

AUBURN UNIVERSITY SENATE  
Departmental Award for Excellence in Education  
Request for Proposals

**Award Goal**

The **Departmental Award for Excellence in Education** is awarded annually by the Teaching Effectiveness Committee to the department that best displays excellence in teaching and learning.

**Award Specifics**

The **University Senate Departmental Award for Excellence in Education** will be awarded to one academic department at Auburn University. The award will provide:

- A plaque describing the award to be displayed in the academic department's office
- A high-quality video showcasing the department's excellence that will be posted on the DAEE page on Biggio Center's website and available for the department to share via its own website, media, and communication channels
- An award of \$10,000 for the 2022 Awardee
- A public recognition ceremony at the annual Faculty Awards Banquet
- Appropriate press releases in local media

**Obligation of Awardee**

The winning department is expected to collaborate in the creation of the video that will showcase its achievements. A point-of-contact must be designated to help coordinate the project in collaboration with the Biggio Center media team.

**Award Administration**

The Biggio Center will establish and provide oversight for the management of the overall accounts and internal transfer distribution of funds to the department.

**Review Process**

The Auburn Faculty Senate's Teaching Effectiveness Committee (TEC) reviews and determines finalists and winners each year. Auburn University academic departments that have not been awarded the DAEE in the past five years are eligible to apply. There is a two-step review process. First, a department representative will submit a written application. From these submissions, the TEC will use a rubric to score and determine a small number of finalists who will be invited to deliver a 10-minute Zoom presentation in front of the committee. The award winner will be chosen from these finalists.

**Step 1: Written Proposal**

No two departments are alike. To demonstrate excellence in teaching and learning ***each department will identify 3 criteria of teaching & learning excellence, provide data, and justify why the criteria were chosen and how the data demonstrates excellence in teaching.***

Providing choice makes this process more competitive for departments with diverse missions, enrollments, faculty, and students. To provide a guiding structure:

1. We expect the criteria selected will address the department's efforts to **improve and/or sustain** excellence in its:
  - support and development of **students**
  - support and development of **faculty**
  - commitments to assessment and **measuring progress** each year
2. We expect that in the justification, departments will share relevant data (quantitative and qualitative) to tell the story of the impact, improvement, and success of these efforts.

Example:

**Criterion 1:** Percentage of students employed or accepted into graduate school within six months of earning their degree: 60%

**Justification:** Our department made x,y,z changes to the curriculum with the goal of enhancing *<specific SLO or skill valued by employers>*. After two years, the First Destination Survey data shows that the rate of students finding jobs or getting accepted into graduate school has improved ten percent... *the justification would then elaborate further on these points.*

## Requirements

Each department must select **3 criteria related to teaching & learning excellence** on which it wishes to be judged. Here is a short, by no means exhaustive list, of possibilities:

Student success metrics, student learning data, support of faculty development, innovative curricular or course improvements, student success stories or metrics, faculty retention rates, increasing number of student majors, graduate employment rates, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) or Educational Research publications, grants that support educational outcomes in the department, high percentages of faculty participating in professional development programs, Alumni endorsements or success metrics, new endowments or enhanced fundraising, student work featured in high profile venues or competitions, etc.

## Some Potential Data Sources

Assessment reports, SCORE Test, First Destination Survey, Campus Engagement and Experience survey, Academic Analytics, alumni surveys, alumni testimonials, student testimonials, faculty testimonials, etc. Please note that extra weight will be given to evidence that comes from sources outside of the self-report of department stakeholders.

## Three Years of Assessment Reports

Departments who are applying for the award must consent to the TEC reviewing their Annual Assessment reports for the past three years as well as data collected by other institutionally administered surveys and tests. You will have the opportunity to indicate your consent in the Application Survey. This data will also factor in to the committee's choice of finalists.

### **Submitting the Application**

This document should be concise, direct, and evidence-based. It may be completed by a single representative of the department or via collaboration. It is anticipated that the ease of compiling this part of the application, coupled with the rubric and feedback on submissions, will encourage departments to submit regularly, thus increasing the level of competition and value of the award. Feedback in the form of rubric scores and written comments from individual members of the TEC Committee will be provided on every submission to increase transparency and to help departments who do not advance strengthen their application in subsequent years. Thus, the process of applying will add value to the department, even if not selected as a finalist.

