

Supporting Documentation for Proposal I (revised October 25, 2006)

A. To designate one of the three annual recipients of the teaching excellence award as winner of the “**Distinguished Achievement in Teaching**” award, the latter being named as GCSU's nominee for the BOR Teaching Excellence award.

Rationale

There is a mismatch between the BOR criteria for teaching excellence awards and our institution’s criteria for the Distinguished Professor award, which makes it difficult for us to send strong portfolios on to Atlanta. To date none of our faculty nominees have ever successfully won a BOR award in the teaching excellence category. Currently GCSU’s Distinguished Professor is automatically the institution’s nominee for the BOR awards. The chart below succinctly sums up the differences between various awards offered at the local and state-wide levels.

It will be evident that the GCSU Distinguished Professor award emphasizes **research** and **service** in addition to superlative teaching, while the BOR awards focus solely on **teaching excellence**. Consequently, the portfolios of GCSU nominees often reflect emphasis on areas that are not focal points for the BOR awards without adequately addressing BOR criteria. There is a place for an overall award at GCSU to recognize excellence in teaching, research, and service and, consequently, **no changes** are proposed to the criteria for the GCSU Distinguished Professor award. However, we do propose that the winner of this award should no longer automatically be the institution’s nominee for the BOR teaching excellence awards. Instead, one of the winners of the **teaching excellence awards** should become the institution’s nominee for the BOR award nomination.

In order to facilitate the nomination process for the BOR award, the committee should designate one portfolio from the winners of the teaching excellence awards that most closely matches the criteria and rubric for the Distinguished Achievement in Teaching award in Section B. This nominee should also receive recognition on campus as the winner of the “Distinguished Achievement in Teaching” award and should become the university’s nominee for the BOR award. The proposed new criteria for the teaching excellence awards and the Distinguished Achievement in Teaching award are outlined in section B below.

Brief Comparison of GCSU Awards with BOR Awards Structure

Awards	GCSU	BOR
Faculty teaching excellence	3 university-wide awards	One faculty award for each sector (2-year, 4-year, etc.)
Program Excellence award	One annually	One program teaching excellence award for each sector
Distinguished Professor Award <i>(From the faculty handbook: The award committee will look for persuasive evidence that nominees have a record of superlative teaching, research, and service related to the profession while at GC&SU. To be eligible for nomination, a faculty member must be full time tenured faculty at GC&SU with a minimum rank of associate professor and must have completed five years of teaching at GC&SU.)</i>	One annually	None
Scholarship of teaching and learning Award for Faculty	None	One faculty award for each sector
Scholarship of teaching and learning for Programs	None	One program award for each sector
Research award	3 annually	None under faculty development
Service award	Irene Rose award	None under faculty development

B. To align the eligibility criteria, nomination process, and documentation standards with those of the BOR Teaching Excellence awards and standards for teaching excellence that are recognized and promoted by well-respected national organizations.

While nominating one winner of the university teaching excellence awards for the BOR awards successfully shifts the focus of the campus nomination process to teaching to fit the BOR awards structure, a quick comparison of criteria for the awards in the chart below reveals that GCSU's criteria for the current teaching excellence awards do not match those of the BOR. GCSU's criteria need to be revised to be more consistent with those of the BOR and to match state-wide expectations where possible.

Comparison of GCSU, BOR, and Proposed Criteria for the Teaching Excellence Awards

