

The University of Texas
Rio Grande ValleyTM

Faculty Excellence Awards
Guidelines

2023-2024

Table of Contents

<u>Timeline</u>	3
<u>Nomination & Evaluation Process</u>	4
<u>Eligibility Requirements</u>	4
<u>Preparing the Nomination/Application Packet</u>	5
<u>Award Description, Criteria & Helpful Tips</u>	
<u>Teaching</u>	6
<u>Tenured/Tenure-Track</u>	
<u>Non-Tenure Track</u>	
<u>Online Teaching</u>	7
<u>Research/Scholarship/Creative Work</u>	8
<u>Service</u>	9
<u>Student Mentoring</u>	10
<u>Community Engaged Scholarship</u>	11
<u>Sustainability Education</u>	12
<u>Distinguished Career Award</u>	13
<u>Emerging Scholar Awards</u>	14



Faculty Excellence Awards Guidelines 2023-2024

Timeline

Date	Activity
Wednesday, January 31, 2024	Call for nominations for Faculty Excellence Awards.
Wednesday, February 21, 2024 by 5:00 pm	Deadline to submit nominations for Faculty Excellence Awards via online form .
Friday, February 23, 2024	Nominees will be informed of their nomination by the Office of Faculty Affairs.
Monday, March 4, 2024	Deadline for nominees to accept or decline their nomination.
Friday, April 12, 2024	Deadline for completed application packets to be submitted to the Office of Faculty Affairs (OFA) via email to facultyaffairs@utrgv.edu . OFA will forward to the UTRGV External Awards Committee.
Wednesday, May 1, 2024	Deadline for the UTRGV External Awards Committee to complete its review.
Monday, May 13, 2024	Deadline for notification of Faculty Excellence Award winners.

The Office of Faculty Affairs (OFA) will oversee the logistics of the awards process in coordination with the sponsoring units.

Nomination & Evaluation Process

1. Faculty will be identified for consideration through a nomination process.
2. Nominations must be submitted by the deadline via the [online form](#).
 - a. Any eligible UTRGV faculty member may nominate themselves or another eligible UTRGV faculty member for any excellence award. Full-time administrators and students cannot submit nominations.
 - b. Nominators should check with the nominees prior to putting their name forward to ensure they are willing and eligible to accept the nomination.
 - c. If individuals are nominated for an award, they must recuse themselves from all aspects of that category's review process.
3. Eligibility will be reviewed and confirmed by the Office of Faculty Affairs (OFA).
4. OFA will notify nominated faculty and provides details for the next steps of the application process via email.
5. Nominees must accept or decline the nomination by the established deadline.
6. Nominees will submit their application packet to the Office of Faculty Affairs via email (facultyaffairs@utrgv.edu) by the established deadline to continue to be eligible for the award.
7. OFA will provide all application packets to the UTRGV External Awards Committee to conduct the evaluation process as outlined in [HOP 06-304](#).
8. Upon the selection of all award winners by the External Awards Committee, the Office of Faculty Affairs will notify the winners.

Eligibility Requirements

1. All full-time UTRGV faculty members who, at the time of nomination, have completed at least two consecutive years of service at UTRGV. Part-time faculty and full-time administrators are not eligible for nomination.
2. Nominated faculty should NOT have been a recipient of a UTRGV excellence award in the same category as current nomination within the last five years.
3. Nominated faculty should NOT have been a recipient of any UTRGV excellence award within the last three years.
4. **Online Teaching Award Eligibility:** Faculty nominees must have designed and taught one or more online course in the last three years.
5. **Distinguished Career Award Eligibility:** Faculty nominees must have *at least* 20 years of service to UTRGV and its legacy institutions as a full-time faculty member. (Intermittent administrative service to UTRGV will count toward the 20 years.)

Preparing the Application Packet

Each nominee should assemble a **single PDF file** that includes all items listed below. The nominee's name and award category should be clearly identified in the file's name (e.g., JaneVaquero_Research). Packets should be submitted by email to OFA at facultyaffairs@utrgv.edu no later than the identified deadline.

