

Association of Former Students

University-Level Distinguished Achievement Awards

Guidelines 2021-2022

The Association of Former Students University Level Distinguished Achievement awards honor Texas A&M University faculty and staff members in the areas of teaching, research, student relations, graduate mentoring, extension/outreach/continuing education/professional development, administration, and staff support. Details of each award are described below. Each award consists of a \$4,000 gift, a framed certificate, and an engraved watch.

These awards are funded by The Association of Former Students. The Office of the Dean of Faculties is responsible for issuing the award guidelines and managing the overall awards process.

Each college/area has its own coordinator who assists with the nomination process and the production of nomination packages. The names of the coordinators are listed in the Appendix I. Please contact those individuals with questions relating to nominations in a particular college or area. For general questions regarding these guidelines, you may contact the Office of the Dean of Faculties at (979) 845-4274 or awardsprograms@tamu.edu.

Table 1. Timeline for the Association of Former Students Distinguished Achievements Awards

January 7, 2022	College/area coordinators submit award nominations to awardsprograms@tamu.edu by 12:00 p.m.
January 13, 2022	Selection committee meeting 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Attendance <u>MANDATORY</u> for DAA committee members
March 7-21, 2022	Colleges/Areas must notify award recipients No later than 5:00 p.m. March 21, 2022
March 22-25, 2022	Recipient names released to the University community and news media
April 2022	Distinguished Achievement Awards Ceremony

Nominee Eligibility

1. A nominee must have completed 5 full years of service to the University by January 1, 2022. For teaching and research awards, the service need not be continuous so long as the nominee has been employed above the level of graduate student for a total of 5 years, and, for teaching awards only, so long as the person was budgeted at least part-time to teach for a total of 5 years.
2. Nominees must not have received a University-level Distinguished Achievement Award in the same category during the previous 10 years. However, 5 years after receiving an award, a person may be nominated for an award in a different category.
3. An individual may be nominated in two different award categories in the same year; however, the college/unit must count that person twice in its allotted nominations (as outlined by the chart on page 9).

Nomination & Selection Process

There are four steps in selecting the recipients of the University-level Distinguished Achievement Awards:

1. Designation of Selection Committee members by specified groups;
2. Call for nominations from specified groups;
3. Preparation of nomination packets by specified groups; and
4. Selection of recipients by Selection Committee.

The nomination process begins as soon as guidelines are released by the Office of the Dean of Faculties. Each group specified on the Nominations Chart is invited to solicit nominations by whatever means deemed appropriate. Individuals or groups not specified on the Nominations Chart should contact one of the specified groups to submit a nomination. We encourage nominators to promote diversity reflective of the constituencies of Texas A&M University in the nomination process.

Colleges may submit up to the total number of nominations for teaching as shown in Table 3. This total should be divided evenly between the Student Council and the Executive Committee for each college; however, if either body chooses not to forward nominations, the other may nominate for that vacancy, up to the stated maximum for the college.

Selection Committee Information

Selection committee composition is available online:

<https://dof.tamu.edu/Opportunities/Awards/AFS-Distinguished-Achievement-Awards>

Each member will be assigned to a sub-committee by the Office of the Dean of Faculties and will participate in the evaluation of nomination packages and the selection of recipients in that award category for a two-year term.

Sub-committees should hold additional meetings, as needed, between the time of the first mandatory meeting and the time that voting ballots are completed. Electronic deliberations are allowable.

