



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
ENGAGING THE WORLD

**TO:** Senate

**FROM** Joy Johnson  
Chair – Senate Committee on Agenda and Rules

**DATE:** April 28, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Revisions to Policy A 32.01 - Excellence in Teaching Awards

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SCAR has reviewed Revisions to Policy A 32.01 - Excellence in Teaching Awards and is bringing it to Senate for approval.

**Motion:**

That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors Revisions to Policy A 32.01 - Excellence in Teaching Awards.

MEMORANDUM

<b>ATTENTION:</b>	Senate
<b>FROM:</b>	Elizabeth Elle, Vice-Provost, Learning & Teaching, and Chair, Senate Committee on University Teaching and Learning <i>Elizabeth Elle</i>
<b>RE:</b>	Revisions to Policy A 32.01
<b>DATE:</b>	21 April 2022

Revisions to Policy A 32.01, Excellence in Teaching Awards, were discussed at the March 2022 Senate meeting. Additional consultation on the policy ran from February 18 to March 18, 2022, and included feedback via email, discussion with SFUFA, and a meeting with the current Excellence in Teaching Awards Committee.

Response to the updated policy was generally positive. Main items included:

- a. Much support for the changes, including criteria, remuneration, Specialized Awards, and NET
- b. Need to clarify who can nominate
- c. Need to clarify eligibility especially for TAs and Sessionals whose employment is variable from term to term, but also for people who have previously been recognized with an award
- d. Need to clarify the responsibility for defining Specialized Awards. There were also new ideas for these awards and the suggestion that for ideas that are not yet fully developed, we reduce the amount of wording in the procedures.
- e. Expand/clarify the opportunity for nominees to present information in their package.

Revisions to the policy address these comments, and were approved by the Senate Committee on University Teaching and Learning at their meeting on April 13, 2022. Revisions since the last time Senate reviewed the policy are shown with “track changes”.

Should Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the policy revisions at the May 16, 2022 meeting, the revisions will be brought to the Board for approval at their meeting in June. If approved by the Board, the new policy will take effect in September 2022.

# AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

**Commented [EE1]:** Changed to plural

<b>Date</b> October 1, 1992	<b>Number</b> A 32.01
<b>Date of Last Review/Revision</b> September 8, 2006	<b>Mandated Review</b> [TBA]

Policy Authority: Vice-President Academic and Provost

Associated Procedure: Awards for Excellence in Teaching: Procedures for Nomination.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This policy establishes an Excellence in Teaching Award program. At a minimum, an Excellence in Teaching Award will be conferred annually to recognize outstanding educators. It is additionally expected that awards will be conferred to recognize excellence at different career stages and in specific aspects of teaching that are valued by the university. The policy establishes a committee to consider nominations, delegate award adjudications to appropriate subcommittees, and make recommendations to the Vice-President, Academic and Provost.

**Commented [EE2]:** This section did not exist in the old policy, and has been added to all policies as we update them.

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy establishes an Excellence in Teaching Award program (“the Program”) and the University Committee for Excellence in Teaching Awards. The Committee will consider nominations, delegate the consideration of Specialized Awards to appropriate subcommittees, and make recommendations to the Vice-President, Academic and Provost.

**Commented [EE3]:** An expansion from a single award, to include additional Specialized Awards.

**Commented [EE4]:** Changed from the President.

## 2.0 SCOPE AND JURISDICTION

- 2.1 The recipient of an award under the Excellence in Teaching Award program must be an employee of Simon Fraser University, with the exception of Specialized Awards for Sessionals, Limited Term Lecturers, or Teaching Assistants, who must be an employee of Simon Fraser University during the teaching term(s) for which they are recognized.
- 2.2 Recipients of the Excellence in Teaching Award are not eligible for nomination for awards included in this policy in future years. Faculty who are recipients of Specialized Awards may be nominated for the Excellence in Teaching Award.

**Commented [EE5]:** Expanded from continuing faculty to reflect that Specialized Awards may eventually be conferred on sessionals, teaching assistants, or other ranks.

Revised to acknowledge the changing basis of employment for TAs and Sessionals.

