

NOMINATION GUIDELINES

Association of Atlantic Universities Award for Distinguished Teaching, 2021

Application deadline: Wednesday, May 5, 2021

Purpose

The purpose of this award is to encourage excellence in teaching in the universities of the Atlantic region by acknowledging individuals who exemplify such excellence and who contribute more generally to the improvement of the quality of university teaching.

Award Description

This award recognizes excellence in university teaching over a number of years, primarily at the undergraduate level. Up to two awards for Distinguished Teaching will be made annually.

An individual nominated for this award will be characterized by a proven commitment to enhanced student engagement and learning, a reflective and intentional approach to teaching practices, and dedication to teaching improvement. The following list reflects significant criteria of distinguished teaching, though the Selection Committee is aware that opportunities to demonstrate all of these characteristics may vary according to the institutional context and that nominees may also provide other examples of teaching excellence:

- demonstrates knowledge of the teaching and learning process;
- uses research to adapt and develop teaching practice and inform course development;
- demonstrates the capacity to arouse student interest in the subject;
- prepares and organizes thoroughly for classes, labs, or tutorials;
- develops and clearly communicates student learning outcomes, course requirements, and pathways to success;
- challenges students to achieve learning outcomes and to develop critical thinking and problem solving abilities;
- develops rapport with students;
- uses approaches to teaching and evaluation of learning that respect diverse student learning needs;
- uses assessment methods that are aligned with learning outcomes and instructional approaches;
- encourages student participation in the learning process; and
- demonstrates reflective teaching, for example by
 - engaging in the scholarship of teaching and learning;
 - sharing good practice with others through workshops, presentations, or publications on teaching and learning; or
 - participating in professional development activities to enhance teaching practice.

Given the superb quality of nominees, simply fulfilling the nomination criteria may not, in itself, be sufficient to receive a Distinguished Teaching Award. Therefore, the Committee encourages nominees to demonstrate not only how they meet, but how they surpass, these criteria.

Eligibility

1. Nominations are accepted in English only. The AAU will reimburse each of its two French-language institutions up to a maximum of \$2,000 per year for the cost of translating a nomination dossier from French to English. Original French-language dossiers should be available upon request from the chair of the Coordinating Committee on Faculty Development which serves as the Selection Committee for the awards.
2. Full-time, part-time, and limited term faculty members are eligible for nomination. Those nominated must be members of the teaching faculty, with a load normal for their discipline, level, or term of appointment as determined by their nominating institution.
3. Chairs and department heads who continue to teach a minimum of half a normal teaching load are eligible for nomination.
4. Academic administrators, such as Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Deans and full-time Directors of teaching centres who do not teach this minimum load and/or whose primary role includes educational leadership or promoting teaching excellence are not eligible.
5. Previous recipients of 3M National Teaching Fellowships are ineligible to be nominated for an AAU Distinguished Teaching Award, as the AAU awards are intended to be a progression to this award.
6. No current member of the AAU Coordinating Committee on Faculty Development may be nominated.
7. A nominee may be selected according to a procedure established by the university and need not have received an institutional award.
8. An individual **cannot** be nominated for both a Distinguished Teaching Award and an Educational Leadership Award in a given year. However, recipients of an award from one category may be nominated for an award in the other category in a succeeding year.
9. Re-nominations of previously unsuccessful nominees are welcomed and encouraged; however, nominators are reminded that the award criteria may change from year-to-year—please ensure that re-nominations conform to the current guidelines.

Nomination Procedure

Application Deadlines

The deadline for applications is set annually, usually during the first week of May. The nomination dossiers must be submitted by the AAU Coordinating Committee on Faculty Development representative from the institution. Please consult the list of Committee members, available at <http://www.atlanticuniversities.ca/committees/faculty-development-committee/committee-members>.

Award Category

Each university may submit a maximum of two nominations in the Distinguished Teaching Award category and one nomination in the Educational Leadership Award category. All dossiers will be considered in the category for which they have been nominated, unless in the following exceptional circumstance: When an institution nominates only **one** person and the Selection Committee believes the nomination is more appropriately suited to the other category, the nomination may be switched.

Supporting Materials

Each nomination shall be accompanied by material supporting the application in accordance with these Distinguished Teaching Award Guidelines for Nomination. Please submit a PDF to the AAU Secretariat (ckent@atlanticuniversities.ca).

<p>The Committee will accept only those dossiers submitted to the AAU Secretariat by the institution's representative on the Coordinating Committee on Faculty Development.</p>
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Selection Committee

The AAU Coordinating Committee on Faculty Development serves as the Selection Committee for the awards.

Announcement of Award Recipients

Each September, the AAU issues a press release announcing the recipients of the Distinguished Teaching Award for that year. Award recipients and their guests will be honoured at a luncheon held during the September meeting of the AAU Presidents' Council. As part of the proceedings at the luncheon, recipients will be asked to give a 10 minute presentation about the importance of effective teaching.

Atlantic Universities' Teaching Showcase

Recipients of the Distinguished Teaching Award will be invited to participate in a session at the annual Atlantic Universities' Teaching Showcase.

Nomination Guidelines, 2021

This award recognizes excellence in teaching over a number of years. Please refer to the award criteria and examples on page one.

Dossier Format

The Selection Committee is aware that each of the nominating universities will have its own procedures and criteria relating to internal teaching awards and it wishes to respect these differences. The following guidelines are presented to ensure fairness and consistency in the presentation of nominations for the AAU awards.

