TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

Operating Policy and Procedure

HSC OP: 10.25, **University Awards**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this HSC Operating Policy and Procedure (HSC OP) is to govern the unified TTUHSC University Awards Program, which honors team members and learners whose accomplishments exemplify the University's mission, vision, and values. The University Awards celebrate the achievements across all locations and align all recognition efforts under a single coordinated framework.

REVIEW: This policy will be reviewed on February 1 of every year by the Office of the President in collaboration with the Office of the Provost, Faculty Senate, and Staff Senate, with recommendations for revisions forwarded to the President by March 15. Policy revisions will take effect the following year.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

1. **Scope of Policy**. This policy applies specifically to awards formally included within the TTUHSC University Awards Program. Certain awards, including endowed recognitions, donor-related awards, or honors governed by separate institutional agreements or funding requirements, are not included in the policy and will continue to follow their respective established processes.
2. **General Policy**. The TTUHSC University Awards Program recognizes exceptional team members and learners whose contributions embody the University's mission, vision, and values. The program encompasses the following award categories:
    a. **Faculty Awards:** These awards honor TTUHSC faculty members whose teaching, research, service, and leadership demonstrate excellence, innovation, and alignment with our values.
        i. **Exemplary Impact Award (Faculty).** Honors outstanding achievement in teaching, research, investigation, outstanding clinical work, and community engagement that results in measurable impact for TTUHSC learners, programs, or the community.
        ii. **Values-Based Leader Award (Faculty).** Honors faculty who consistently model TTUHSC's values through mentorship, collaboration, and leadership.
        iii. **Values Champion Award** (**Faculty**). Honors a team member whose actions and influence have had a transformative effect on the workplace environment through consistent demonstration of our values.
        iv. **President's Award of Excellence (Faculty).** Honors extraordinary faculty contributions to TTUHSC through excellence in scholarship, innovation, and leadership.
        v. **University Distinguished Faculty Award**. The highest honor that recognizes faculty whose sustained achievements have had a transformative impact on education, research, clinical practice, and service while bringing distinction to TTUHSC through their professional accomplishments and leadership. Recipients of the University Distinguished Faculty Award are recognized for careers characterized by excellence, innovation, and significant contributions to their discipline, profession, and the broader academic community. The designation reflects the scholarly, educational, clinical, and service missions of TTUHSC.

The title of **University Distinguished Faculty** shall be conferred upon selected faculty members and will be held for the remainder of the recipient's active service at TTUHSC. Recipients who are subsequently granted emeritus status shall be designated as **University Distinguished Faculty Emeritus**.

1. **Criteria for Selecting University Distinguished Faculty.**
    a. In general, a University Distinguished Faculty will have been recognized nationally and usually internationally for the importance of their research, teaching, and/or clinical achievements. They will also have demonstrated the breadth of interest characteristically encompassed by the traditional role of faculty as teacher and public servant. In addition, they will have brought distinction to TTUHSC as a result of their activities.
    b. Specifically, a University Distinguished Faculty will have achieved a record judged by peers to be superior and outstanding in at least one of the following areas:
    superior teaching skills of recognized breadth and depth in their discipline; scholarly and research achievements; and a distinguished record of clinical service and community service.
    c. University Distinguished Faculty recognition will be conferred on tenured and non-tenured members of the TTUHSC faculty with the rank of associate or full professor.
2. **Nomination Documentation.**
    a. Letters of nomination from relevant deans and chairpersons or directors. These administrators will consult with appropriate department, school, or college advisory committees before endorsing nominations;
    b. A summary of the nominee’s achievements;
    c. The nominee’s curriculum vitae (CV);
    d. Letters of support from faculty and other colleagues at this and other institutions, as well as appropriate other entities, assessing the nominee's record of achievements in teaching, research, or public service; and
    e. Letters of support from present and former learners will be obtained, when appropriate.
3. **Review and Selection Process.**
    a. Complete nomination packets for the University Distinguished Faculty Award will be reviewed by the Office of the Provost to confirm the nominee’s eligibility and good standing.
    b. University Distinguished Faculty Award nomination packets determined to be in good standing will be reviewed by the Academic Council in accordance with the established criteria for the award.
    c. Following the Academic Council recommendations and successful completion of the good-standing review, the Provost will review as Chief Academic Officer and submit finalist recommendations, through the Office of People and Values, to the President for final consideration and selection.

