University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee

Awards and Recognition Committee
2013-2014 Annual Report

Members:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Krista Lisdahl</td>
<td>FAC Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kristen Murphy</td>
<td>FAC Chemistry &amp; Biochemistry</td>
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<td>Carlos Galvao-Sobrinho</td>
<td>FAC History</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simone Linhares Ferro</td>
<td>FAC Dance</td>
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<td>Jon Kahl, Chair</td>
<td>FAC Mathematical Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adream Blair</td>
<td>FAC Art &amp; Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>Junhong Chen</td>
<td>FAC Mechanical Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rebecca Adame</td>
<td>Student</td>
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<td>&lt;&gt;</td>
<td>Student</td>
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1 Repl D. Haseman (2014-E)

Charter:
Functions/ Responsibilities:

A1.6 Awards and Recognition Committee

(1) **Membership.** Nine members as follows: four elected faculty members; three faculty members appointed by the University Committee; and two students.

(2) **Functions**

a) Subject to administrative policies and guidelines and subject to the provisions of gifts, bequests, or other unbudgeted sources not administered directly by colleges, schools, or departments, recommends or selects candidates for awards or recognition for faculty members.
b) Selects recipients for outstanding teacher recognition awards and service awards from candidates nominated by students, faculty, or departments.

c) Recommends students for appropriate scholarship awards not under the jurisdiction of other faculty committees or other agencies.

d) Maintains liaison with appropriate system-wide committees where these are pertinent to UWM.

e) Acts as an information clearing house concerning sources of awards and recognition.

(Doc 1016, 3/17/77: UWM Administration approval, 3/30/77)
(Editorially revised, 7/1/10)

Meetings:

The committee met five times, on

16 September 2013
5 December 2013
16 December 2013
28 March 2014
21 April 2014

In addition, some committee business was conducted by email.

Award Recommendations

Distinguished Undergraduate Teaching Award

The committee received seven nominations for the Distinguished Undergraduate Teaching Award. After careful consideration, including multiple classroom observations of each nominee, the committee recommended that the following five nominees receive the award:

Prof. Thomas Consi (Freshwater Sciences)
Prof. Kristin Sziarto (Geography)
Prof. Paul Lyman (Physics)
Prof. Michelle Lopez-Rios (Theater)
Prof. Kim Cosier (Art & Design)

In an email exchange on 23 April 2014, Kristen Van Housen of the Secretary of the University's office confirmed that Distinguished Undergraduate Teaching Awards may be granted to all five of the above nominees.
The committee has some concerns concerning some of the logistical details associated with the Distinguished Undergraduate Teaching Award. These concerns are described below in the "Recommendations for Procedural Changes" section of this document.

**Joanne Lazirko Award for Innovative Use of Learning Technologies**

In March 2014 Tanya Joosten, chair of the Joanne Lazirko Award for Innovative Use of Learning Technologies committee, requested that the Faculty Awards and Recognition Committee appoint a member to the Joanne Lazirko Award committee. Prof. Kristen Murphy was appointed and served on the committee.

**UWM Alumni Association Outstanding Scholar Award**

The Alumni Association asked the committee to identify the top 10 applicants for their Outstanding Scholar Award. There were 32 applications in total. The committee recommended the following applicants (in no particular order):

- Nolan Kresnak
- Madeleine Ninmann
- Melissa Mursch
- Laura Kohlhagen
- Jensen Skinner
- Bryant Kimball-Biersach
- Molly Kiefer
- Kai Bottum
- Teresa Evenson
- Gabriella Cisneros

The committee had some significant concerns about the manner in which the applicants' information was provided. These concerns are described below in the "Recommendations for Procedural Changes" section of this document, and were communicated to Erin Harrass of the Alumni Association.

**UW System Regents Teaching Award**

The committee received two nominations for this UW System-wide award. The committee was responsible for recommending one nominee to the Secretary of the University. We recommended Prof. Kim Cosier (Art & Design).

**Distinguished University Service Award**

The committee received three nominations for the Distinguished University Service Award, and recommended that the award be granted to Prof. Nadya Fouad (Educational Psychology).
Distinguished Public Service Award

The committee received one nominations for the Distinguished Public Service Award, for Prof. Leah Rouse (Arndt), Educational Psychology, and recommended that Prof. Rouse receive the award.

