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2013-2014

**Changes to WCU University Faculty Awards**

**Office of the Provost**

**Executive Summary:**

As part of its role in fostering faculty development, the Office of the Provost oversees all university-level awards on campus. As part of a periodic review and based on information culled from the integrated awards process, the Provost has chosen to implement several strategic changes to these awards, effective for the 2013-14 academic year.

This document details the following changes to be made to WCU’s university level awards:

1. The creation of a new award, the WCU Excellence in Community Service Award, in tandem with general administration’s Board of Governor’s Award for Excellence in Public Service   
2. The elimination of the Jay M. Robinson Award for eTeaching   
3. The replacement of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Scholar Award with the Innovative Scholarship Award

**Background: WCU Integrated Awards**

Strategic Alignment:

GOAL 2.3: Instill pride in the University through more visible recognition and celebration of institutional achievements and traditions.

History:   
In 2011, WCU instituted an integrated awards process. The process integrates the nomination/voting process for many of the campus awards for outstanding faculty and staff work in teaching and learning, service, scholarship, and engagement. Each year the process has expanded to include more of WCUs awards and recognitions.

For a complete list of awards included in the process, please see appendix 1 below.

Process:   
In late January, all faculty, staff, and students who are eligible to nominate receive a link to a customized electronic ballot (executed through Qualtrics). The ballot remains open for approximately a two-week period. The Coulter Faculty Commons compiles the results and sends them to the appropriate representatives/committee chairs for each award.

Rationale:  
The proposed benefits of the integrated awards system included the following:

1. Efficiency. With over 20 major awards, WCU was challenged with multiple and conflicting processes, often without clearly defined owners. The new process would provide one, clear process and a single point of contact for communication and support.   
2. Integrity. Many award nomination processes still included paper ballots, or other means with the potential to provide inappropriate or duplicate entries. Qualtrics provided objective and consistent authentication, as well as the individualized ballots which did not permit duplicate entries.   
3. Participation. Research suggested that integrated, on-line processes had the potential to increase what for WCU had been a distinct downward trend in nominations. This would definitely prove to be the case at WCU (see appendix 2 below), as participation in the award nomination process increased exponentially at first and steadily thereafter. The CFC is predicting that the addition of the staff awards over the summer of 2013 will follow a similar trajectory.

**Recommendation 1**

* To create the WCU Award for Excellence in Community Service

Background: The UNC system has offered an annual Board of Governors’ Award for Excellence in Public Service since 2007. The award recognized the faculty members from the UNC system who demonstrated a “sustained, distinguished, and superb achievement in university public service and outreach, and contributions to improving the quality of life of the citizens of North Carolina.” The UNC system recognizes one nominee from each campus.

Rationale:   
-Given WCU’s emphasis on community engagement, the Office of the Provost has deemed it timely for the institution to reward faculty whose work directly support this mission and for that work to be recognized at both the campus and system level.   
-Because WCU’s other university-level awards recognize award winners rather than nominees, this process will include the creation of a new WCU-level award (WCU Award for Excellence in Community Service) , the winner of which will become, upon confirmation by the Provost, WCU’s nominee for the system-wide Board of Governors’ Award for Excellence in Public Service.   
-In addition to the GA criteria (stated above), the WCU level award would also include the following two criteria:

* A concrete demonstration of service projects, teaching and learning methods, and/or scholarship that have engaged with and positively influenced specific communities, industries, or other external constituencies, and contributed to the public good
* Clear alignment with WCU’s 2020 Vision

-The nominations for the award will be solicited through the integrated awards process, following the common timeline. Nominees for the award will submit small portfolios, which will be reviewed by the University-level Community Engagement Steering Committee, which includes WCU faculty, staff, administrators, and community partners. This committee will recommend a winner to the Office of the Provost.   
-Winners of the WCU Excellence in Community Service award will receive a plaque, a cash award of $1000, and their status will be formally recognized as part of WCU’s annual spring awards ceremony. The awards process will be facilitated by the Coulter Faculty Commons on behalf of the Office of the Provost.   
-The final decision to create of this award at the University level is at the discretion of the Chancellor.

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**Recommendation 2**

* To eliminate the Jay M. Robinson eTeaching Award

Background: The Jay M. Robinson award was started in 2006 by the Jay M. Robinson Distinguished Professor, John LeBaron, whose office was then housed in the Coulter Faculty Center. Since 2006, the award has been given to recognize excellence in on-line teaching and includes a $1000 award, paid for from the Jay M. Robinson Distinguished Professor funds.

Rationale:   
-After Dr. LeBaron’s departure, the position of Jay M. Robinson Distinguished Professor has remained vacant and the most recent search curtailed. This has made it difficult to revise and continue to improve the award program and review of nominees, in absence of its benefactor.

-The office has also moved from the Coulter Faculty Commons to the College of Education and Allied Professions. This has resulted in a number of changes to the responsibilities of the distinguished professorship, many of which suggest that sponsorship of this award would be less in keeping with the tenor and goals of the position.   
  
-As appendix 2 demonstrates, participation in the Jay M. Robinson award nomination process is among the lowest of all University-level awards. This is particularly telling as the nomination is a simply button click and no extra text or documentation is required to nominate for the award.

-Pedagogically speaking, WCU has been striving to do more to break down the separation between on-line teaching and other forms of instructional delivery. While there are challenges specific to on-line teaching and learning, most teaching strategies and philosophies apply across a variety of delivery modes. This fits with trends in instruction, as the growing ubiquity of the LMS has resulted in nearly all courses at WCU having a blend on-line and face-to-face formats. Finally, those that teach on-line or hybrid courses are equally eligible to be nominated for all major University and college-level teaching awards---several have already been nominated and a handful have won.