All documents are expected to adhere to the page limits specified in these instructions. Nominations that do not follow the guidance outlined in the instructions below are subject to disqualification.

Application Packet Contents

1. **Cover Page containing the following information:**
 - a. Excellence award category
 - b. Full name of nominee
 - c. Current position of nominee (title, rank, department/school, and college)
 - d. Number of years in current rank as well as total number of years at UTRGV and legacy institutions
 - e. UTRGV email address
 - f. Phone number
2. **Table of Contents**
3. **Letter of Nomination** (Max. length: Two (2) pages each)
The letter should summarize the nominee's achievements in the area of the Excellence Award and address impact(s).
4. **Nominee's Abbreviated CV** (Max. length: Five (5) pages)
The abbreviated CV should primarily focus on the nominee's accomplishments (particularly in the category for which the faculty member is nominated) during the last five years **except in cases of applications for the Distinguished Career Award**, which should be cumulative in nature.
5. **Highlighted Achievements/Activities**
The highlighted list of achievements should only include work done 1) at UTRGV, and 2) in the past five years within the award's category. Candidates are encouraged to provide a bulleted list with brief explanations where needed. **The only exception to the years is in the case of applications for the Distinguished Career Award**, in which case nominees should provide a highlighted list of their achievements over the course of their career at UTRGV and its legacy institutions.
6. **Letters of endorsement** (Max. length per letter: One (1) page)
Up to five (5) letters of endorsement may be included per packet. Letters may be written by any individual who can speak to the excellence award criteria. Letters from students who may be advised or evaluated by the faculty nominee are discouraged, however, those from former students/graduates are appropriate. The role/position of the letter's author should be clearly identified either within the letter's content or denoted by the nominee on behalf of the author.
7. Packets should not exceed 25 pages. **Applicants of the Distinguished Career Award are the only exceptions.**

Teaching

Award Description

The **Faculty Excellence Awards in Teaching** recognize, encourage, and reward outstanding faculty's contributions to the development and delivery of effective teaching and learning experiences. **There will be two awards in this category:** one for tenured/tenure-track faculty and one for non-tenure-track faculty. Each recipient will receive a \$5,000 stipend.

Criteria

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. Nominee's implementation of teaching methodologies are appropriate to the discipline with demonstrated innovation in teaching, including use of new technology as available.
2. Individual demonstrated continuous improvement of course material and assessment tools to enhance student learning outcomes.
3. Faculty creates a positive learning environment and ensures academic rigor.

Helpful Tips

- The members of the Committee are likely to be from different disciplines than the nominee, meaning that clear and simple prose (rather than discipline-specific jargon) is helpful.
- Nominees should encourage individuals writing supporting letters to clearly identify their professional status, vantage point, or area of expertise.
- Summaries of the nominee's student evaluations and peer-reviews of their teaching are recommended.
- Applicants are highly encouraged to provide materials in their packet that address assessment of student learning outcomes.

Online Teaching

Award Description

The **Faculty Excellence Award in Online Teaching** recognizes, encourages, and rewards outstanding teachers' contributions to the development and delivery of exceptional online teaching and learning. The recipient should be considered a model of excellence for fellow faculty. Their courses should use well-designed course materials and instructional strategies while demonstrating a rapport with students and effective achievement of desired learning outcomes using best practices. There will be **one** award in this category, and the recipient will receive a \$5,000 stipend.

Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. **Quality of Online Course Design:** The nominee has developed a well-design online course that meets Quality Matters Standards. The course will be evaluated using the QM Rubric.
2. **Exceptional Instructional Strategies:** The nominee has utilized commendable practices in instructional strategies. Instructional strategies include, but not limited to, incorporating student-centered and collaborative learning environment, meaningful authentic experiences, and course assessments.
3. **Excellent Course Facilitation:** The nominee demonstrates best practices in online course facilitation by creating both faculty and peer-to-peer online presence.
4. **Student Feedback on Course Effectiveness:** The nominee has demonstrated rapport with course participants and provides evidence(s) of learners' satisfaction and effectiveness. In this section, we will ask for a letter of recommendation from a former student.
5. **Effective Learning Outcomes:** The nominee has demonstrated a strong partnership between instructional materials and strategies towards achieving the course learning outcomes. In this section, we ask for sample student work and explanation towards how learning outcomes were met.
6. **Enables Accessibility:** The course is consciously developed to meet accessibility standards, inclusive design for all learners by incorporating Universal Design for Learning guidelines and Accessibility standards.