Download the application DAEE Written Application Template and complete the following:

1. Tell us which 3 criteria related to teaching excellence your department has chosen and why you chose them (<200 words)
2. Share the data related to criterion 1 and explain its significance (<150 words)
3. Share the data related to criterion 2 and explain its significance (<150 words)
4. Share the data related to criterion 3 and explain its significance (<150 words)

Once the Word Doc is complete, save it as a pdf and submit it via the Qualtrics Survey:

<https://aub.ie/daeeapp>

You will have the opportunity to attach supporting material as appendices to your application as long as it *directly* relates to the criteria cited in the application. These will not be part of the word count nor will there be direct feedback provided on them.

### **Review of Applicants**

The TEC committee will evaluate applicants based on:

1. Choice of criteria and justification
2. Quality of the evidence
3. Quality of assessment reports

Our evaluation of proposals will consider four broad classifications of excellence in teaching as defined in "Definitions of Quality in Higher Education: A Synthesis of the Literature" (Schindler et al., 2015). The DAEE Rubric document, based on the definitions in Table 1, and within the cultural context of Auburn's institutional priorities, will be used to evaluate the Written Proposal. Applicants will receive feedback on submissions not selected to advance to the Zoom Presentation round.

Table 1. Classifications of Quality

Classifications	Definitions
Purposeful	Institutional products and services conform to a stated mission/vision or a set of specifications, requirements, or standards, including those defined by accrediting and/or regulatory bodies (Cheng & Tam, 1997; Commonwealth of Learning, 2009; Green, 1994; Harvey & Green, 1993; Harvey & Knight, 1996; Peterson, 1999)
Exceptional	Institutional products and services achieve distinction and exclusivity through the fulfillment of high standards (Bogue, 1998; Cheng & Tam, 1997; Green, 1994; Harvey & Green, 1993; Harvey & Knight, 1996; Peterson, 1999)
Transformative	Institutional products and services effect positive change in student learning (affective, cognitive, and psychomotor domains) and personal and professional potential (Biggs, 2001; Bobby, 2014; Bogue, 1998; Green, 1994; Harvey & Green, 1993; Harvey & Knight, 1996; Haworth & Conrad, 1997; Pond, 2002; Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2012; Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007)
Accountable	Institutions are accountable to stakeholders for the optimal use of resources and the delivery of accurate educational products and services with zero defects (American Society for Quality, n.d.; Cheng & Tam, 1997; Green, 1994; Harvey, 2005; Harvey & Green, 1993; Harvey & Knight, 1996; Nicholson, 2011)

## **Step 2: Zoom Presentation**

Departments who are selected as finalists will do a 10-minute Zoom presentation for the TEC committee. There will be a 10-minute Q&A session following the presentation for the TEC committee to ask clarification questions. Presentations and Q&A sessions will be recorded and shared with TEC members who are not able to attend the live session. Departments will receive a copy of their own recording as well. We encourage the use of PPT and Zoom tools for these sessions, but no other technology tools.

## **Review of Finalists**

The presentation should enhance aspects of the written proposal that the department wishes to highlight and discuss the significance of the department's achievements in teaching and learning relative to the [University Strategic Plan](#).

Presentations will be judged on their ability to tell the story of teaching excellence in a compelling and convincing way. Where does the department shine and why does it matter within the context of the institution at large, given our current moment and strategic priorities?

Pre-recorded media may be part of the presentation, but there must be a live presenter to deliver the session and answer questions. Although interactivity in the presentation is allowed, it will not factor into the score or evaluation. We are evaluating the content of the presentation, not its style, technology, or design of the presentation.

A department may have one to three individuals participate in the presentation. These representatives may include leaders, faculty, students, staff, and alumni of the department. They may not include anyone who is not, or has never been, affiliated with the department as a student or employee.

The DAEE Rubric will be used to evaluate the Zoom Presentations. Finalists who are not selected as the winner will receive feedback in the form of rubric scores and written comments from individual members of the TEC Committee on their Zoom Presentation. We strongly encourage finalists to reapply.

**Disclaimer**

It is not mandatory that an award be given each year. The award committee reserves the right to deny funding of proposal due to inadequate information or qualities commensurate with expectations of the award.