1. The specific number of individuals per category for each college are listed online.
 - Colleges have already submitted selection committee representatives through the Office of the Dean of Faculties general awards selection committee recruitment process.
 - Administrative units and student associations will receive additional instructions via email from the Office of the Dean of Faculties, at awardsprograms@tamu.edu.
2. Individuals with the title of department head, dean, director of an A&M System member, assistant vice president, associate vice president, vice president, executive vice president, and president are **not eligible to serve on the Selection Committee**. However, individuals with titles that include the modifiers of assistant or associate for department head, dean, or director of an A&M System member may serve.
3. Except for the Dean of Faculties designee, who serves as the chair of the selection committee, no member may serve on the committee for more than two consecutive years.
4. Individuals who are nominated for awards may not serve on the Selection Committee. If an individual that is chosen for the committee ends up being nominated, please email awardsprograms@tamu.edu immediately with the name and contact information for a replacement committee member.
5. Selection committee members must be available to attend the mandatory selection committee meeting, participate in subsequent subcommittee meetings, and thoroughly review the nomination packages.
6. The identity of the members on the Selection Committee and the proceedings of the committee are confidential.
7. Great care shall be taken to ensure that all members of the Selection Committee fully understand the significance of the awards and the necessity for maintaining the integrity of the awards.
8. Diversity reflective of the constituencies of Texas A&M University should guide the choice of representatives for this selection committee.
9. The Graduate Student Award selection committee is compiled by the Office of the Dean of Faculties and overseen by the Graduate and Professional School.
 - A. Graduate faculty members are preferred to serve on this selection committee.
 - B. The Grad School office will be in contact regarding these awards and the corresponding selection committee process.

Table 2. Number of Awards per Category

Award Category	Number of Awards
Teaching	10
Research	6
Individual Student Engagement	2
Graduate Mentoring Award	2
Extension, Outreach, Continuing Education, & Professional Development	1
Administration	1
Staff	2
TOTAL	24

See Appendix for award category rubrics.

Table 3. Teaching Award Nominations Allowed per College

College Name	Maximum Number of Nominations
Agriculture & Life Sciences	5
Architecture	2
Bush School of Government & Public Service	1
Education & Human Development	4
Engineering	9
Geosciences	1
Liberal Arts	6
Mays Business School	3
Science	5
Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences	4
School of Law	2
University Libraries	1
Dentistry	3
Medicine	2
Nursing	1
Pharmacy	1
School of Public Health	1
Texas A&M University Galveston	2
Texas A&M University Qatar	1

Table 4. Award Nominations Allowed per Unit

Nominating Unit	Teaching	Research	Student Engagement	Graduate Mentoring	Extension, Outreach, CE, & PD	Staff	Admin
Office of the President			1			1	1
Office of Provost & Executive Vice President			1		1	1	1
Vice President for Finance and Administration and CFO						6	2
Vice President for Student Affairs			1			2	1
Texas A&M at Galveston –Vice President Texas A&M and President Texas A&M at Galveston	See Table 3	1	1	1		1	1
Texas A&M at Qatar - Dean and CEO	See Table 3	1	1	1		1	1
Each College - Dean					2		
Each College - Executive Committee	See Table 3	3	1	1		1	1
Each College - Student Council	See Table 3		1			1	1
University Libraries - Dean		1	1			1	1
Directors of Extension/Continuing Education for Each College & the University					1		
Directors – AgriLife Research & TEES		1			1		
Directors – AgriLife Extension & TEEX					1		
Corps of Cadets Commandant			1				
Graduate Student Council President			1	1			
International Student Association President			1			1	1
MSC Council President			1				
Residence Hall Association			1				
Student Government Association President			1				

Note: A single individual may be nominated in two categories but will be counted toward the unit allotment in both categories.

Submitting Nominations

Each nominating unit should email submissions to awardsprograms@tamu.edu by the deadline listed in Table 1 of these guidelines. Every submission should include the following items as attachments or Filex transfers:

1. Nominations Summary Chart for the submitting college or unit
Submissions will be accepted only if the provided template is used.
“AFS DAA 2021-2022 Unit Nominations Summary.xlsx”
2. Nomination Packet for each nominee included in the Nominations Summary Chart
Submissions will be accepted only if the provided template is used. See details below.
“AFS DAA 2021-2022 Nomination Packet Template.pdf”
3. Professional Photo for each nominee included in the Nominations Summary Chart
Please provide a recent close-crop headshot in full color, 1:1 intrinsic ratio, minimum 300 dpi.