b. **Staff Awards**: These awards recognize TTUHSC staff members who advance the University’s values-based culture and exemplify excellence in service, leadership, and collaboration. Please note that residents fall under the Learner Awards category.
    i. **Exemplary Impact Award (Staff)**. Honors a staff member who demonstrates exceptional initiative, problem-solving, or innovation resulting in measurable, positive outcomes for their unit, division/school, or University.

ii. **Values-Based Leader Award (Staff)**. Honors a staff member who models TTUHSC's values daily, fostering an environment of respect, accountability, and collaboration.
iii. **Values Champion Award (Staff)**. Honors a team member whose actions and influence have had a transformative effect on the University workplace environment through consistent demonstration of our values.
iv. **President's Award of Excellence (Staff)**. Honors a staff member with sustained outstanding performance, professional integrity, and dedication to TTUHSC's mission.
v. **The Penny Harkey University Distinguished Staff Award**. The highest staff honor, recognizing long-term commitment, exemplary service, and significant contributions to the success and reputation of TTUHSC.

c. **Team Awards**: These awards recognize team members whose collective efforts, within or across departments, schools, or functional areas, produce outcomes not achievable individually.
i. **University Team Award (Faculty and Staff)**. Recognizes teams whose collaborative efforts have produced exceptional results advancing TTUHSC's mission, vision, and values.

d. **Learner Awards**: To celebrate TTUHSC's values among our future professionals, the learner award category recognizes learners or residents who model leadership, service, and collaboration.
i. **Exemplary Impact Award (Learner).** Recognizes learners who exemplify TTUHSC's core values through community engagement, academic excellence, and positive peer influence.

3. **Eligibility**. Except as otherwise provided for the University Distinguished Faculty Award, the eligibility requirements set forth in this section apply to all awards administered through the TTUHSC University Awards Program. Eligibility criteria ensure nominations are consistent, transparent, and representative of the talent and dedication across our locations and modalities.
a. All active TTUHSC team members and learners in good standing are eligible for nomination.
i. Good standing will be verified through the appropriate review process prior to final award consideration. This review may include, but is not limited to, the Division of Human Resources and applicable school, division, or departmental leadership to ensure nominees meet employment, academic, professional, and conduct expectations.
b. For the purpose of awards formally included in the University Awards Program, residents shall be considered for Learner Awards. Residents may be included in Team Award nominations.
c. Individuals may be nominated by peers, supervisors, direct reports, or learners.
i. Exception: University Distinguished Faculty requires nomination from the relevant dean.
d. Self-nominations are permitted with a required supporting letter from another team member or supervisor.
i. Exception: University Distinguished Faculty requires nomination from the relevant dean.
e. Previous recipients are eligible for future nominations after three (3) years.
i. Exception: Nomination for University Distinguished Faculty do not prohibit faculty from being simultaneously or subsequently considered for other awards
4. **Administration of Program**. Administrative oversight of the call for nominations, receipt of nominations, and review of nominations will be coordinated by the Office of People & Values.
5. **Description of Awards.** All awards will be presented during the annual University Awards Ceremony, coordinated by the Office of the President, held in January. Awards will be presented as a framed certificate, an engraved recognition piece, and (if applicable) a monetary prize.
6. **Instructions and Procedures for Applications**. The process for review of the University Awards applications includes the following steps.