Important Information about Dossier Format

- The dossier must be formatted as a PDF file.
- The AAU Coordinating Committee on Faculty Development representative for the institution is the person who should email the PDF file to the AAU Secretariat (ckent@atlanticuniversities.ca) by **Wednesday, May 5, 2021**.
- Nomination dossiers must not exceed **20 numbered pages**. The following are **required** but **not** counted in the 20-page limit:
 - cover page which displays the nominee’s name, academic unit, institution, and year of submission;
 - table of contents; and
 - separation pages that clearly identify each category of evidence.
- Dossiers must be presented in **12-point font** with all original descriptive content written by the nominee appearing in a **consistent standard font** such as Times New Roman, Calibri, or Arial. Use standard **one-inch page margins** all around.
- Nominators are encouraged to consider dossier layout carefully for ease of reading.
- The Selection Committee’s decision will be based on material contained within the 20-page dossier and appendices only. The dossier must **not include URLs** to supporting material.

The Committee will not accept dossiers which exceed the 20-page limit (excluding required appendices), or which use a font size smaller than 12-point or margins narrower than one inch all around. A dossier which does not conform to these guidelines or which lacks any of the following component parts will not be considered for an award.

Dossier Contents

The dossier should make a persuasive case for distinguished teaching using evidence from a variety of sources, including the nominee, learners, peers, and exemplary teaching materials. The following categories of evidence and appendices should be presented in the given order:

Part 1: Nomination Letter—A nomination letter summarizing the nominee’s major teaching strengths and contributions.

When the nomination letter is written by someone other than the President or Vice-President Academic, the President or Vice-President Academic should endorse the nomination by appending a brief note or by adding their signature to the nomination letter. No current member of the AAU Coordinating Committee on Faculty Development may be the designated nominator.

Part 2: Academic Career Achievements—A one- or two-page (maximum) summary **in list or abbreviated CV format** that highlights the nominee’s major academic career achievements in teaching, service, and research, with an emphasis on contributions to teaching and learning, such as course development, introducing new instructional strategies or technologies, presenting workshops, or publishing on teaching and learning.

Part 3: Teaching Philosophy—A one- to two-page (maximum) teaching philosophy statement. An effective philosophy statement provides the context for the nominee’s teaching and explains the values, principles, and goals that underpin teaching decisions and actions. It should demonstrate that the nominee reflects on and learns from the teaching experience and literature. The teaching philosophy is the anchor of the dossier and the Committee’s first opportunity to hear the nominee’s own voice—it should be personal and genuine. The best ones put into words the spirit that animates the teacher, who then comes to life on the page as a result.

Part 4: Evidence of Excellence in Teaching—Varied evidence of how the nominee implements their teaching philosophy. Such evidence may include course syllabi, examples of their most effective teaching and learning strategies, their development and use of formative teaching evaluation, learning activities developed, or assessment strategies used.

Part 5: Student Ratings of Instruction (See also Appendices)

- a. A paragraph that explains the context for student ratings of instruction (SRI) at the institution including the following:
 - the office responsible (e.g., Provost, institutional planning, etc.);
 - the administrative procedures for SRI (who conducts them, how the forms are administered, how the results are reported);
 - the normal course load for a teacher in the department; and
 - if the nominee has used a **university-sanctioned** alternative to the institution’s standard SRI, a description of the alternative instrument and how it is administered, and a rationale for using it.
- b. A table that contains the following information:
 - Two years of courses taught by the nominee during the **last five years** of teaching responsibilities (allowing for sabbaticals and leaves, and allowing for the advanced preparation of dossiers that require translation from French to English); and
 - the enrollment in each course.

If the institution’s standard SRI has been used, the table should also include the following:

- the number of students who responded to the SRI questionnaire in each course;
 - the mean rating received for the **global or ‘overall’ question(s)** for each course; and
 - the name and position of the person who summarized the data for the table and how the summary was prepared.
- c. A paragraph that contextualizes or expands upon the data provided and that helps the Selection Committee in its interpretation. For example, what trends or patterns emerge in the data? What information explains irregularities for a particular course? Whether the institutions standard SRI or a university-sanctioned alternative has been used, the nominee should reflect on the data and explain how they have responded to, applied, or used student feedback to enhance their teaching and student learning.

Also see **Appendices** for further student ratings requirements.

Part 6: Letters of Support—Up to six letters of support, three from each of the following two groups of supporters may be included:

- students not currently enrolled in any of the nominee’s classes or working under their supervision, and
- colleagues/peers with personal experience of the nominee’s teaching.

Important Information about Supporting Letters:

- The Committee will accept letters of support that are up to 18 months old. For submissions translated from French to English, the Committee will accept letters of support that are up to 24 months old.
- Current members of the AAU Coordinating Committee on Faculty Development are ineligible to write letters of support.
- Letters should provide specific examples illustrating the characteristics attributed to each nominee.
- Letters should include the signature and postal address of the writer. If the letter is in the form of an e-mail message, it should include the full name and e-mail address of the sender.
- Mindful of the 20-page limit for the dossier, nominees are strongly discouraged from including multiple letters that repeat the same information, thereby limiting the amount of evidence they can supply in Part 4.
- Letters with single signatures are valued the same as letters with multiple signatures.

Appendices—The following appendices are required but **not** included in the 20-page limit for the dossier.

- A. A one-page description of the two courses chosen and a rationale for their inclusion.
- B. Complete sets of student comments from **two** courses listed in the table in Part 5b. If student comments are not collected on the institution’s standard SRI, please include anonymous comments collected at the end of the semester by another method. All nominees must explain how and by whom the comments were collected, compiled, and verified.
- C. A blank copy of the student ratings questionnaire or university-sanctioned alternative.