

Teaching Excellence Awards Selection Procedure		
Parent Policy:	Teaching Excellence Awards Committee Terms of Reference	
Related Policies:	N/A	
Approving Body:	Students' Legislative Council	
Passed:	January 13, 2014 (71.02)	
Amended:	March 27, 2021 (78.02)	

Definitions

Instructor refers to a professor, associate professor, senior instructor, assistant instructor, or sessional instructor teaching an undergraduate level course at the University of Calgary.

Teaching Assistant (TA) refers to a graduate or undergraduate student who assists with the instructional responsibilities in their department. TAs typically instruct tutorials and labs.

Authority

Since its inception in 1984-85, The University of Calgary Students' Union has celebrated the accomplishments and positive impact of university instructors and teaching assistants with its annual Teaching Excellence Awards. The creation of the Teaching Excellence Awards by the Students' Union was an effort to improve the profile and the importance of high quality undergraduate instruction at the University of Calgary. The Teaching Excellence Awards have become a highly recognized program in the university community and the only award based solely on student feedback.

The Teaching Excellence Awards Committee is established in the Union Bylaw as a Standing Committee of the Union. The committee is delegated the authority to establish procedures respecting the selection of award winners.

Mandate

- 1 (1) The Teaching Excellence Awards Committee shall:
 - (a) Enable students to provide feedback on the quality of instruction within their courses;
 - (b) Recognize and encourage excellence in teaching within faculties;
 - (c) Promote innovative and engaging teaching methods; and
 - (d) Ensure that excellence in teaching is valued and recognized at the University of Calgary.

Teaching Excellence Award Criteria

- 2 (1) An excellent teacher is one who excels in all areas of teaching on a consistent basis. Excellent teachers shall be nominated and evaluated on the following criteria. An excellent teacher:
 - (a) Outlines expectations at the beginning of the term;

- (b) Communicates subject matter clearly and in multiple ways;
- (c) Shows enthusiasm for the subject and teaching in general;
- (d) Has the ability to cultivate thought and initiate discussion;
- (e) Delivers interesting, accurate, and organized instruction, such as in lectures, seminars, labs, and tutorials;
- (f) Is approachable and available to meet outside of the classroom;
- (g) Can provide up-to-date resources to students beyond the assigned textbook, including Open Educational Resources (OERs);
- (h) Is fair and consistent in evaluation;
- (i) Motivates and inspires students; and
- (j) Is sensitive to issues of gender, race, disabilities, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, etc.

(2) Instructors and TAs are eligible to be nominated if they are teaching at the undergraduate level in the term that the nomination is made.

Nomination Procedures

- 3 (1) The Teaching Excellence Awards Committee shall solicit online nominations for a period of five to six weeks during the Fall and Winter terms.¹
- 4 (1) Of those nominations received, the Committee shall create a short list of nominated instructors and TAs to be evaluated through classroom visits based on the following criteria:
 - (a) There shall be a maximum of three classroom visits conducted for each Faculty Representative position on the Students' Legislative Council² for instructors nominated for courses in a faculty;
 - (b) There shall be a maximum of ten classroom visits conducted for TAs across all faculties; and
 - (c) A nominated professor or TA may be selected for a classroom visit based on the number of nominations received relative to course enrollment and course size³. Instructors and TAs with the highest percentage of nominations, relative to course size, shall receive classroom visits⁴.

Evaluation Procedures

¹ Note that nomination procedures occur once per semester.

² The number of Faculty Representatives is calculated according to Union Bylaw sections 7-8. Example: In the Faculty of Social Work, there is one Faculty Representative on SLC so a maximum of three classroom visits may be conducted for instructors nominated for courses in that faculty. In the Faculty of Arts, there are four Faculty Representatives on SLC so a maximum of twelve classroom visits may be conducted for instructors nominated for courses in that faculty.

³ Percentage = Number of nominations received / Total students enrolled in the course.

⁴ The Committee recognizes that instructors of large courses (defined as those with more than 150 students enrolled) are disadvantaged when a percentage-based system is used to allocate classroom visits, as the likelihood of students submitting nominations decreases as class size increases. To address this, classroom visits are allocated to small (courses with less than 150 students enrolled) and large courses in proportion to the overall number of nominations received across both categories in each semester. If there are less eligible instructors and TAs in a course category than there are available classroom visits for that category, these visits shall be made available to the next eligible instructor or TA regardless of course size, at the discretion of GM or Staff Designate in consultation with the VP Academic.

- 5 (1) Committee members, volunteers, and SU staff may conduct class visits for the purpose of evaluating nominated instructors and TAs.
- (2) During each classroom visit, evaluation forms shall be distributed to a maximum of 20 students in the course section for which the instructor or TA is nominated.
 - (a) The instructor or TA shall be asked to leave the room while the evaluation is being conducted.
 - (b) Students shall be allotted approximately 15 minutes to complete the evaluation forms.
 - (c) Feedback collected through nominations and evaluation forms shall remain anonymous and confidential.
- 6 (1) The General Manager or designate shall calculate the average score for each evaluation and transcribe open-ended comments for later review by the Committee.
- (2) A nominee must receive an evaluation form score of 45/50 to qualify for consideration by the Committee during its deliberations.

Number of Awards

- 7 (1) The Committee shall select a maximum of one instructor nominee per Faculty Representative position on SLC to be the recipient of a Teaching Excellence Award in each faculty.
- (2) The Committee shall select a maximum of ten TA nominees, across all faculties, to be recipients of Teaching Excellence Awards.
- (3) The Committee may select a maximum of ten nominees to receive Hall of Fame Awards. To be eligible for a Hall of Fame Award, nominees must:
 - (a) Have previously won three Teaching Excellence Awards; and
 - (b) Be selected as a Teaching Excellence Award recipient for the current year.
- (4) The Committee may select a maximum of ten nominees for Honourable Mention.

Selection Procedures

- 8 (1) The Committee shall review the average scores and transcribed comments for each qualifying nominee in conjunction with the Teaching Excellence Criteria to determine award recipients.
- (2) The Committee shall select award recipients by a two-thirds majority vote.

Amendment History: June 13, 2017 (75.05); July 31, 2018 (67.12); April 28, 2020 (77.03).