Nomination Packet Details

Preparing a Packet

1. Collect and prepare all required materials.
2. Complete all fillable fields in the template (title page and letter of endorsement summary chart).
3. Insert required materials in appropriate sections of the template and save as a single PDF.

Required Packet Sections

1. Table of Contents
2. Letter of Nomination — **LIMIT: 4 pages**
3. Biographical Summary — **LIMIT: 300 words**
This brief biography should provide a concise background on the nominee, including major achievements relevant to the award category. It should be written as if it will be published. It should include the following information:
 - A. Name of the nominee including professional salutation
 - B. Current position and number of years employed at Texas A&M
 - C. Highest degree received in what field of study
 - D. Career highlights, especially those relevant to the award category, including select awards/honors
4. Detailed Biographical Data (CV style) — **LIMIT: 10 pages**
This document should provide the following information in the order listed:
 - A. The name of nominee
 - B. Current position (title, rank, department or unit)
 - C. Number of years in the position
 - D. Number of years at Texas A&M University
 - E. Degrees held (source and date)
 - F. Employment history (previous positions, years; list most recent first)
 - G. Honors and awards
 - H. Membership in professional and honorary societies (note offices held)
 - I. List of articles and books published and professional accomplishments within the last five years.
Particularly significant earlier accomplishments may be described in the letter of nomination.
5. **Letters of Endorsement** — **LIMIT: 6 pages total, up to 6 distinct letters**
For Teaching and Student Engagement categories, two student letters are REQUIRED (current or former).
6. **Publications** — **LIMIT: 2 publications**
For nominations in the Research category only, up to two links to outstanding publications, or equivalent evidence of professional accomplishments, may be included.

Additional Notes on Nomination Packets

1. Letters of endorsement
 - A. At least two letters from current and/or former students are REQUIRED for nominations in Teaching and Individual Student Engagement. These letters must be separate from the letter of nomination.
 - B. Please advise letter writers that the endorsements will be read and evaluated by selection committee members who may or may not be familiar with the discipline of the nominee.
 - C. All letters of endorsement should be *written* to:
[Selection Committee](#)
[The Association of Former Students Distinguished Achievement Awards](#)
 - C. All letters should be *mailed* to the college/unit and included with the nomination packet. Do not mail letters directly to The Association or to the selection committee.
2. Letters of nomination on teaching (Teaching Awards)—The letter writer should include indicators of teaching excellence and effectiveness such as:
 - A. Numbers and types of courses taught
 - B. Statements from student evaluations
 - C. Summaries of student evaluations. Should summaries be given, longitudinal perspective must also be given
 - D. Evidence of student outcomes as appropriate
3. Letters about teaching from colleagues (Teaching Awards)—Letters should include indicators of teaching excellence and effectiveness, such as:
 - A. Evaluation of course syllabi, assignments, examinations and grading methods to determine levels of scope, rigor and quality
 - B. Evaluation of nominee performance in classroom teaching situations
 - C. Evaluation of the development of new courses or substantial revision of existing courses
4. Letters from significant persons outside of the University—Letters of support from significant persons outside of the University tend to have a much greater impact. In teaching, these include letters from students who have gone on to clearly successful careers or to graduate school or who have realized other personal benefits from the influences of the teacher. In research, letters from recognized and respected peers or experts in the field are strongly influential. In extension, letters from officials at other institutions who have interacted with the nominee are also included as strong support.

NOTE: For Staff or Administration awards, letters should be sought from professional colleagues and others familiar with the nominee's accomplishments beyond the expectations of the position. In this category, it is often difficult to obtain letters from outside Texas A&M University, or from former or current students who may not be familiar with the contributions of the staff member or administrator within the University.
5. Where applicable, evidence of strong student involvement and input into the unit's nomination process should be included
6. Nomination closely follows the format requirements—Pay careful attention to the number of letters, length of sections (where specified), packaging, etc.
7. Prepare a package that is professional in appearance and proofread all documents.