Helpful Tips

- The members of the Committee are likely to be from different disciplines than the nominee, meaning that clear and simple prose (rather than discipline-specific jargon) is helpful.
- Nominees should encourage individuals writing supporting letters to clearly identify their professional status, vantage point, or area of expertise.
- Summaries of the nominee's student evaluations and peer-reviews of their teaching are recommended.
- Applicants are encouraged to include materials in their packets that address assessment of student learning outcomes.
- Within the letters of endorsement, all nominees should include at least one letter from a student and one from an administrator or colleague.

Research/Scholarship/Creative Work

Award Description

The **Faculty Excellence Award in Research/Scholarship/Creative Work** recognizes, encourages, and rewards scholarly contributions to the body of knowledge in their field. There will be one award presented with a \$5,000 stipend.

Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. The nominee's research/scholarly or creative work is/has been recognized for its impact locally, regionally, or nationally.
2. The research/scholarly or creative work expanded the body of knowledge in the faculty member's discipline.
3. The individual's research/scholarly or creative work has distinctly impacted the academic discipline.

Helpful Tips

- The members of the Committee are likely to be from different disciplines than the nominee, meaning that clear and simple prose (rather than discipline-specific jargon) is helpful.
- Nominees should encourage individuals writing supporting letters to clearly identify their professional status, vantage point, or area of expertise.
- All supporting letters should address the significance and impact of the research/creative work in its theoretical, practical, and/or artistic aspects as well as how it has advanced/contributed to the knowledge in the field/discipline. Supporting letters from peers outside of UTRGV are especially useful.

NOTE: A copy of the research/creative work itself (e.g., book, journal article, artwork, etc.) will not be shared with the committee.

Service

Award Description

The **Faculty Excellence Award in Service** recognizes, encourages, and rewards faculty's service contributions to the university, community, and profession. There will be one award presented with a \$5,000 stipend.

Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. The service demonstrated leadership, commitment, and dedication to the university, community, and/or profession.
2. Impact of the service on the university, community, and/or profession is significant.
3. Impact of the nominee's service contributions is noteworthy and has gained local, regional, and/or national recognition.

Helpful Tips

- The members of the Committee are likely to be from different disciplines than the nominee, meaning that clear and simple prose (rather than discipline-specific jargon) is helpful.
- Nominees should encourage individuals writing supporting letters to clearly identify their professional status, vantage point, or area of expertise.
- All supporting materials, including letters of endorsement, should clearly articulate the impact or results of the service activities.
- Highly regarded packets often include letters from both colleagues at UTRGV and individuals in the community who can attest to the impact of the service.

Student Mentoring

Award Description

The **Faculty Excellence Award in Student Mentoring** recognizes and rewards faculty mentors for their contribution to student success and engagement. There will be one award presented with a \$5,000 stipend.

Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Nominee has demonstrated success in the areas of student engagement and achievement.
2. Individual has influenced student retention and graduation.
3. Faculty significantly impacted the lives of students during and after college.

Helpful Tips

- The members of the Committee are likely to be from different disciplines than the nominee, meaning that clear and simple prose (rather than discipline-specific jargon) is helpful.
- Student and colleague letters are particularly impactful.
- Nominees should encourage individuals writing supporting letters to clearly identify their professional status/role in relation to the nominee.
- The supporting materials should clearly articulate impact of the student advising/mentoring activities on student success.

Community Engaged Scholarship

Award Description

The **Faculty Excellence Award in Community Engaged Scholarship** recognizes, encourages, and rewards faculty contributions to advancing community engagement through research/creative works and experiential learning opportunities. There will be one award presented with a \$5,000 stipend.

Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. The impact of the faculty's contributions to community engaged scholarship have gained local, regional, and/or national recognition.
2. Nominee demonstrated leadership through infusion of community engagement in research, creative works, or experiential learning opportunities.
3. Reciprocal community partnerships have flourished through individual's engagement.

