

University Recognition of Excellence in Teaching

Policy Memorandum No. 32

Recommended by: The Commission on Faculty Affairs
Approved by University Council: March 15, 1982
Approved by the President: March 15, 1982
Effective: Immediately

After many months of study, and on recommendation of the Commission on Faculty Affairs, the Academy of Teaching Excellence, and the Faculty Senate, the University Council has approved substantial changes in the University's practices in recognition of teaching excellence. Under policies previously approved, Certificates of Teaching Excellence have been awarded annually to 10 percent of the faculty, a proportion that some considered excessive. The Academy of Teaching Excellence recommended that good teaching would be stimulated more effectively and recognized more appropriately if the certificates were awarded more selectively. In addition, the Academy felt that because of the growth of the University in size and diversity, additional University-wide awards were warranted beyond the Wine and Sporn Awards for truly exceptional teaching.

To satisfy these concerns, recommendations were developed reducing the number of Certificates of Teaching Excellence to be awarded each year from the current 10 percent of teaching faculty to a University-wide total of twenty (20), and providing for the election of two individuals to receive new Alumni Teaching Awards which are equal in stipend to the Wine and Sporn Awards. Recipients of Certificates of Teaching Excellence become eligible for Alumni Teaching Awards and membership in the Academy of Teaching Excellence.

Following is the Resolution on University Recognition of Excellence in Teaching as approved by the University Council.

CFA Resolution University Recognition of Excellence in Teaching

Whereas, it is widely perceived that the awarding of Certificates of Teaching Excellence annually to ten percent of the faculty has given rise upon occasion to some questionable practices, and

Whereas, the Academy of Teaching Excellence has recommended that good teaching would be more effectively stimulated and more appropriately recognized if the Certificates were awarded much more selectively, and

Whereas, the growth of the University in size and diversity over the past decade warrants the creation of additional University-wide awards beyond the Wine and Sporn Awards, for truly exceptional teaching

Be it resolved that the following recommendations concerning teaching awards and recognitions be adopted and implemented in timely fashion so that the first of the recommended awards may be presented in Spring, 1982:

1. It is recommended that the number of Certificates of Teaching Excellence be reduced from their current number (10 percent of teaching faculty) to a University-wide total of twenty (20) per

year. This number is to be proportionately distributed over the University by college, according to the numbers of instructional (Agency 208) faculty positions allotted to each college, but with each college awarding at least one Certificate, whatever its size. To encourage University-wide consistency, the Academy of Teaching Excellence will provide guidelines for colleges to follow concerning selection criteria and procedures. However, the details of the selection process, and of course the selections themselves, shall be determined by the individual colleges, subject to review by the Academy. ALL full-time faculty are eligible to receive certificates.

2. The 20 Certificate holders, by virtue of this recognition by their colleges, become eligible for election to membership in the Academy of Teaching Excellence (see recommendation 3). This eligibility lasts for three years from the date of Certificate presentation, during which time these individuals are NOT eligible to receive any additional Certificates. An appropriate presentation (not cash, but something such as a plaque, a tastefully framed and matted certificate, an embossed chair, or a desk set. . . awarded by the college but uniform in kind across the University) should accompany each Certificate. The Academy of Teaching Excellence, in consultation with the colleges, shall determine what it is to be.
3. Each year, from the pool of sixty* names of Certificate awardees over the past three years, the Academy of Teaching Excellence will elect two individuals to receive the Alumni Teaching Award. These two awards will be equal in stipend to the Wine and Sporn Awards, announced and presented concurrently with those other major University-wide teaching awards.
4. The six major award winners each year (3 Wine Awards, 1 Sporn Award for the teaching of introductory subjects, 2 Alumni Teaching Awards) will be inducted into the Academy of Teaching Excellence and will then begin active terms of three years in the Academy. As these recommendations take effect over a three-year phase-in period, the Academy will become an 18-member body of major teaching award winners. Although "active service" in the Academy is for three years, membership in the Academy is for life. An individual who has received one of the six major teaching awards is ineligible for any other for a period of seven years.
5. Concerning the calendar and phase-in, it is anticipated that these recommendations could be put into effect as early as 1982, with the first selections of Certificate recipients taking place in the various colleges during late winter or early spring quarters, and elections of all major award winners in late spring, in time for announcements during the final week of classes. Presentations of the six major awards may or may not continue to be acknowledged as part of the Commencement Ceremonies, but in all events the names of the six awardees, as well as Certificate winners, should appear prominently in the printed Commencement Program. An induction ceremony for the Academy of Teaching Excellence will be held early the following fall in the already-established tradition, with the Provost hosting a luncheon for the new inductees.

*The pool size for the initial two years will be smaller.

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President's Policy Memorandum

URL: <http://purl.vt.edu/vtdocs/policies/ppm32>