Area Coordinators

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APPENDIX: Award Category Descriptions and Rubrics

<i>Administration Award</i>	<i>p. 10</i>
<i>Extension, Outreach, Continuing Education, & Professional Development Award</i>	<i>p. 11</i>
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Administration (One award)

This award recognizes, rewards, and encourages an administrator who has contributed to the welfare of Texas A&M University through outstanding administrative service beyond the expectation of the position. This award is designed to recognize the individual whose normal scope of service has been outside the areas described in the awards listed previously.

NOTE: Those eligible for this award hold the title of vice president, provost, dean, department head, director of A&M System member (e.g., TEES, AgriLife Research), or variations of these titles.

Administration										
Measures	Candidates									
	<i>Rate each of the candidates for each measure with 1 (adequate) to 5 (exceptional)</i>									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Operational Excellence Implements approaches that enhance productivity, efficiency, and quality. Demonstrated capacity for creative solutions.										
Exceptional Service Provides highly effective interactions with all stakeholders										
Impact Actions and accomplishments positively impact their unit and Texas A&M as a whole										
Leadership Provides the vision to inspire, and the development to enable, others to achieve excellence.										
Communication Clearly articulates a vision, invites and clearly considers input, internal and external stakeholders are informed										
Total Average										

Extension, Outreach, Continuing Education, & Professional Development (One award)

This award recognizes, encourages, and rewards a staff member, faculty member, or administrator who has brought credit to Texas A&M University through dedication, enthusiasm, attitude, and effectiveness in accomplishing his or her mission in a particular field of extension, continuing education, or professional development.

NOTE: Those eligible for this award must be actively and personally engaged in extension, outreach, continuing education, or professional development. The award is not designed for the oversight or administration of these activities.

Extension, Outreach, Continuing Education, & Professional Development										
Measures	Candidates									
	<i>Rate each of the candidates for each measure with 1 (adequate) to 5 (exceptional)</i>									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Recognized Excellence National and international recognition within the discipline										
Productivity Includes but not limited to presentations, grants, publications, programs, patents, etc.										
Impact Actions and accomplishments positively impact their unit and Texas A&M as a whole										
Quality Quality of the products for, and interactions with, stakeholders (internal and external)										
Communication Exemplary writing, speaking, listening and marketing skills										
Total Average										

Graduate Mentoring Award (Two awards)

This award recognizes, encourages, and rewards superior mentors of graduate students—those faculty or administrators who go well beyond advising by bringing their skills and commitment to a student’s learning and professional development as future teachers, practitioners, researchers, and scholars through mentoring. These mentors build the enthusiasm of others for their profession, help graduate students achieve their goals, and provide opportunities that will introduce students to a community of professionals who can also assist them in their development. Nominees for this award are dedicated to contributing to the overall development of their students as learners and future professionals.

NOTE: Both faculty members and administrators are eligible for this award, but nominees must be significantly engaged in mentoring. Administrators should be nominated only for their mentoring activities, not for their administrative activities. For this award, a distinction is being made between advising (giving advice or counsel, such as in course selection) and mentoring (professional guidance and coaching). Individuals whose activities are limited to part-time advising should not be nominated for this award.