a. Call for nominations: The Office of People and Values will issue the annual call for nominations on August 1 to recognize achievements from the previous fiscal year (September–August) with the exception of University Distinguished Faculty. Nominations will close on October 1.
b. Nomination Process
    i. Nominations are submitted electronically via the University Awards Qualtrics portal.
    ii. Except for the University Distinguished Faculty Award, each nomination must include:
        1. Nomination Narrative (750-word min) addressing the award criteria.
        2. Letter/s of Support (from someone other than the nominator; PDF upload).
        3. A full CV is required for faculty nominations.
        4. Optional supporting materials (e.g., data summaries, project outcomes, or testimonials; PDF upload).
    iii. Except for the University Distinguished Faculty Award, nominators may be TTUHSC team members or learners.
    iv. Awards requiring two letters of support include the President's Award of Excellence and University Distinguished Awards (Faculty or Staff).
    v. All nomination materials should be submitted by 11:59 p.m. CST on October 1. To ensure consistency and fairness in the review process, materials cannot be edited or replaced after submission.
    vi. Only complete nominations received by the deadline will be reviewed for consideration.

7. Review and Selection

a. Committee Review. All complete nomination packets will be reviewed by the appropriate committee using standardized rubrics aligned with the established criteria for each award category.
    i. The Faculty Senate Awards Committee will review faculty nominations.
        1. University Distinguished Faculty will be reviewed by the Academics Council.
    ii. The Staff Senate Awards Committee will review staff nominations.
    iii. The Collaborative Awards Committee will review team and learner nominations.
        1. The Collaborative Awards Committee will include representation from the Staff Senate, Faculty Senate, and Student Government Association.
    iv. Committee Governance. Members of review committees must recuse themselves from deliberations involving nominees with whom they have a direct reporting relationship or close personal association.
    v. Confidentiality. All nomination materials and committee deliberations are considered confidential and will be used solely for the purpose of evaluating award nominees.
    vi. Committees (and Academic Council in the case of University Distinguished Faculty nominations) will finalize recommendations by November 1 for advancement to the next stage of review.

b. Good Standing Review. Following committee recommendations, nominees advancing for final consideration will undergo an institutional review to confirm eligibility and alignment with professional, academic, employment, and conduct expectations.
    i. The Division of Human Resources, University Executive Council, and other applicable institutional leadership may review finalist recommendations to confirm applicable eligibility criteria.
    ii. Each reviewing office or leadership group will be provided approximately 24–48 hours to complete its review and provide feedback before recommendations advance to the next stage of the selection process.

c. **Presidential Selection.** Following the committee recommendations and successful completion of the good-standing review, finalist recommendations will be submitted to the President for final consideration and selection.
    i. Final Presidential selections will be completed by November 30.
    ii. The President retains final authority for the selection of award recipients.
d. **Notifications.** Award recipients will be notified by December 5 by the Office of People and Values.
e. **Timeline Flexibility.** The Office of the President may adjust nomination or review timelines when institutional schedules or unforeseen events necessitate changes, provided adequate notice is given to the TTUHSC community.

8. Related Recognition Programs

In addition to the awards administered through the TTUHSC University Awards Program, faculty may be eligible for recognition through other University, system, and externally sponsored award programs. These awards are governed by separate eligibility criteria, nomination processes, review procedures, and funding sources and are not administered under this policy.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

a. **Minnie Stevens Piper Professor Award.** A statewide award recognizing outstanding college and university educators in Texas. TTUHSC nominations are coordinated through the Office of the Provost.

b. **Grover E. Murray Professorships.** Distinguished professorships are awarded in recognition of outstanding academic achievement and contributions to higher education. HSC OP 10.06

c. **Chancellor's Council Distinguished Teaching and Research Awards.** Prestigious Texas Tech University System awards recognizing excellence in teaching and research. These awards are funded through gifts to the Chancellor's Council and administered in accordance with TTU System policies and procedures. The Chancellor's Awards.

Additional University, System, state, national, and externally sponsored recognition programs may be available and will be administered in accordance with the requirements established by the sponsoring organization or governing authority.