

Seven UTPA faculty members win UT System Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award

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Seven UTPA faculty members received the prestigious UT System Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award this year. Twenty-six other UTPA faculty members have won the award since it was initiated in 2008.

Seven faculty members at The University of Texas-Pan American were selected by The University of Texas System Board of Regents to receive the prestigious 2014 Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award. It is the largest contingent of winners from UTPA since the award was initiated in 2008.

The award - believed to be one of the single largest financial teaching awards in the nation - recognizes tenured, tenure-track and other instructional faculty for their outstanding teaching, mentoring, personal commitment to students and the learning process as well as motivating students in the classroom.

The UTPA Regents' Award recipients - among 96 faculty members in the UT System's 15 academic and health institutions honored this year - are:

- [Dr. Sanjeev Kumar](#), professor and director of the Network Research Lab, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, College of Engineering and Computer Science (Tenured);

- [Dr. Javier Angel Kypuros](#), associate professor of mechanical engineering and associate dean for Undergraduate Affairs, College of Engineering and Computer Science (Tenured);
- [Dr. Virgil U. Pierce](#), associate professor, Department of Mathematics, College of Science and Mathematics (Tenured);
- [Dr. Russell K. Skowronek](#), professor of anthropology and history, Departments of History and Philosophy and Sociology and Anthropology, College of Arts and Humanities (Tenured);
- [Dr. Laura M. Grabowski](#), assistant professor, Department of Computer Science, College of Engineering and Computer Science (Tenure Track);
- [Dr. Alexander V. Stehn](#), assistant professor of philosophy, Department of History and Philosophy, College of Arts and Humanities (Tenure Track); and
- [Dr. Ken A. Grant](#), lecturer in history and religious studies, Department of History and Philosophy, College of Arts and Humanities (Contingent).

A complete list of winners by institution can be found on the [Regents' Outstanding Teaching Awards website](#).

"The teachers we are honoring are truly the best of the best," said Board of Regents Vice Chairman Steven Hicks in a [UT System release announcing the awards](#).

"We are proud that these awards support and promote a culture of teaching excellence, especially in undergraduate programs, at all our campuses."

Award recipients were vetted by their peer colleagues, students and UT System presidents before advancing to competition at the System level. The review panel considers a range of activities and criteria, including classroom expertise, curricula quality, innovative course development and student learning outcomes. The Regents have awarded nearly \$13.4 million since the awards program began.

UT System Chancellor Francisco G. Cigarroa, M.D., said the awards are a reflection of the Regents placing the highest priority on undergraduate, graduate and professional teaching excellence System-wide.

"Our excellence in teaching faculty is a critical part of the System's vision of an institution of the first class," Cigarroa said.

This year's winners join 26 other UTPA faculty members who have received the Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award since it was initiated five years ago.

UTPA President Robert S. Nelsen said the number of awardees for this 2013-14 academic year - seven - is almost as outstanding as the faculty are outstanding.

"At every graduation ceremony, I end the ceremony by telling the graduates and the audience how great the faculty at Pan Am are. We have, once again, proof of their greatness," Nelsen said. " I am very proud of them and honored to count them as colleagues."

Each of the 96 System wide awardees will receive \$25,000 and be honored at a ceremony Aug. 20 at The University of Texas at Austin's Shirley Bird Perry Ballroom in the Texas Union.