Graduate Mentoring										
Measures	Candidates									
	Rate each of the candidates for each measure with 1 (adequate) to 5 (exceptional)									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Chaired to completion doctoral and masters graduates (numbers considered in context of the departmental patterns)										
Placement/achievement/success of graduates in academia or profession (e.g. could be demonstrated through prestigious professional or tenure-track positions, students receiving dissertation awards, students successful in publishing, securing grants, etc.)(outcomes considered in context of the discipline norms)										
Provided high quality mentoring program, course, or publication on student professional development to assist students										
Demonstrates dedication to students as learners and future professionals (e.g. member of substantial number of graduate committees, received advising/mentoring award)										
Introduce student professionally (at conferences, through letters, co-presenting with students) and support student scholarship (coauthor, invite on research team, or in other ways support student outside the classroom expectations.)										
Total Average										

Individual Student Engagement (Two awards)

This award recognizes, encourages, and rewards those employees whose professional relationships with students are particularly helpful and inspiring. The recipients of this award should exhibit concern for the welfare and development of students and should have demonstrated a willingness to meet the special needs of students while ensuring that students accept their responsibilities and strive to meet their own potentials. The two recipients of this award go beyond the requirements of their appointments to give time and effort to student growth and service. They offer guidance and encouragement in a spirit of mutual questing and shared expectations.

Individual Student Relations										
Measures	Candidates									
	<i>Rate each of the candidates for each measure with 1 (adequate) to 5 (exceptional)</i>									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Student welfare										
Interest in student health and mental well-being										
Student development										
Consult and advise with students to provide insight about their dilemmas and opportunities										
Student-centered										
Meets specific needs of students										
High expectations										
Ensure students accept responsibility and strive to their potential										
Exceeds expectations										
Give time and effort to student growth and service beyond the requirements of the position										
Total Average										

Research (Six awards)

This award recognizes, encourages, and rewards those individuals whose research efforts have been particularly significant and outstanding and are so recognized locally, nationally, and internationally. The results of these research efforts should have added substantially to the basic body of knowledge, have had significant societal impact, and/or inspired the discipline to expand in new research directions. These scholarly pursuits can take many forms. In the words of Vision 2020, “Research, as the creation of knowledge in the broadest sense, encompasses all forms of scholarship from creation of works of art and literature through evaluation and reorganization of knowledge to investigations into the preservation, transmission, and application of knowledge.

Research										
Measures (For each candidate enter a rating of 1-5 per measure)	Candidates									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<u>Distinguished record of scholarly contributions with a wide impact</u> Authorship or co-authorship of peer-reviewed articles in premier journals, prestigious conference proceedings, highly regarded scholarly monographs, artistic works, software or other professional documents Extensive citations of published scholarly work Measurable impact of research on the local and national communities										
<u>Distinction as a scholar of national and international reputation</u> Demonstrated through prestigious memberships, awards, fellowships, memberships, and residencies Major leadership roles in disciplinary, and professional organizations Keynote speaker at premier conferences or professional meetings Membership on review panels for prestigious national awards, fellowships, memberships, and residencies										
Research innovation or originality recognized through prestigious awards, fellowships, and grants <i>(As disciplines vary, discussion of this parameter should involve level of prestige, innovation, and/or originality)</i>										
Evidence of the impact on the careers of graduate students, post docs, and junior faculty colleagues via significant mentoring roles										
Professional recognition of research productivity through appointment as editor, associate editor, or guest editor of prestigious journals in one’s field or serving as editor of a prestigious series for a major university press.										
Total Average										

Staff (Two awards)

This award recognizes, rewards, and encourages a staff member who has contributed to the welfare of Texas A&M University through outstanding staff support beyond the expectations of the position. This award is designed to recognize individuals whose normal scope of service has been other than teaching, research, student relations, continuing education/extension/professional development, or administration.

NOTE: Persons eligible for this award may NOT hold the title of: vice-president, provost, dean, department head, director of A&M System member, or variations of these titles.