GCSU Teaching Excellence Awards	GCSU Distinguished Professor Award	BOR Criteria for Teaching Excellence Awards	Proposed New Criteria for GCSU Teaching Excellence Awards
<p>The award committee will look for persuasive evidence that nominees have a record of classroom teaching excellence, continued professional development, and contributions to the overall institutional objectives. Nominees must be full time faculty members who have completed three years of full time teaching at GCSU.</p>	<p>The award committee will look for persuasive evidence that nominees have a record of superlative teaching, research, and service related to the profession while at GC&SU. To be eligible for nomination, a faculty member must be full time tenured faculty at GC&SU with a minimum rank of associate professor and must have completed five years of teaching at GC&SU.</p>	<p>The award committee will look for persuasive evidence that nominees have a record of superlative teaching at their campus, including a strong commitment to fostering the academic success of students through classroom instruction and through interaction with students outside of the classroom (e.g., advising, mentoring,</p>	<p>Candidates for this award should demonstrate through persuasive, directly documented evidence that they have on a campus-wide basis achieved excellence in a variety of the following activities, to be weighed in the order they are listed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a record of superlative teaching that has enhanced student learning on campus; • developed and implemented innovative pedagogy that exhibits creative solutions to classroom teaching and learning issues reflected in the scholarly literature; • developed and implemented teaching methods that reflect current literature, practice, trends, and issues in their discipline and in higher education and that have had a demonstrable impact on student learning;

		recruiting, etc.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developed, implemented, and changed classroom practices on the basis of strong and direct evidence that their practices enhance student learning; • engaged in creative and documented assessment practices appropriate to their discipline that go beyond required institutional student evaluations and that have been used to refine teaching methods; • been instrumental in developing special projects and innovative curricula on the school, college, or university level that have had a demonstrable impact on student success. • a commitment to and record of achieving student success through activities that transcend the classroom, such as advising student organizations related to one's discipline, mentoring students as advisors, directing and/or facilitating service learning projects, facilitating living/learning communities, coordinating special programs, etc.;
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Rationale

1. Current mismatch between BOR criteria and GCSU teaching excellence criteria

Note that GCSU's criteria call for evidence that "nominees have a record of classroom teaching excellence, continued professional development, and contributions to the overall institutional objectives." The BOR criteria transcend institutional objectives, make no reference to "professional development," and note that superlative teaching includes "a strong commitment to fostering the **academic success of students** through classroom instruction and through interaction with students outside of the classroom."

2. The need to align GCSU's teaching excellence criteria with current national trends

The BOR criteria for the teaching excellence awards have, for several years, moved away from a teacher-centered, content-driven model towards an emphasis on **outcomes and student learning**. Largely this is due to a national shift towards a more **learner-centered model**, reflected in various initiatives sponsored by The American Association for Higher Education (while it was in existence), The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, The American Association of Colleges and Universities, The Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education, and other influential national organizations. Many research I institutions, such as Georgetown University, Indiana University, and The University of Notre Dame, have transformed their standards for teaching excellence to incorporate an emphasis on student learning. Accreditation agencies are also placing more weight on documented student learning outcomes. An emphasis on the connection between innovative pedagogies and deep student learning is especially relevant to our mission as the public liberal arts university of Georgia, but our current criteria place little emphasis on either of these areas.

A revision of our institutional criteria for teaching excellence to better reflect current practices and issues of concern in the academy would be a positive expression of our commitment to quality teaching and to our mission. We propose some changes to the **criteria for the teaching excellence awards** on campus as outlined in the chart above. Differences between the proposed criteria and the BOR criteria arise from faculty members' experiences who have served on the BOR selection committee. The proposed criteria for the GCSU awards simply state more clearly what the BOR committee actually looks for in portfolios.

As outlined in section A above, the nominee for the BOR teaching excellence award should be chosen from the three winners selected for the teaching excellence awards, based on the rubric below:

Teaching Excellence Criteria	Distinguished Achievement in Teaching Award Criteria
<p>Candidates for this award should demonstrate through persuasive, directly documented evidence that they have on a campus-wide basis achieved excellence in a variety of the following activities, to be weighed in the order they are listed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a record of superlative teaching that has enhanced student learning on campus; • developed and implemented innovative pedagogy that exhibits creative solutions to classroom teaching and learning issues reflected in the scholarly literature; 	<p>Candidates for this award should demonstrate through persuasive, directly documented evidence that they have attained recognition on a statewide or national basis (as evidenced by winning statewide and/or national awards for teaching, or dissemination of teaching insights and knowledge to colleagues through conducting teaching and learning workshops at other institutions or organizations, publications in peer-reviewed scholarly journals, conference presentations at peer-reviewed scholarly statewide or national conferences) for a variety of the following activities, to be weighed in the order they are listed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a record of superlative teaching that has enhanced teaching and student learning on campus or, through adaptation of the candidate's methods, in the university system, or across the nation; • developed and implemented innovative pedagogy that exhibits creative solutions to classroom teaching and learning issues reflected in the scholarly literature;

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developed and implemented teaching methods that reflect current literature, practice, trends, and issues in their discipline and in higher education and that have had a demonstrable impact on student learning; • developed, implemented, and changed classroom practices on the basis of strong and direct evidence that their practices enhance student learning; • engaged in creative and documented assessment practices appropriate to their discipline that go beyond required institutional student evaluations and that have been used to refine teaching methods; • been instrumental in developing special projects and innovative curricula on the school, college or university level that have had a demonstrable impact on student success. • a commitment to and record of achieving student success through activities that transcend the classroom, such as advising student organizations related to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developed and implemented teaching methods adapted and employed by other professionals that reflect current literature, practice, trends, and issues in their discipline and in higher education and that have had a demonstrable impact on student learning; • developed, implemented, and changed classroom practices on the basis of strong and direct evidence that their practices enhance student learning and shared these insights with others; • engaged in creative and documented assessment practices appropriate to their discipline that go beyond required institutional student evaluations, that have been used to refine teaching methods, and whose results have been influential on other professionals in their discipline; • been instrumental in developing special projects and innovative curricula on the university, state or national level that have had a demonstrable impact on student success. • a commitment to and record of achieving student success through activities that transcend the classroom, such as advising innovations, service learning projects, living/learning community development, development of
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<p>one's discipline, mentoring students as advisors, directing and/or facilitating service learning projects, facilitating living/learning communities, coordinating special programs, etc..</p>	<p>special programs, etc. that have impacted the state and/or nation;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievements of their students, such as awards and other recognition from scholarly organizations at local, state, and national levels; presentations at scholarly conferences; publications in peer-reviewed scholarly journals; publications in student research journals; enrollment in graduate programs in the discipline; and/or placement in professional positions.
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If none of the winners of the teaching excellence awards match the criteria for the Distinguished Achievement in Teaching award, it should not be awarded in any given year. In the event the Distinguished Achievement in Teaching Award is not given in any year, the awards committee will have the discretion to award three teaching excellence awards. Further, the president shall have the discretion to nominate a faculty member for the BOR teaching excellence award or to create an alternate process for selecting a campus nominee (faculty members might be invited to apply for that privilege, for example).

i. to increase the emphasis on documentation of student learning as a measure of teaching effectiveness so as to align required documentation for GCSU Teaching Awards to BOR requirements

The chart outlines differences between BOR required documentation for teaching excellence awards and GCSU documentation.

GCSU Required Documentation for Teaching Excellence Awards	BOR Required Documentation for Teaching Excellence Awards	Proposed Changes
Nomination portfolios for these awards are limited to 20 pages, including any appendices (no smaller than 12 point). Each portfolio must include the following information (electronic submission is encouraged):	Nomination portfolios for these awards are limited to 20 pages, including any appendices (no smaller than 12 point). Each portfolio must include the following information:	Nomination portfolios for this award are limited to 20 one-sided pages (no smaller than 12 point). Candidates are permitted to include multimedia resources (samples of student work; models of innovative use of technology, etc.) on a CD, but any text files included will count towards the 20 page limit. Otherwise, the CD shall itself count as 1 page. Nominees are encouraged to review the portfolios of past recipients of the BOR teaching excellence awards or to consult with CETL for guidance on appropriate materials to include. Each portfolio must include the following information:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nomination letter. (1-2 pages) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nomination letter from the institution's chief academic officer, noting the highlights of the nomination portfolio. (1-2 pages) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nomination letter from a colleague highlighting noteworthy achievements and explaining how the candidate meets the criteria. (1-2 pages)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A condensed curriculum vitae covering the past 5 years. (2 pages) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A condensed curriculum vitae. (2-3 pages) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A curriculum vitae covering at least five years focusing on and highlighting achievements in teaching and learning, including relevant

