WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
PROGRAM OF EXCELLENCE AWARD PROCESS

The academic and support program of excellence awards are separate $10,000 awards which are presented to an academic department/unit and a support department/unit to recognize established records of excellence. Academic departments/units are recognized in even-numbered years, while support departments/units are awarded in odd-numbered years.

I. CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES

A. For the purposes of these awards a department or unit is defined as:
   1. An academic department/unit is organized under the Provost, reports directly to an academic dean, associate dean or academic department head, and supervises an academic credential (a degree, certificate, continuing education units, etc.).
   2. A support department/unit is any non-academic unit that primarily provides administrative support and/or services.
   3. Units are typically distinctive and identifiable operational areas within a recognized departmental structure.
   4. The offices of the Chancellor’s Executive Council are excluded from consideration for this award.

B. Questions about the designation of a department/unit shall be forwarded to the Provost for a determination. For the purposes of this award, Hunter Library and associated units are eligible for the support award, while the Honors College is eligible in academic award years.

C. Nominations shall be collected through a University-wide process for soliciting award information. Departments/units may nominate themselves and/or be nominated by third parties. Multiple nominations are permissible but unnecessary.

D. The Chair of the Program of Excellence Committee will review the list of the nominated departments/units with corresponding member(s) of Executive Council to verify support for that department’s/unit’s application for the award.
E. The department head of any nominated departments/units will be notified by the Chair of the Program of Excellence Committee and provided with the application instructions and deadlines.

F. Applications must document a significant accomplishment on the part of the members of the department/unit as a whole. If the stature or distinction of the unit is based mostly on the efforts of an individual, the unit itself will not be eligible for the Program of Excellence Award, but the unit should consider nominating the responsible individual for the Paul A. Reid Award.

G. Applications will be evaluated primarily on the basis of the quality of accomplishments, the relationship of accomplishments to WCU’s Vision 20/20 Strategic Plan, mission and goals, the collaborative and sustained effort involved in realizing the achievement, a description of how the award will be utilized, and designation of the accountable officer responsible for any funds awarded. The Chair of the Program of Excellence Committee will review and prepare the on-line application to reflect these criteria.

H. The funds realized through these awards are to be used by the department/unit to enhance overall effectiveness.

I. Previous winners may not repeat for a period of five years as determined by the Chair of the Program of Excellence Committee.

II. PROGRAM OF EXCELLENCE AWARD COMMITTEE AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

The Program of Excellence Award Committee will be constituted as follows consistent with the alternating cycle of this award:

A. The Program of Excellence Award Committee shall review the applications of nominated departments/units consistent with the criteria and guidelines above. Deliberations of the committee shall be confidential to the greatest extent permissible. The committee shall make a confidential recommendation to the Chancellor on the department/unit to receive the award.
B. Academic Program of Excellence Award Committee (even-numbered years)
Four faculty members (two chosen by the Provost Council and two chosen by the Chair of the Faculty Senate), two administrative staff members appointed by the Provost. The Chair shall be a member of Executive Council appointed by the Chancellor.

C. Support Program of Excellence Award Committee (odd-numbered years)
Six administrative staff members appointed by Academic Affairs, Administration & Finance, Athletics, Office of the CIO, Student Affairs, and the Chief of Staff. The Chair shall be a member of the Provost Council appointed by the Provost.

D. The Chair of the Program of Excellence Committee will convene the committee, facilitate the meeting, and will vote only in the event of a tie. The Chair shall report recommendations of the committee to the Chancellor. The award will be announced by the Chancellor.

E. Members of the committee are expected to recuse themselves as necessary if a conflict of interest should arise. Committee members are also expected to participate in the selection meeting but may vote by proxy at the discretion of the Chair.

Last revised: February 2015