UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED

ACADEMIC SENATE

Friday, February 11, 2022

2021-2022 Senate Distinguished Graduate Teaching/Mentorship Award

The Senate Distinguished Graduate Teaching/Mentorship Award is intended to encourage and recognize individual excellence in teaching at the graduate level and mentorship of graduate students. Both are important functions of faculty at a research university. However, many of the faculty at our young institution have had limited opportunities to teach formal courses at the graduate level or to serve as major professors for graduate students. Accordingly, this award may be given in recognition of excellent performance in either or both areas. A list of previous recipients is provided here on page 3 and available at
https://senate.ucmerced.edu/previous_senate_awardees.

Eligibility
All members of the Academic Senate, including all Senate faculty rank and title who have not previously won the award are eligible. Previous nominees who have not won the award may be nominated again.

Criteria for Award
1. A faculty member is limited to one award per lifetime.
2. The award may be given in recognition of outstanding instructional and mentorship activities during a single year or over multiple years.
3. The qualities that distinguish excellent graduate teaching and mentorship are highly variable across disciplines. In general, distinguished graduate teaching and mentorship are defined by the following traits:
   • Command of the subject.
   • Continuous growth in the field of study.
   • Ability to organize course material and to present it cogently.
   • Ability to inspire students' intellectual growth and independent, original and critical thinking.
   • Enthusiasm for the subject, and the ability to convey that enthusiasm to students.
   • Maintenance of the highest standards of professional conduct and personal ethics, which guides students to emulate such standards.
   • Setting and consistently attaining high standards of professional scholarship.
   • Fostering the development of graduate students' communication skills, written and oral, as appropriate for the students' disciplines by critiquing written work and oral presentations.
   • Accessibility to students and effective and respectful communication in interactions with students.
   • Education of students in the culture and procedures appropriate to their discipline; helping students network with other scholars in the field.

- Providing career guidance, actively helping students to find professionally relevant employment.

Nomination Process

Initial nominations for the award will be accepted from any member of the academic community (students, faculty, staff, alumni). A nomination may be put forth by a faculty or staff member, or by a student or group of students. The nomination should discuss reasons for the award to the faculty nominee based on the criteria listed above. **Nominations should be submitted electronically as one PDF packet to the Chair of the Academic Senate (senatechair@ucmerced.edu) and must include the following:**

1. **A [nomination form](#).**
2. **One nomination letter** (maximum of two pages) that highlights the outstanding contributions of the nominee to UCM in graduate teaching and mentorship. This letter should be written by a UCM faculty member who is familiar with the nominee's accomplishments in these areas. Faculty with administrative appointments (e.g., deans) may serve as nominators.
3. **Three supporting letters** (suggested length two pages) specifically solicited for this nomination.
   - ✦ One letter is written by a UCM faculty member.
   - ✦ One letter is written by a current or former graduate student, not necessarily a research advisee of the nominee.
   - ✦ One letter is written by another faculty member, another student, or any other individual who has an appropriate professional background to comment on the nominee's graduate teaching and/or mentorship (e.g., faculty from other campuses or institutions, or other UCM staff).
4. **A current and complete curriculum vitae.**
5. **Nominee's statement on teaching.**

Student teaching evaluations should not be included as part of the nomination package but may be summarized and/or excerpted by writers of nominating or supporting letters.

Based on the nomination materials, supplementary information may be requested of finalists by the GC Awards Committee. Supporting materials may include course syllabi, teaching evaluations, published textbooks, articles on pedagogy, additional letters or support, and any other evidence of exceptional instructional activities. All materials and notes will be held in confidence by the GC Awards Committee.

Selection Process

The [Graduate Council](#) (GC) will form an ad-hoc committee from its membership to serve as the GC Awards Committee with a **minimum of three Senate faculty.** The GC Awards Committee will have balanced representation from a range of academic areas and broad school representation. If additional expertise is needed, non-GC committee members will be appointed by the GC Chair. The GC Awards Committee reserves the right to not give an award if there is an insufficient number of nominees, or if nominees do not meet the above criteria for the award.

The GC Awards Committee will review nominees and members will submit their first-choice candidate or their recommendation that no award is merited, to the Chair of the Awards Committee, with a brief justification for either case. The Awards Committee will select a recipient based on majority vote.

The GC Awards Committee will complete its selection process and inform the Chair of the Academic Senate (senatechair@ucmerced.edu) of the results. On the recommendation of the Awards Committee, any finalist may be nominated for the award the following year.

Deadline for Nominations: 5:00pm, Thursday, March 31, 2022.

The announcement of the recipient will be made during the UC Merced Spring Meeting of the Division on Thursday, May 12, 2022.

Past Recipients

2020-2021 – Frederick Wolf

2019-2020 – Zulema Valdez

2018-2019 – Miriam Barlow

2017-2018 – Michael D. Cleary

2016-2017 – Jan Wallander

2015-2016 – Ashlie Martini

2014-2015 – Harish Bhat

2013-2014 – Jinah Choi

2012-2013 – Nestor Oviedo

2011-2012 – Jennifer Manilay

2010-2011 – Ignacio López-Calvo