		publications, presentations, and teaching awards. (2-3 pages)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · A reflective statement about teaching and learning from the nominee. (2 pages) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reflective statement about teaching and learning from the nominee.(2-4 pages) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reflective statement by the candidate about their philosophy of teaching and learning that addresses the award criteria. Candidates should include a description of innovative techniques and ways that these address and solve specific teaching and learning issues. (2-4 pages). Candidates are encouraged to work with CETL volunteers to develop teaching philosophy statements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Two letters of support from colleagues who have observed the nominee teach and are qualified to comment on the nominee's teaching. A GIFT (Group Instructional Feedback Technique) evaluation may be substituted for one letter. Letters should describe how the nominee teaches and why he or she is especially effective in advancing student learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or two letters of support from colleagues qualified to comment on the nominee's teaching. These letters should describe how the nominee teaches and why he or she is especially effective in advancing student learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or two other letters from colleagues familiar with the candidate's teaching and how it addresses the above criteria. The letters should especially address the ways the candidate's teaching has contributed to deep student learning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Two letters of support from current and/or past students. At least one letter should be from one of the nominee's current students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or two letters of support from current and/or past students. At least one letter should be from one of the nominee's current students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two letters of support from past students.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents that provide evidence of the nominee's teaching success in one course (e.g. data showing the success of the nominee's students, teaching techniques, course syllabi, handouts, descriptions of evaluation methods, examinations, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents that provide evidence of the nominee's teaching success (e. g. data showing the success of the nominee's students, course syllabi, handouts, descriptions of evaluation methods, examinations, summaries of recent student evaluations, etc.) Direct documentation of student learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persuasive, directly documented evidence of the impact of one's teaching on student learning. This documentation shall represent a wide-array of materials, which might include examples chosen from the following items: description of creative assessment methods and their results with regard to student learning, a list of achievements of past and present students, student performance on standardized national instruments, results of interviews and formative surveys, course materials where these demonstrate innovative approaches or help to elucidate the student learning outcomes achieved, any other relevant direct documentation of student learning that demonstrate the impact of the candidate's teaching on student learning, and a summary of student responses to the most relevant questions (i.e. responses to "This instructor is an effective teacher" or other especially pertinent questions) on the student opinion form over several terms. The candidate should also clarify how the data have informed his or her teaching practices.
<p>Grade distributions for all classes taught by nominee for the past 3 years (condense to 1 page).</p>	<p>No comparable requirement</p>	<p>No comparable requirement</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student opinion summaries for the 	<p>See above, but no requirement for 3 years of complete data (response to</p>	<p>See above, but no requirement for 3 years of complete data (response to the most relevant</p>

nominee for the past 3 years (condensed).	the most relevant questions on the opinion form should be submitted; candidates rarely submit complete data.)	questions on the opinion form should be submitted)
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Rationale

A comparison of items required to document the nomination also illustrates that the BOR requires letters and other evidence that demonstrates why candidates are especially effective at **advancing student learning**. GCSU's required documentation currently includes student opinion summaries and grade distributions. Candidates for BOR awards do not present grade distributions as part of the required documentation. Further, nominees often use student opinion information very selectively and do not present it in its entirety. It is used only as part of a much larger package more directly documenting academic achievements of the instructor's students. The BOR committee often does not place emphasis on syllabi as compelling indicators of student learning. The proposed changes are consistent with BOR required documentation and a greater emphasis on student learning.