Staff										
Measures	Candidates									
	<i>Rate each of the candidates for each measure with 1 (adequate) to 5 (exceptional)</i>									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Contributions toward job excellence – demonstrating performance on the job that is consistently outstanding and which easily meets or surpasses the needs of those they serve.										
Innovation – demonstrating independent action and resourcefulness; encouraging new ideas and creativity; exhibiting leadership qualities within the context of position responsibilities; demonstrating other skills that exceed work expectations.										
Professionalism - Reflection of the University core values of respect, excellence, leadership, loyalty integrity, selfless service in their work.										
Impact Actions and accomplishments positively impact their unit and Texas A&M as a whole										
Total Average										

Teaching (Ten awards)

This award recognizes, encourages, and rewards superior classroom teachers—the individuals whose command of their respective discipline, teaching methodologies, pervasive caring, communication skills, and commitment to the learning process exemplify the meaning of teacher/mentor in its highest sense. This award is designed to distinguish those teachers who maintain high expectations of their students and ensure academic rigor in their courses. These teachers recognize their responsibilities in motivating and contributing to the overall development of their students as learners and future professionals.

Teaching										
Measures*	Candidates									
	Rate each of the candidates for each measure with 1 (adequate) to 5 (exceptional)									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<u>Command of discipline and teaching methodologies</u>										
Demonstrates strong expertise and passion for the discipline and the teaching of the discipline										
Incorporates active and engaging learning strategies (e.g., in-class activities, group work, case studies, classroom assessment techniques)										
Engages in high impact educational practices (e.g., capstone projects, service learning, internships, study abroad, undergraduate research)										
Integrates technology or other innovations to enhance learning										
Evidence of exceptional effectiveness with the teaching methods used										
Has well-aligned course design with clear learning outcomes, learning activities, and assessments (both formative/low-stakes and summative/high-stakes)										
Evidence of improvement in student motivation and engagement, student learning outcomes, and related student achievement										
Student and peer comments directly relate candidate's pedagogy to extraordinary student results and products										
<u>Pervasive caring</u>										
Genuinely cares about the students, their learning, and their personal and professional development										
Creates sense of community and belonging in teaching/learning environment										
Designs and facilitates an environment to maximize learning through acknowledging and valuing students and the unique cultural backgrounds and experiences they bring to the classroom										
Actively listens to students; asks students for feedback										
Demonstrated accessibility and effectiveness in mentoring/advising										
Students written comments addressing care and positive impact of faculty										
<u>Communication skills</u>										
Communicates with students in ways that are clear, timely, understandable, reflective, and humanistic										
Demonstrates respect and fairness										
Evidence of student satisfaction with communication skills within teaching and learning environment										
<u>Maintain high expectations and ensure academic rigor</u>										
Sets high expectations for student learning and provide strong support for students to achieve the expectations										
Provide clear learning outcomes and their rationale for student learning and development										
Motivates and empowers students to challenge and push themselves in learning and growth										
Evidence of approaches used to support the learning of low, middle, and high performing students										
Evidence of improvement in student learning										
<u>Commitment to the learning process</u>										
Is committed to a learning-centered teaching philosophy and to the learning and development of all students										
Takes a scholarly approach to teaching – observe and identify a learning problem/opportunity, choose and implement an intervention based on literature/expert advice, collect evidence through assessments to evaluate the effect on learning, and inform the next steps for continuous improvement of teaching and learning										
Remains up to date with disciplinary research and pedagogy through professional development activities										
Actively engages in curricular improvements/innovations, e.g., develops teaching materials or resources for others or collaborates with other faculty on teaching or learning projects										
Engages in scholarship in teaching and learning, e.g., conducts research on use and effectiveness of different modalities in classroom or teaching methods, presents at disciplinary or general teaching and learning conferences, and publishes on teaching and learning issues/projects										
Mentors other faculty/graduate students in teaching and learning and engages in peer review of teaching										
Participates in/leads teaching and learning committee work on program assessment and curriculum design										
Engages in disciplinary pedagogical development, faculty development, and curricular/educational reform through professional societies										
Total Average										

*The evidence listed under each category are typical for nominees who “exemplify the meaning of teacher/mentor in its highest sense” however there could be other relevant evidence. Every nominee should exhibit most of these in their teaching practice and have exceptional strength in some of them, but is not expected that they exhibit all of them.