## 3.0 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 See Appendix A for the definition of Excellence in Teaching and the interpretative principles that apply to it.

## 4.0 POLICY

- 4.1 The purpose of the Excellence in Teaching Award program (“the Program”) is to give greater recognition for teaching excellence at Simon Fraser University. Teaching excellence should additionally be recognized for individuals at different career stages and engaged with diverse aspects of teaching as defined by the Committee, that are aligned with institutional values.
- 4.2 The University Committee for Excellence in Teaching Awards established by this policy should regularly review and update areas for recognition as set out in the procedures.
- 4.3 At minimum, an Excellence in Teaching award will be conferred annually to recognize outstanding educators. It is additionally expected that Specialized Awards will be conferred to recognize excellence at different career stages and in specific specialized aspects of teaching that are valued by the university as defined by the Committee.
- 4.4 The University Committee for Excellence in Teaching Awards will consist of:
- 4.4.1 The Associate Vice-President and Vice-Provost of Learning & Teaching, who will serve ex officio as Chair with no vote except in the case of a tie;
  - 4.4.2 One faculty member from each Faculty nominated by the Dean of that Faculty;
  - 4.4.3 One undergraduate student selected by the Simon Fraser Student Society;
  - 4.4.4 One graduate student selected by the Graduate Student Society; and

**Commented [EE6]:** Repeats the Program is expanding beyond a single award.

Removed vague reference to “values”.

**Commented [EE7]:** Added to committee to provide structure and continuity and assist with procedural items. No other changes made to committee composition.

4.4.5 Two ~~representatives from the Alumni Association~~ members of the alumni community.

Ideally, at least some committee members nominated by the Faculty Deans would be previous award winners. Committee members normally serve for two years and can be renewed.

**Commented [EE8]:** To reflect changes in progress to the structure of the alumni society.

**Commented [EE9]:** These items were not explicit in previous policy, but were the practice.

## 5.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The University Committee for Excellence in Teaching Awards will receive and consider nominations and will make recommendations to the Vice-President, Academic and Provost.

**Commented [EE10]:** Changed from the President.

5.2 Prior to making its recommendations, the Committee is expected to seek appropriate information from various sources as set out in the procedures.

5.3 The Committee may appoint subcommittees to consider nominations to Specialized Awards as set out in the procedures.

## 6.0 RELATED LEGAL, POLICY AUTHORITIES AND AGREEMENTS

6.1 The legal and other University Policy authorities and agreements that may bear on the administration of this policy and may be consulted as needed include but are not limited to:

6.1.1 *University Act*, RSBC 1996, c 468

6.1.2 *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, RSBC 1996, c 165

## 7.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

7.1 The information and records made and received to administer this policy are subject to the access to information and protection of privacy provisions of British Columbia's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the University's Information Policy series.

## 8.0 RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF RECORDS

8.1 Information and records made and received to administer this policy are evidence of the University's actions to recognize and award teaching excellence. Information and records must be retained and disposed of in accordance with a records retention schedule approved by the University Archivist.

## 9.0 POLICY REVIEW

9.1 This policy must be reviewed every five years and may always be reviewed as needed.

## 10.0 POLICY AUTHORITY

10.1 This policy is administered under the authority of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost.

## 11.0 INTERPRETATION

11.1 Questions of interpretation or application of this policy or its procedures shall be referred to the Vice-President, Academic and Provost whose decision shall be final.

Commented [EE11]: Changed from the President.

## 12.0 PROCEDURES AND OTHER ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

12.1 Appendix A contains the criteria for the Excellence in Teaching Award.

12.2 The Procedures for this Policy are: Awards for Excellence in Teaching; Procedures for Nomination.

## APPENDIX A - AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING - DEFINITION

<b>Date</b>	<b>Number</b> A 32.01
<b>Date of Last Review/Revision</b>	<b>Mandated Review</b> [TBA]

Policy Authority: Vice-President Academic and Provost

Parent Policy: Awards for Excellence in Teaching (A 32.01)

### 1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 This Appendix sets out the definition of Excellence in Teaching and the interpretative principles that apply to it for the purposes of Policy A 32.01 and its procedures.

