Endorsement of Joanne Lazirko Award for Innovative Use of Learning Technologies

The Joanne Lazirko award, made annually, recognizes innovation in the effective use of learning technologies to promote student engagement and collaboration, active learning, and critical thinking. Although all full-time instructors and all courses are eligible for consideration, it is anticipated that “innovative use of learning technologies” will principally recognize excellent instruction in a blended or fully online course.

Candidates for the Lazirko award must be faculty or academic staff. Candidates who have been awarded the UWM certificate for blended/online teaching are particularly encouraged. Candidates must not previously have received the Lazirko award.

The Lazirko awards committee will review and evaluate candidates. The Lazirko awards committee comprises the Director, chair ex officio, of the Learning Technology Center, two other members of the permanent LTC staff named by the Director, one member of the faculty appointed by the Faculty Awards and Recognition Committee, and one member of the teaching academic staff appointed by the Academic Staff Awards Committee. Appointees to the Lazirko awards committee should have substantial experience in blended and/or online teaching.

Nominations for the Lazirko award may be submitted by UWM students, faculty, staff, departments, and organizations. A nominator must write a letter which details the learning technologies used by the nominee, and the reasons for their perceived pedagogical effectiveness. The nomination should focus on no more than two courses which demonstrate the nominee’s innovative and effective use of learning technologies. The nominator must also submit two additional letters of support from persons familiar with the nominee’s teaching.

When all materials for the nomination have been received by the chair of the awards committee, each candidate will be contacted by the chair and invited to provide documentation to support the candidacy, including, but not limited to, the relevant course syllabi, D2L sites, and student evaluations. The candidate will be invited to make available a pedagogical reflection upon the courses to be evaluated, to assist the committee in its deliberations.

The awards committee will review this documentation with extreme care to ensure that a candidate has followed standard best practices in course design and delivery. This standard shall reflect the criteria identified and elaborated in the LTC Handbook for Peer Evaluation of Online and Blended Courses. The awards committee may request an interview with the candidate after the evaluation of all materials has been completed to clarify any questions that remain.

Nominations will be solicited by the awards committee in February; the committee shall select a recipient by May. The Lazirko recipient will be honored by an announcement in UWM Report, a $1500 award, and recognition at the Fall awards ceremony hosted by the Chancellor.