

**Brief Summary of Proposals to Make Changes to Existing  
GCSU Teaching Excellence Awards and to Create a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award**

**Date of proposal:** September 15, 2006

**Drafted by:** Dr. Deborah Vess (Professor of History) and Dr. Autumn Grubb (member, Academic Governance Committee)

**Summary of proposals**

**Proposal I**

To make the following changes to the

**GCSU EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARDS GUIDELINES** (section 2.09.04.2 of GCSU Academic Affairs Handbook)

A) To rename the "**GCSU Excellence in Teaching**" award to the "**Excellence in Teaching and Learning**" award and to designate one of the three annual recipients of the teaching excellence awards as winner of the "**Distinguished Achievement in Teaching and Learning**," the latter being named as GCSU's nominee for the BOR Teaching Excellence award.

B) to align the eligibility criteria, nomination process, and documentation standards with those of the BOR Teaching Excellence awards and standards for teaching excellence that are recognized and promoted by well-respected national organizations.

Specifically:

- (i) to increase the emphasis on documentation of student learning as a measure of teaching effectiveness;
- (ii) to increase the number of years of service required for candidacy from three to five;
- (iii) to change the nomination process to allow a faculty member to self-nominate and forbid nominations by students;
- (iv) to discourage letters and other support from current students given that the candidate is assigning a grade to them and students may feel pressured.

## Proposal II

To create an award on campus for the scholarship of teaching and learning to match the BOR awards. The winner of this campus-wide award should be the university's nominee for the BOR SOTL award, instituting

- a. criteria that match those of the BOR SOTL award for faculty to be adopted for the next round of nominations;
- b. required documentation that match those of the BOR award to be adopted for the next round of nominations;
- c. a nomination process permitting self-nominations by faculty members or nominations by their colleagues, but forbidding student nominations.

### Brief Rationale for both proposals

GCSU's current criteria for the Distinguished Professor Award do not match the BOR Teaching Excellence criteria and neither do those of the teaching excellence awards. The BOR awards emphasize documentation of student learning as an indicator of teaching excellence, which reflects a national shift from a teacher-centered model towards an emphasis on **outcomes and student learning**, evident in current SACS accreditation requirements. An emphasis on the connection between innovative pedagogies and deep student learning is especially relevant to our mission as the public liberal arts university of Georgia. No changes are proposed for the Distinguished Professor Award, which recognizes areas beyond teaching, but we do propose changes to the names of and the criteria for the teaching excellence awards to align them with BOR and national standards.

Proposal II reflects the BOR emphasis on a scholarly approach to teaching and learning, as it sponsors a state-wide award for the scholarship of teaching and learning (formerly called the research in undergraduate education award). This is a research award that recognizes scholarly projects disseminated through a scholarly network that document the connection between innovative pedagogy and exemplary student learning. SOTL is an emerging field of research now recognized for tenure and promotion purposes by several research I institutions, including Notre Dame, Indiana University, and Georgetown University. Recognition of SOTL is now included in several tenure and promotion policies on campus, including The School of Arts and Sciences and The School of Education, and is also in keeping with our institutional mission. Proposal II requests that GCSU create a SOTL award to match the BOR awards structure.

Finally, many changes are based on the experience of Dr. Vess, who has served on the BOR committee for five years. Where the proposed criteria and documentation differ slightly from current BOR criteria, this is based on her experience of the deliberations of the committee and knowledge of the revisions under way for the next round of awards.

### Structure of Supporting Documents

Supporting documents for this proposal are broken down into components matching items listed above to allow the committee the opportunity to consider and vote on each aspect of the proposal separately if they deem it necessary. For each component or piece, a

rationale is offered as well as a description of the corresponding practice currently in place for GCSU and the BOR. In the event that the component has no existing equivalent at GCSU, e.g. the SOTL award, that too is noted.

### Overview of Changes Proposed

The following chart outlines proposed changes to criteria and required documentation for the GCSU teaching excellence awards, the creation of a Distinguished Achievement in Teaching and Learning Award and a SOTL award.

<b>Current GCSU Faculty Awards</b>	<b>Selection Criteria</b>	<b>Length of Service Requirement/Eligibility to receive again</b>	<b>Nomination Process</b>	<b>Required Documentation</b>	<b>Awards Structure</b>	<b>Nomination for the BOR Faculty Awards</b>
<b>Teaching Excellence</b>	Changes proposed to match BOR requirements	*Change from a minimum of 3 to 5 years of full-time teaching at GCSU.  *Change from current 5 year period between receipt of award and eligibility to receive again to allow for receipt only once in one's career at GCSU.	*Change process to allow faculty to self-nominate.  *Change process to prohibit student nominations	Changes proposed to match BOR requirements	*One university-wide winner of teaching excellence awards named "Distinguished Achievement in Teaching and Learning," based on proposed new criteria.  *Two university-wide teaching excellence awards recognize "excellence in teaching and learning," and are based on new criteria.	Distinguished Achievement in Teaching and Learning award winner is the institution's nominee for the BOR awards.
<b>Distinguished Professor</b>	No changes proposed	No changes proposed	No changes proposed	No changes proposed	No changes proposed	Distinguished Professor is no longer the automatic nominee for the BOR teaching excellence

						awards
<b>Research Awards</b>	No changes proposed	No changes proposed	No changes proposed	No changes proposed	No changes proposed	No changes proposed
<b>Service Awards</b>	No changes proposed	No changes proposed	No changes proposed	No changes proposed	No changes proposed	No changes proposed
<b>Scholarship of Teaching and Learning</b>					GCSU institutes a new award for the scholarship of teaching and learning to match the BOR award.	Winner of the GCSU SOTL award is nominee for BOR award