of the University annually.
- There shall be one University-level award annually. The University-level awardee shall be chosen from the college/school-level award winners.
- The award for excellence in public service may be shared when the achievements being recognized result from joint efforts.

D. Award for excellence in early career.

- There may be one award in each college/school of the University annually.
- There shall be one University-level award annually. The University-level awardee shall be chosen from the college/school-level award winners.
- The award for excellence in early career may be shared when the achievements being recognized result from joint efforts.

E. Award for excellence in social justice.

- There may be one award in each college/school of the University annually.
- There shall be one University-level award annually. The University-level awardee shall be chosen from the college/school-level award winners.
- The award for social justice may be shared when the achievements being recognized result from joint efforts.

III. Selection

A. Eligibility.

- Persons with faculty status as defined in the current faculty handbook, except for the adjunct and visiting categories, holding full-time faculty appointments who have completed five or more full years of service to the University may be nominated for any of the awards except for the award for excellence in early career; faculty who have administrative responsibilities are eligible if their teaching duties are 50% or more of their work assignment for the academic year in which they are nominated.
- Faculty members who are otherwise qualified for the teaching award but who are not administratively a part of one of the colleges/schools shall be eligible through the award process of the college/school that offers the courses such

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faculty teach.

- The most recent five years of accomplishments comprise the record to be documented, presented and reviewed in the selection process.
- Eligibility for the early career award is limited to persons holding full-time faculty appointments who have completed at least one year and less than five years of service to the University; tenured faculty and senior instructors are ineligible for the early career award.
- Persons may not receive an award of the same category for a period of three years.

B. Nominations.

- Persons considered for awards shall be identified through a process of nomination.
- The nomination process shall be open – i.e., any person may nominate a faculty member for any of the awards.

C. Selection committees – college-level awards.

- There shall be a selection committee within each college/school.
- The size and composition of the committee shall be as follows:
 - A. One representative chosen by the faculty from each department within the college/school.
 - B. One student member.
 - C. One alumni member.
- In colleges/schools which are not organized departmentally, the faculty shall develop a method for faculty representation.
- The manner of choosing the student and alumni members shall be determined by the college/school faculty.
- Individuals who serve as administrators with the title of department chair (or its equivalent) and at higher levels of administration are not eligible to serve on the selection committee.
- Individuals who are nominated for an award may not serve on the selection committee.

D. Selection committee – University-level awards.

- The UA Little Rock Board of Visitors will serve as the external selection committee for the university-level awards.

IV. Procedure

A. Administration of the award process.

Administrative support for the award process shall be the responsibility of the Office of the Provost.

B. Solicitation of nominations.

- Not later than September 30 of each year, the Provost shall advise members of the campus community of the award process and nominating procedure. The

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timeline and deadlines for preparation, completion and submission of materials shall be announced as well.

- The Director of Alumni Affairs shall advise the alumni of the University through appropriate alumni publications.
- Information about the awards shall be widely disseminated throughout the community to encourage nominations from the business, professional, and public sectors of the community.

C. Preparation of nomination packets.

- Nominators are responsible for preparation of nomination packets containing information as specified in the attachment, “Preparation and Submission of Nomination Packets.” Page limitations are enforced.
- Department chairs or equivalent administrators shall cooperate with nominators in assembling supporting evidence.

D. Submission of nomination packets.

- One copy of each nomination packet for the college-level awards shall be submitted to the college selection committee no later than the date specified in the Provost’s announcement.
- One copy of each college-level winner’s packet shall be forwarded to the Provost no later than the date specified in the Provost’s announcement.

E. Selection committee action.

- College-level selection committees shall meet as necessary in order to complete the selection of the award winners.
- Committee procedures shall be determined by the respective colleges/schools.
- The committee shall review such materials as are submitted in the nomination packet.
- The proceedings of the committees shall be confidential.
- The committee shall prepare for each college-level winner a one-page letter of support to be included in the nomination packet.
- Each college-level committee shall forward one copy of the nomination packets of the winners of the college-level awards to the Provost no later than the date specified in the Provost’s announcement

F. The Provost shall forward sets of nomination packets to members of the external selection committee.

- The members of the selection committee shall advise the Provost of the committee’s selections by a date designated by the Provost.
- The proceedings of the committee shall be confidential.
- The announcement of University-level winners shall be made at a suitable University event.

V. Preparation and Submission of Nomination Packets

Nominations must adhere to the following instructions and page limitations to be accepted by

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the Provost's Office. Place in a single manila folder one copy of each item described below for each nominee. Clearly identify the name of the nominee on the tab of the folder. Please do not use special folders or binders. Submit the folder to the college or school selection committee by the date specified in the annual solicitation for nominations. Department chairs (or equivalent administrators) are expected to cooperate as needed in assembling the required information.

The contents of each packet should be as follows, minimum 12-point font:

1. Table of Contents
2. Letter of Nomination (limited to three pages). Focus on accomplishments during the most recent five year period.
3. Personal statement (Optional; One page maximum)
4. Biographical data. (limited to five pages) Please provide in the order listed:
 - Name of nominee and award for which nominated
 - Current position (title, rank, department, or unit)
 - Number of years in this position
 - Number of years at UA Little Rock
 - Degrees held (source and date)
 - Employment history (previous positions, years; list most recent first)
 - Honors and awards
 - Membership in professional and honorary societies (note offices held)
 - List of courses taught in each of the five years prior to nomination. Provide the full course title and not just the course number.
 - Scholarly and Professional Accomplishments: List of articles and books published and professional accomplishments within the last five years (please provide the complete citation). If there are particularly significant accomplishments before the last five years, those may be referenced in the letter of nomination. Do not submit copies of work(s). The selection committee may request these if desired.
 - Description of the public service activities in each of the five years prior to nomination.

Only the contents of the packet as specified above will be sent to the members of the external selection committee.

5. Letters of Endorsement: (limited to one page each) Letters of endorsement may be provided from up to four people who can speak to the award criteria. Letters from students who are likely to be subsequently advised or evaluated by the faculty nominee are discouraged. Standard, anonymous student evaluations and individual letters from graduates are appropriate. The perspective or status of the authors of the letters should be clearly identified, either in the letter itself or by the person who prepares the nomination packet as well as their title, e.g., Professor of English, or Alumnus, or Dean of Arts, or Student, etc.

Pages exceeding the limits above will not be considered. The total packet requires a Table of Contents and a maximum of **15** pages (excluding the optional personal statement).

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