

Teaching Excellence Proposal II

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To create a new GCSU award for Excellence in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL).

Rationale

The Board of Regents has a state-wide award for the scholarship of teaching and learning (formerly called the research in undergraduate education award). It would be easier for us to nominate candidates for this award if we had a valid campus-wide process for selecting outstanding candidates that matched the criteria of the BOR award. Also, institutions across the country are increasingly emphasizing the scholarship of teaching and learning as an important area of focus, and the focus on student learning in this kind of research also supports our institutional mission. FDW and other initiatives are making great progress in changing our campus climate about assessment and, as more and more faculty embrace SOTL, recognizing exemplary faculty research in this area is in keeping with our mission. Granting visible awards also helps to disseminate the research of these faculty members and to inspire further work in their disciplinary areas and across campus. We propose that we create a university-wide award to recognize **“excellence in the scholarship of teaching and learning.”**

The winner of this university award would be the institution’s nominee for the BOR award. Committee members should review the winning portfolio and make suggestions for any changes deemed necessary to meet the BOR criteria or to strengthen the application before the portfolios are forwarded to Atlanta.

A. Proposed criteria

BOR Criteria	Proposed GCSU Criteria
<p>The award committee will look for persuasive evidence that nominees have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experience with varied strategies for investigating and documenting teaching practice and students' learning • a commitment to understanding 	<p>Successful candidates for the university-wide SOTL award should be faculty members who have demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a sustained record of investigating teaching and learning issues through well-defined formal research projects using methods appropriate for their disciplines; • a sustained record of using the evidence gleaned from these projects to revise and improve their teaching methods in order to enhance student learning;

<p>how and under what conditions powerful forms of student learning can be fostered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a focus not only on teacher practice but on depth of student learning • experience with the review of teaching that includes peer collaboration e.g. teaching circles, learning communities, etc. <p>(BOR is currently changing the following criteria now posted to reflect points found in the proposed GCSU criteria)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a sustained record of disseminating results of teaching and learning research projects through publications in peer-reviewed journals and presentations to scholarly organizations. <p>The award committee should have discretion as to which of the following criteria to weight the most heavily. Candidates for this award should demonstrate through persuasive, directly documented evidence that they have engaged in teaching and learning research projects that have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defined a research problem related to teaching and learning that focuses on ways to foster powerful forms of student learning within a specific classroom setting; • connected the research problem to studies in the scholarly literature; • used appropriate formal disciplinary methods of research to investigate and document teaching practice and its impact on students' learning within the context of specific classroom situations; • closed the assessment loop by documenting further modifications to research questions and teaching methodologies in response to results; • focused not simply on teacher practice but on its direct and documented connection to deep student learning; • directly documented student learning as a result of modifications to or experiments with creative teaching methodologies; • been subjected to a formal process of peer-review by a scholarly publication or academic conference; • been disseminated through scholarly networks via publications and presentations.
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B. Proposed Documentation for the Excellence in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award

Comparison of Required Documentation for BOR SOTL award and Proposed GCSU SOTL award

BOR Required Documentation	Proposed GCSU Required Documentation
<p>Nomination portfolios for these awards are limited to 20 pages, including any appendices (no smaller than 12 point). Each portfolio must include the following information:</p>	<p>Nomination portfolios for these awards are limited to 20 one-sided pages, including any appendices (no smaller than 12 point). Nominees should be encouraged to review the portfolios of the BOR scholarship of teaching and learning award recipients or to consult with CETL for guidance on appropriate materials to include. Each portfolio must include the following information:</p>
<p>Nomination letter from the institution's chief academic officer, noting the highlights of the nomination portfolio. (1-2 pages)</p>	<p>Nomination letter from a colleague that addresses the candidate's achievements in relation to the above criteria and noting the highlights of the nomination portfolio. (1-2 pages)</p>
<p>Two or three letters of support from colleagues qualified to comment on the value and quality of the teaching and learning activities, and its role in undergraduate education. These letters should describe how the nominee's activities have contributed knowledge in the field and how it has enhanced the learning of undergraduate students.</p>	<p>Two other letters of support from colleagues qualified to comment on the value and quality of the candidate's teaching and learning research projects and their role in advancing undergraduate education and learning. These letters should describe how the nominee's projects match the criteria above and how they have contributed to knowledge in the field. Letters should also identify the ways that the research has enhanced the learning for undergraduate students.</p>
<p>A narrative that outlines the goals, theories, and methods of scholarship activities that describe the ways in which students (if any) were/are involved in the project; and that includes data/evidence of the findings of the scholarship activities and its potential impact on teaching and learning in the discipline. (3-5 pages)</p>	<p>A formal narrative by the candidate that outlines the goals, theories, and methods of their most significant teaching and learning research projects. The narrative should describe the ways in which students were/are directly involved in the projects and include a discussion of the specific data/evidence generated as well as an analysis of the significance or potential impact of the projects on teaching and learning in the candidate's discipline. (3-5 pages)</p>
<p>A condensed curriculum vitae. (2-3</p>	<p>A condensed curriculum vitae that focuses on and highlights</p>

pages)	the candidate's scholarship of teaching and learning research projects, awards, and other relevant activities. (2-3 pages)
One or two letters of support from current and/or past students who participated in a scholarship of teaching project. At least one letter should be from one of the nominee's current students (if applicable)	One or two letters of support from students who were involved in one or more of the candidate's scholarship of teaching projects

C. Proposed Nomination Process

Candidates may be nominated by colleagues or may self-nominate. Nominations may not come from students, given that candidates will assign grades to students and students may feel unduly pressured.