-In the summer of 2013, the Coulter Faculty Commons and the Division of Educational Outreach chaired a task force that resulted in the adoption of Quality Matters, a nationally recognized program that uses a distinctive peer-review structure for assessing the quality of on-line or hybrid courses. Participation in Quality Matters allows for the recognition of high-quality on-line courses at the national level and through a highly credible external peer evaluation system. In the long run, the Quality Matters adoption would allow the Jay M. Robinson Award to be replaced by a more viable and higher level form of recognition.

**Recommendation 3**

* To replace the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Scholar Award with the *Innovative Scholarship Award*

Background: The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Scholar Award, started in the early 2000s, recognized a faculty member (solo or as part of a team) who engages in exemplary scholarship that focuses on teaching and student learning and then applies the results of that scholarship so that students experience significant, enduring learning as a result of the SoTL project. Award winners receive $1000, paid for by the Office of the Provost and a plaque. Funding is provided by UNC general administration (stipend) and the Coulter Faculty Commons (plaque).

Rationale:

The SoTL Scholar Award committee has provided consistent feedback regarding the declining quantity and quality of submissions for this award. For the past two years, they have recommended that the award be expanded to include other forms of scholarship, as defined by Ernest Boyer (1996) and recognized in WCU’s CRD process.

The Coulter Faculty Commons has documented a steady increase in the number of WCU faculty (and staff) pursuing engaged teaching and scholarship, an emphasis that fits well with WCU’s mission as an engaged institution and supports its Carnegie designation. To expand the award to include such endeavors would seem to fit strategically as well as be in keeping with the evolution of practice.

The Innovative Scholarship Award will recognize those faculty who engage in exemplary scholarship in areas outside of the scholarship of discovery, including integration, engagement, and teaching and learning.

* Exemplary scholarship will be evaluated using the standards outlined in Glassick, Huber, and Maeroff, Scholarship Assessed: Evaluation of the Professoriate (Jossey-Bass,1997).
* The Innovative Scholarship Award may be awarded to: 1) one campus-wide recipient; or 2) joint recipients for shared projects.
* Particular emphasis will be given to research that reflects innovative types and forms of scholarship

The logistics of the award process will remain largely unchanged. Nomination for the award will be incorporated into WCU’s integrated awards process (see above) and nominees will be invited to submit dossiers documenting the outcomes of their projects to the award committee (repurposed from the SoTL Scholar Award Committee). The process will be facilitated by the Coulter Faculty Commons on behalf of the Office of the Provost.

**Appendix 1:**

**INTEGRATED AWARDS PARTICIPATION 2011-13**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Students | % | Faculty | % |
| 2011-12 | 925 | 9% | 144 | 24% |
| 2012-13 | 1179 | 12% | 228 | 38% |

Student Demographics Used: 9500 (2011-12), 9800 (2012-13)  
Faculty Demographics Used : 600 (2011-12 and 2012-13)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Award title | Nominations 2010 PRIOR | Nominations 2012 | Nominations 2013 | % Increase |
| CDTA | 1197 | 1376 | 1556 | 30 |
| ETLSA | 14 | 19 | 38 | 170 |
| Last Lecture | 158 | 471 | 328 | 107 |
| JMR | 46 | 154 | 172 | 273 |
| SOTL | 9 | 18 | 21 | 133 |
| A&S | 83 | 247 | 128 | 54 |
| CFPA Teaching |  | 133 | 59 | \*Technical problem |
| KSCMT Research |  | 6 | 11 |  |
| KSCMT Engagement |  | 5 | 12 |  |
| KSCMT Teaching |  | 4 | 13 |  |
| KSCMT Advising |  | 4 | 8 |  |
| KSCMT Early Career |  | 5 | 11 |  |
| HHS Teaching |  | 13 | 12 |  |
| HHS Scholar |  | 7 | 10 |  |
| HHS Engagement |  | 18 | 14 |  |
| HHS Service |  | 14 | 8 |  |
| HHS Leadership |  | 9 | 15 |  |
| COB Graduate |  |  | 18 |  |
| COB Teaching |  |  | 3 |  |
| COB Professor |  |  | 97 |  |
| COB Research |  |  | 7 |  |
| CEAP Soaring |  |  | Not offered |  |
| CEAP Research |  |  | 13 |  |
| CEAP Service |  |  | 13 |  |
| CEAP Teaching |  |  | 49 |  |

**Appendix 2: Awards included in the 2013-14 Integrated Awards Process:**   
  
University Awards  
Chancellor’s Distinguished Teaching Award

Excellence in Teaching Liberal Studies Award

Jay M. Robinson eTeaching Award

SoTL Scholar Award

Last Lecture Award

College of Arts & Sciences

College of Arts and Sciences Teaching Award

College of Business (added 2012-13)

COB Graduate Faculty Teaching Award

COB Board of Governors’ Creative and Innovative Teaching Award

COB Professor of Excellence Award

COB Excellence in Research Award

College of Education and Allied Professions (added 2012-13)

CEAP Soaring High Award

CEAP Dean’s Research Award

CEAP Dean’s Service Award

CEAP Taft-Botner Distinguished Teaching Award

College of Fine and Performing Arts

Fine and Performing Arts Teaching Award

College of Health and Human Sciences  
Innovation Teaching Award

Faculty Student Engagement Award

Faculty/Staff Leadership Award

Faculty Service Award

Faculty Scholar Award

Kimmel School

Distinguished Research and Scholarly Engagement Award

Distinguished Teaching Award

Distinguished Student Engagement Award

Award for Excellence in Mentoring and Advising

Outstanding Early-Career Faculty Award

Staff Awards (added 2013-14)

Paul A. Reid Service (Faculty and Staff)  
Program of Excellence  
Judy McDowell   
Bright Idea Award

Star Staff Award