

Annual Report – Distinguished Teaching Award Committee 2011-12

In compliance with article 6.1.1 of the Senate Bylaws, please accept this report as the official record of the Distinguished Teaching Award Committee's activity for 2011-12.

Committee Membership

Prior to its first meeting, the committee saw the resignation of two members – faculty member Deborah Bauer and student member Stephanie Matheson. President Berdahl confirmed the appointment of a new student member subsequent to the first meeting. With this appointment, the Distinguished Teaching Award Committee for 2011-12 consisted of the following members:

Madonna Moss, Anthropology (term expires 2012)
Analisa Taylor, Romance Languages (term expires 2012)
Jon Brundan, Mathematics (term expires 2013)
Daniel Rosenberg, Clark Honors College (term expires 2013) – Chair
David Swanson, student (term expires 2012)
Russ Tomlin, convener, *ex-officio, non-voting*
Ruth Keele, staff, *ex-officio, non-voting*

The Distinguished Teaching Award Committee is charged with “responsibility for the screening, investigation, and recommendation of candidates to receive any Campus-wide teaching awards including, but not limited to, the Ersted Award for Distinguished Teaching and the Thomas F. Herman Faculty Achievement Award for Distinguished Teaching.” (*University of Oregon Committees website: <http://committees.uoregon.edu/node/12>*) Committee members evaluate the nominations received and select up to three recipients in total. The committee is comprised primarily of previous distinguished teaching award recipients, as well as one or two additional faculty members and a student representative. The committee is provided administrative support through the Office of Academic Affairs.

Summary of Committee Activities

Nominations for the Ersted and Herman Awards were solicited during January and February through email announcements distributed to the University community and advertisements in the *Daily Emerald*. A deadline of February 10, 2012 was posted.

The committee met in February to review the charge and timeline for committee work and to undertake a preliminary assessment of nominations. In light of the large number of nominations received this year, the committee conducted an initial review, narrowing the field of continuing candidates prior to soliciting information from departments. Department heads were asked to provide information consisting of (1) a single page statement attesting to the nominee's appropriateness for the award, (2) a copy of the current CV, and (3) a concise description of teaching related activities with which the nominee has been involved. In addition, staff collected a list of each candidate's courses and enrollments during the three most recent years and quantitative course evaluations for that period.

Members of the committee reviewed all files, meeting again in early April to discuss the nominees and construct a short list of final candidates. Departments were again asked for supporting materials providing greater detail on three or four courses taught within the past three

years (including course syllabi) and a description of instructional efforts outside the classroom. Written course evaluations were collected and provided by staff.

Committee members reviewed the new materials and met again in early May to discuss the final candidates and determine the recipients of the Ersted and Herman Awards for 2012.

Award Recipients 2012

Alexander B. Murphy, Geography – Herman Award

Paul Peppis, English – Herman Award

Jennifer W. Reynolds, School of Law – Ersted Award

Additional Committee Business and Recommendations

During the final meeting, committee members considered procedural issues and discussed options for broadening the university's recognition of outstanding teaching.

The committee noted that the number of nominations for awards received this year significantly exceeded that of previous years. It attributed this increase to better advertising and to a new online form, which facilitated the nomination process. It noted also that nominations this year were often short and uninformative, and that a fair number did not fall into categories of consideration. In view of this, the committee made minor changes in the online form in an effort to obtain more complete nominations. It suggests that the committee review both the number and quality of recommendations at the end of the next cycle and further refine the process and language.

The committee believes that the pool of nominees for UO teaching awards is strong and deep, and it supports efforts to expand the number and type of teaching awards made by the university. It suggests that the Office of the Provost recommend the addition of one more teaching award similar to Ersted and Herman as a development objective.

The committee considered at length the possibility of offering additional awards of different kinds through its own process, awards that might, for example, highlight particular aspects of teaching excellence such as lecturing or mentorship. It determined that this would overly complicate the work of the committee. It suggested that a variety of different award types might be considered by other bodies, perhaps committees located in the individual colleges and schools of UO. It noted that some colleges and schools as well as some departments already engage in such a practice.

By a majority vote, the committee agreed to solicit peer reviews of teaching in 2012-13 on an experimental basis, to be renewed only upon majority vote at the end of the 2012-13 cycle. Daniel Rosenberg was elected chair of the committee for 2012-13.

By unanimous vote, the committee recommends that faculty members appointed to the Distinguished Teaching Award Committee be ineligible for both the Ersted and Herman Awards during their term of service. For this reason, the committee urges the Senate Committee on Committees to make every effort to appoint previous award recipients and to take into account the Ersted eligibility timeline (two to seven years of service at the university) in making

appointments. The committee decided that if a member of the university community nominates a current member of the committee, the committee should reply to the nominator along the following lines, “X is serving on the review committee and is, therefore, ineligible to be considered for an award this year. Please consider resubmitting the nomination in [year].”

Additional information on the awards and award recipients may be found at:
<http://academicaffairs.uoregon.edu/teachingawards>).