### 2.0 EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

2.1 An Excellent Teacher inspires and facilitates student learning in ways that make a sustained, substantial, and positive influence on how students think, engage, and act in the world. Excellent teachers centre the student learning experience, demonstrate expertise in the subject and in related pedagogy, communicate effectively, and are reflective individuals dedicated to continual improvement of their teaching practice.

2.2 The definition of Excellence in Teaching, as set out in section 2.1, will be interpreted by applying the following principles:

- 2.2.1 Teachers who centre the learning experience transparently engage their students in their own learning, and use diverse and inclusive pedagogies.
- 2.2.2 Teachers who demonstrate expertise are current in disciplinary/subject knowledge and actively developing their pedagogical skills
- 2.2.3 Effective communicators set clear expectations, use diverse communication channels, and create opportunities for feedback with their students.
- 2.2.4 A dedication to improvement is clear when instructors demonstrate an openness to learning, challenge their own biases, and solicit and apply feedback from others to their practice.

**Commented [EE1]:** Previous policy had no definition, and included only a list of criteria that the Committee considered vague and difficult to assess.

Those criteria were:

- \* Ability to stimulate students to think creatively and critically
- \* Demonstrated caring for student learning
- \* Ability to present complex information clearly
- \* Demonstrated enthusiasm for and innovation in teaching
- \* Sustained record of excellent teaching
- \* Diversity of course level

The new definition and principles should clarify expectations for both nominees and the Committee.

# AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING: Procedures for Nomination

**Date**  
A 32.01

**Number**  
A 32.01

**Date of Last Review/Revision**  
Mandated Review [TBA]

Policy Authority: Vice-President Academic and Provost

Parent Policy: Awards for Excellence in Teaching (A 32.01)

## 1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 These procedures set out the nomination process for teaching awards conferred under Policy A 32.01.

## 2.0 DEFINITIONS

2.1 See Appendix A to the Awards for Excellence in Teaching (Policy A 32.01) for the definition of Excellence in Teaching and the interpretative principles that apply to it.

## 3.0 PROCEDURE

### Awards

3.1 Normally, up to three Excellence in Teaching Awards are conferred each year, with a dollar value of \$5,000 which recipients can choose to accept as either a monetary award or a research grant.

3.2 “Specialized Awards” may be conferred to reflect different career stages or areas of teaching expertise as defined by the University Committee for Excellence in Teaching Awards (“the Committee”).

3.3 All award recipients will be invited to join a new entity, the Network for Excellent Teaching (NET) for a period of 5 years. This Network will provide peer mentorship and support, as well as professional development opportunities aimed at the interests of award winners.

3.4 Types of Specialized Awards and any changes to process or criteria will be finalized by the University Committee for Excellence in Teaching Awards (“the Committee”) by May 31 in each year, based on their experience with the process.

**Commented [EE1]:** Value is doubled relative to the 2006 policy, and recipients now can choose a research grant

**Commented [EE2]:** New.

**Commented [EE3]:** New.

**Commented [EE4]:** The terms of NET will be decided collaboratively with members. It is optional, and is being created as one small way to contribute to a culture that celebrates teaching at SFU. For years, faculty have expressed that opportunities (for interaction with others passionate about teaching, or learning opportunities, or other) can sometimes be more valuable than awards or monetary recognition. NET is one way to offer those opportunities.



## NOMINATIONS

3.5 Requests for nominations should begin no later than September 15. The Chair of the Committee is expected to help solicit nominations from across the institution and encourage nominations that are inclusive of SFU's diversity of instructors.

**Commented [EE5]:** To address concerns that we may not be receiving nominations from all sectors of our community.

3.6 Nominations are due in October 15 of each year, with the awards announced at the annual awards ceremony (normally in February or March). Recommendations of award recipients should be made by the Committee to the Vice President Academic and Provost no later than January 31.

**Commented [EE6]:** Consistent with former policy, and with practice when not specified in former policy.

3.7 An individual cannot be considered for, or receive, more than one award in a given year.

3.8 At the Committee's discretion, Specialized Awards may not be conferred in any given year, for instance if there is not a strong or extensive pool of nominees for a particular award.