Some students have reported feeling pressured to nominate candidates for teaching awards. Students who are in the position of having to earn a grade from a candidate should not be asked to participate in or initiate this process through nominations or through providing letters of support. Student input will still be sought through letters from previous students that form part of the required documentation, but candidates for awards should not directly contact current students and request letters. The BOR has also considered dropping the requirement that candidates submit a letter from a current student, but in the event they keep the requirement, the departmental chair or another colleague should request and obtain volunteers from the candidate's current classes to provide letters.

ii. to increase the number of years of service required for candidacy from three to five for the Distinguished Achievement in Teaching Award and to limit receipt of the Distinguished Achievement in Teaching to once in a career.

Awards	Current Length of service requirement	Years between receipt and eligibility to reapply: Teaching Excellence Awards
GCSU	3	5
BOR	None specifically stated, but those who have attained the rank of at least Associate Professor are most common award winners.	One-time only

Rationale

Nominees for the Distinguished Achievement in Teaching award shall be full-time faculty who have completed at least **five** years of full time teaching at GCSU. Currently, the requirement for teaching excellence awards is for **three** years of full-time teaching, but a quick look at BOR winners since 1997 illustrates that all but one had attained the rank of associate professor or above at the time of the award (see http://www.usg.edu/academics/fac_dev/recipients.phtml) . If we want our teaching award recipients to be more viable at the state level, we need to consider making this stipulation for the **Distinguished Achievement in Teaching Award**. Increasing the requirement for years served would also elevate the status of the Distinguished Achievement in teaching award by recognizing sustained contributions by seasoned faculty. However, candidates shall continue to be eligible for the teaching excellence awards after only **three years** of service, to provide a reward mechanism for junior faculty.

Recipients of the Distinguished Achievement in Teaching award shall **not** be eligible for nomination for or to win again the Distinguished Achievement in Teaching award. This shall be the university's highest recognition for teaching and shall be awarded on a one-time basis only. However, a candidate who has previously won a teaching excellence award may be nominated again for another teaching excellence award and, therefore, shall still be able to compete for the Distinguished Achievement in Teaching award, provided a 5 year period has elapsed between the first award won and the subsequent nomination for another award. This process for the Distinguished Achievement in Teaching award parallels the BOR rule of only awarding the statewide award once, but allows faculty who may win a GCSU teaching excellence award prior to their fifth year of service another attempt to win the Distinguished Teaching Award once they fulfill the service requirement and, therefore, a chance to be nominated for the statewide award.

iii. to change the GCSU nomination process to forbid nominations by students

Source of Nominations for GCSU Teaching Awards	Current System	Proposed System
Colleagues	yes	yes
Faculty members who wish to self-nominate	no	no
Students	yes	no

Rationale

Some students have reported feeling pressured to nominate candidates for teaching awards. Students who are in the position of having to earn a grade from a candidate should not be asked to participate in or initiate this process through nominations. Student input will still be sought through letters from previous students that form part of the required documentation, but candidates for awards should not directly contact current students and request letters. In the event a candidate's portfolio is sent on to Atlanta as a nomination for a BOR award, the departmental chair or another colleague should contact any current students whose letters are required.

iv. to drop the requirement to have letters and other support from current students given that the candidate is assigning a grade to them and students may feel pressured.

Rationale:

Some students have reported feeling pressured to nominate candidates for teaching awards. Students who are in the position of having to earn a grade from a candidate should not be asked to participate in or initiate this process through nominations. Student input will still be sought through letters from previous students that form part of the required documentation, but candidates for awards should not directly contact current students and request letters. The BOR is also moving towards dropping the requirement for letters from current students. In the event a candidate's portfolio is sent on to Atlanta as a nomination for a BOR award, the departmental chair or another colleague should contact any current students whose letters may still be required.