Helpful Tips

- The members of the Committee are likely to be from different disciplines than the nominee, meaning that clear and simple prose (rather than discipline-specific jargon) is helpful.
- Nominees should encourage individuals writing supporting letters to clearly identify their professional role as it relates to the nominee as well as their area of expertise.
- The supporting materials should clearly articulate how the faculty member infuses community engagement in their research/creative works or through experiential learning opportunities.
- Letters of endorsement from community members who can attest to the impact of the activities are highly recommended.

Sustainability Education

Award Description

The **Faculty Excellence Award in Sustainability Education** recognizes and rewards faculty who contribute to sustainability through their teaching, research/creative works, and service. There will be one award presented with a \$5,000 stipend.

Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. The nominee's contributions to sustainability education/the impact of contributions are noteworthy and have gain local, regional, and/or national recognition.
2. Faculty demonstrated leadership by infusing sustainability into their teaching, research/creative works, and service.
3. Individual promotes an environment where members of the campus and community can initiate sustainable practices in their personal and professional lives.

Helpful Tips

- The members of the Committee are likely to be from different disciplines than the nominee, meaning that clear and simple prose (rather than discipline-specific jargon) is helpful.
- Nominees should encourage individuals writing supporting letters to clearly identify their professional status/role as it relates to the nominee as well as their area of expertise.
- The supporting materials should clearly articulate how sustainability has been pervasive throughout the the faculty member's teaching, research/creative works, and service.
- It is recommended that letters of endorsement are solicited from individuals who can share how the contributions have led to changes in sustainability practices.

Distinguished Career Award

Award Description

The **Distinguished Career Award** recognizes and rewards a senior faculty member (tenured and non-tenure track) who has set themselves apart in teaching, service, and contributions to the scholarly community over a 20+ year career at UTRGV and its legacy institutions. Particularly, contributions to student and/or faculty success are of high regard. **One** Distinguished Career Award will be presented with a \$5,000 stipend.

Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Service to UTRGV and legacy institutions exceeds 20 years.
2. Faculty member has had significant impact on student/faculty success.
3. Nominee's contributions have made a notable influence on the institution and attracted recognition for their work.
4. Nominee has demonstrated continuous excellence in numerous areas over the course of a career.

Helpful Tips

- The members of the Committee are likely to be from different disciplines than the nominee, meaning that clear and simple prose (rather than discipline-specific jargon) is helpful.
- Nominees should encourage individuals writing supporting letters to clearly identify their professional role as it relates to the nominee as well as relay their vantage point and area of expertise.
- The supporting materials should clearly articulate the impact the faculty member has had in multiple areas over the course of their time at UTRGV and its legacy institutions.
- It is highly recommended applicants provide letters from former students, colleagues, and/or administrators, in addition to current peers/students, that can demonstrate the longevity of excellence.

Emerging Scholar Award

Award Description

The **Emerging Scholar Award** recognizes and rewards tenure-track faculty for their contributions and demonstrated excellence in research or creative works. Early career faculty with an outstanding record of strong scholarly achievements will be considered. **One** Emerging Scholar Award will be presented with a \$5,000 stipend.

Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Accomplishments reflect innovative research and scholarship.
2. Nominee's scholarly contributions to the field are making a notable influence and attracting recognition.
3. Faculty's pattern of scholarly work demonstrates great potential for impact in the discipline.

Helpful Tips

- The members of the Committee are likely to be from different disciplines than the nominee, meaning that clear and simple prose (rather than discipline-specific jargon) is helpful.
- Nominees should encourage individuals writing supporting letters to clearly identify their professional status/role in relation to the nominee as well as their area of expertise.
- All supporting letters should address the significance and impact of the research/creative work, and specifically speak to the criteria listed above as it relates to the influence, attention, and potential impact of the nominee's work.
- Supporting letters from peers outside of UTRGV are especially useful.

NOTE: A copy of the research/creative work itself (e.g., book, journal article, artwork, etc.) will not be shared with the committee.