3.9 Nominations may be made by SFU faculty, staff, students, or alumni, and should address the criteria for Excellence in Teaching as set out in Appendix A, and any additional criteria for the Specialized Awards as defined by the Committee (Section 3.4).

**Commented [EE7]:** Consistent with previous policy

3.10 Further information collected is at the discretion of the Committee but is normally comprised of:

**Commented [EE8]:** Captures the current practice of the Committee.

a. A nomination form addressing the criteria for Excellence in Teaching as set out in Appendix A, plus up to 2 additional pages of information from the nominator(s), which may include excerpts from additional letters of support.

b. A letter of support from a person in a leadership role such as a Chair, Director, Dean, or delegate

c. The committee will seek input from students when conferring teaching awards. This may be through a survey sent to 50 randomly selected students taught over the previous 5 years or through another method, to be determined by the committee.

b.d. A statement and supporting documentation from the nominee including a form addressing the criteria for Excellence in Teaching as set out in Appendix A, and any criteria for Specialized Awards; and additional reflection (no more than 3 pages) reflecting on teaching approaches, practices, and impact in the context of the criteria for Excellence in Teaching as set out in Appendix A, and any criteria for Specialized Awards. The nominee will also provide information on career progression, courses taught, TAs supervised, etc. such as is normally included in a CV.

e. For the Excellence in Teaching Award, the statement from the nominee should additionally include reflection on contributions to educational innovation, inquiry, and leadership. which is an additional criterion for this award. and normally the committee seeks input through a survey sent to 50 randomly selected students taught over the previous 5 years.

## SPECIALIZED AWARDS

Commented [EE9]: New.

- 3.11 Normally, subcommittees will be formed to consider nominees for Specialized Awards. Subcommittees will have at least three members, with at least one individual a member of the Committee. Other individuals not on the Committee may be invited to serve because of their expertise (for example, past recipients of the award).
- 3.12 Specialized Awards for consideration are reviewed and defined annually by the Committee. ~~will initially include the following—~~ Some awards have criteria beyond meeting the definition for Excellence in Teaching in Appendix A.
- a. **Early Career Award for Excellence in Teaching**  
  
Additional criteria: Limited to faculty members who have been in a faculty appointment for no more than 6 years, including faculty appointments at institutions other than SFU. Normally, individuals would have taught at SFU for a minimum of two years.
  - b. **Community Engaged or Experiential Education Award**  
  
Additional criteria: nomination and supporting information limited to courses with a substantial community-engaged and/or experiential education component. Our SFU draft definition: “Experiential education is when learners purposefully engage in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and develop learners’ capacity to contribute to their communities.” Community-engaged experiential education is normally designed in partnership with community to address mutually beneficial goals.
  - c. **Excellence in the Online or Blended Environment**  
  
Additional criteria: nomination and supporting information limited to courses taught in the online (OL) or blended (B) format.

## FUTURE SPECIALIZED AWARDS

Commented [EE10]: This section simplified and additional ideas added in response to community consultation.

- 4.0 Future Specialized Awards may be established by the Committee. The following are examples of recognition that the Committee will consider establishing:
- Sessional or limited term lecturer award
  - Teaching assistant award(s)
  - Student/alumni choice award
  - Librarian award
  - Open educational Resources award.
- d. ~~Sessional or Limited Term Lecturer Award~~

~~Additional criteria: must have taught in one of these capacities at SFU within the past 2 year (the course(s) for which the nomination is made)s, and, Given the changing nature of employment for Sessionals, may not be be a current employee of SFU at the time of nomination.~~

e. ~~Teaching Assistant Award~~

~~Additional criteria: open to graduate or undergraduate students who have taught as a Teaching Assistant or Tutor Marker at SFU within the past 2 years. Given the changing nature of employment for students, may not, and be a current employee of SFU at the time of nomination.~~

f. ~~Student/Alumni Choice Award for Excellence in Teaching~~

~~Nomination by students and/or alumni, with two of the three members of the subcommittee being students or alumni.~~

~~Other awards for development in the future could include recognition of librarians, recognition of staff, and additional specialized areas such as Open Educational Resources, Well-being in Learning environments, and more. The Committee will be tasked with defining Specialized awards annually.~~