Recommendations for Procedural Changes

1. Distinguished Undergraduate Teaching Award.

The committee has identified two problems with the logistical details concerning this award.

First, the call for nominations (attached to this document) requires nominators to "Send one (1) copy of a DETAILED letter of nomination, describing how the nominee merits the award" to the committee. Once nominations have been received, the committee chair sends a letter to the nominees requesting additional information (see attached sample). This letter specifies a vita not exceeding five pages, and no more than three supporting letters.

The problem here is that some nomination letters are quite short, no more than a paragraph or two, while others are voluminous, multi-part documents containing full vitae (i.e. much more than five pages) and numerous supporting letters. This results in an undesirable situation in which the complete nomination packages (initial nomination plus the additional material requested of the candidate) vary widely in size and content among the candidate pool.

The committee recommends that the 'call for nomination' document be changed in an attempt to correct this problem. Specifically, we recommend the final paragraph be changed to the following:

TO NOMINATE SOMEONE FOR THE AWARD:
Send one (1) copy of a detailed letter of nomination describing how the nominee merits the award (e.g., command of subject, classroom organization, teaching innovations, stimulation of learning, concern for students' needs) to the address below. Nomination letters may be no longer than three pages. Following the nomination, the Awards and Recognition Committee will request additional material from the candidate, including a vita and supporting letters from colleagues and/or students.

The second problem concerns the timing of the nominations. As the evaluation process includes multiple classroom observations, the committee must work quickly to organize classroom visits for those nominees who teach an undergraduate class in the Fall semester only. With this in mind, we recommend the following:

a. The nomination deadline be changed to three weeks after the start of classes, i.e., September 23, 2014.
b. The call for nominations for the upcoming academic year should be disseminated to the university community at the end of the spring semester as well as at the beginning of the fall semester.

2. **UWM Alumni Association Outstanding Scholar Award.**

The committee had some serious concerns involving our recent efforts to identify, at the Alumni Association's request, the top 10 applicants for the Alumni Association's Outstanding Scholar Award. These concerns were forwarded to Erin Harrass of the Alumni Association on 7 February 2014.

In essence, the problem is that the data used in our evaluations were not consistent among all applicants. Specifically:

- On the Outstanding Scholar Award Application form, the "specify the [GPA] scale used" field is inconclusive. Some students wrote "unweighted", but it's not clear whether they're referring to a 4-point or 5-point unweighted scale, or something else. Other students wrote "4.0", but it's not clear whether they meant 4.0-weighted or 4.0-unweighted. Perhaps the solution to this problem would be to require all applicants to report their GPA on a 4-point, unweighted scale, thus making this information completely consistent among all applicants.

- Our committee was instructed to consider the Leadership Scholarship applications along with the Outstanding Scholar Award applications. This was especially problematic, because the application forms are different. Some significant examples:
  - The Leadership form asks for GPA on a 4.0 scale (without specifying whether the scale is weighted or unweighted), while the Outstanding Scholar form requires the scale to be specified (see comment above about the problems with this field).
  - The Outstanding Scholar award requires the class rank and class size (very useful statistics), while the Leadership form does not.
  - The Leadership form requires ethnicity information, while the Outstanding Scholar form does not.
  - Perhaps most importantly, the Leadership and Outstanding Scholar awards target different sets of skills and attributes. The personal essays and letters of recommendation are usually geared toward these skills/attributes and thus present an additional source of inconsistency.

If both the Leadership and Outstanding Scholar applications are to be considered for the Outstanding Scholar award, then we recommend a joint application form in which all students apply for both awards, thus ensuring consistency among the applications.

The committee felt that it was extremely difficult to evaluate the applications in a fair and effective manner, given the significant lack of consistency and other problems detailed
above. We feel that these problems be corrected before the next scholarship cycle.

3. Joint dissemination of the calls for nominations for both teaching and service awards

The number of nominations for the service awards was disappointingly small. With the goal of increasing the number of nominations, we recommend the following. While the nomination deadline for the service awards is typically in March, we recommend that the call for nominations for the service awards (with the usual March deadline) accompany the call for nominations for the teaching award that goes out earlier in the academic year. This will give potential nominators a long lead time to plan and prepare their nominations.