

Teaching Academy Executive Council Minutes

March 22, 2024

Members Present:

Karen Alexander, David Roach, Mitzi Ziegner, Lisa Garner Santa, Belinda Kleinhans, Katie Langford, Cindy Akers, Charles Crews, Rob Stewart, Ameri Gurley, Suzanne Tapp

Members Not Present:

John Masselli, Andrew Stetson, Nancy Soonpaa, Fanni Coward

Approval of Minutes:

David moved to approve the minutes from January 26th; Katie seconded. The council approved the February minutes.

Departmental Excellence in Teaching Award

Jeffrey Harper gave a report from the selection committee. He shared that they received several impressive applications and selected the Area of Management. The committee had no suggested changes to the selection process.

President's Excellence in Faculty Peer Mentorship Award

The selection committee created a rubric for reviewing applications and met to choose an applicant. The committee was comprised of the original co-chairs of the Faculty Mentor Academy; Lisa Garner Santa, Barbie Chambers, Jorge Ramirez, David Doerfert, and Suzanne Tapp. They requested to make the following addition to the criteria:

“Reviewers recognize that success can be measured through multiple paths related to personal and professional goals.”

The committee also requested the following changes to two questions on the evaluation rubric:

2. In what ways does this candidate demonstrate ~~an effectiveness~~ *excellence* in official mentorship roles?
3. In what ways does this candidate demonstrate ~~an effectiveness~~ *excellence* in unofficial mentorship roles?

Cindy moved to approve the changes; Ameri seconded. The council voted in favor of the changes and the motion passed.

Teaching Academy Membership Application Update

The council drafted an updated version of the membership application to align with the newly accepted Definition of Teaching Excellence (new application attached on pages 3-6). Mitzi moved to accept the new application; Belinda seconded. The council voted in favor and the motion passed.

Teaching Evaluation Initiative Updates

Department Teaching Plans: David shared that the subcommittee used the department plan from Kinesiology and Sport Management as a template to offer to other departments.

Self-Reflection: Lisa stated that this subcommittee developed a set of optional questions for reflection that align with each pillar of the new definition of teaching excellence.

Peer Observation: Mitzi shared that this subcommittee is interested in creating a database of tools and resources for peer evaluation and hope to get input from faculty across campus. They have also collected external resources. In addition, they would like to plan a few workshops about how to be an effective peer evaluator. Charles asked if these resources would apply to online teaching. Karen stated that they have adapted the face-to-face evaluation guide, but it could use improvement.

Student Evaluations: Suzanne shared that this subcommittee will meet to finalize a handout with the proposed new feedback questions and the results from the recent pilot study. They will present their recommendations to the Faculty Senate in April.

Adjourn:

Ameri moved to adjourn the meeting; Cindy seconded. The meeting was adjourned.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Molly Jacobs.

Teaching Academy Membership Application

This version represents a detailed reordering of the old application into the pillars of excellence in the teaching definition.

The Teaching Academy application is a separate and independent process from applications for other purposes (e.g., teaching awards). Carefully review this guide to be sure your application specifically addresses the criteria and conforms to format/page limit requirements. **The Selection Committee will not consider applications that do not conform to requirements.** The recommendation and nomination letters and all sections in the supporting documents are weighted in the selection process. Applications will only be accepted online.

The Teaching Academy application aligns with the newly adopted Texas Tech definition of excellence in teaching. To view this document in its entirety, please visit the [TLPDC website](#). Note that the pillars of teaching excellence identified in this definition often complement each other and areas of overlap do exist. The following guide offers suggestions to help applicants organize their applications and demonstrate their commitment to teaching.

Nomination/Recommendation Letters (10%)

Applicants must have letters of recommendation from the nominator and one other current member of the Teaching Academy. Guidelines for nomination/recommendation letters are linked at the bottom of this page. Your nominator and recommender can submit their letters after you have completed the application. (Note: Teaching Academy members may support only one candidate per year).

Nominators and recommenders are encouraged to refer to Texas Tech [definition of excellence in teaching](#) in their letters by referring to the relevant pillars of excellence (student-centered, intentional, evidence-based, and engaging) with examples as appropriate.

Supporting Documents (90%)

The combined supporting documents must be limited to 20 pages. Each section in the supporting documents is equally weighted (15%). Please upload a PDF document containing the items below with clearly labeled sections in the specified order:

A. Teaching Philosophy Statement (15%) (not to exceed **2 pages**): Refer to the Texas Tech [definition of excellence in teaching](#) and the relevant pillars (student-centered, intentional, evidence-based, and engaging) of excellence for your teaching with specific, current classroom examples.

B. Evidence Supporting Student-Centered Teaching (15%)

(Not to exceed 4 pages)

Definition of Student-Centered Teaching:

Excellent teachers tailor learning to be collaborative (when appropriate) and fair, ensuring every student is empowered to take an active role in their own learning. They strive to create learning environments that support student success and wellness and anticipate a variety of life experiences, learning histories, identities, and perspectives. These teachers have high expectations for students and provide opportunities for them to convey their learning.

Possible materials that could be submitted to demonstrate student-centered teaching include:

- Creative assignments
- Sample syllabus, excerpt from a sample syllabus, comparisons of syllabi over time to show change
- Descriptions of innovative techniques
- Course/curriculum development
- Experiential learning (Service Learning)
- Recognition received for teaching excellence/awards received
- Others

C. Evidence Supporting the Characteristics of an Intentional Teacher (15%)

(Not to exceed 4 pages)

Definition of Intentional Teaching:

Excellent teachers are intentional in how they design and foster the learning experience to achieve specific goals and outcomes. Over their careers, they use a variety of instructional techniques, remain receptive to improving and innovating their teaching methods, and understand that excellent teaching is reflective and evolving.

Possible materials that could be submitted to demonstrate intentional teaching include:

- Participation in university teaching projects (Open Teaching Concept)
- Participation in multi-institutional teaching projects (Transparency Project)
- Attending TLPDC presentations or other teaching-related professional development
- Attending conferences related to teaching (Burns Conference, Advancing Teaching and Learning Conference, disciplinary-specific teaching conferences or tracks, etc.)
- Membership in teacher-focused organization
- Participation in teaching related forums (on and off campus)
- Others

D. Evidence Supporting Evidence-Based Teaching (15%)

(Not to exceed 4 pages)

Definition of Evidence-Based Teaching:

Excellent teachers are purposeful in using best teaching practices grounded in a solid understanding of pedagogy drawn from research, experience, and professional dialogue. They seek evidence to establish and track the effectiveness of teaching methods to ensure students reach learning outcomes.

Possible materials that could be submitted to demonstrate evidence-based teaching:

- Presented a workshop about teaching
- Published an article about teaching
- Written an opinion article about teaching
- Mentored a novice faculty in teaching
- TLPDC program participant (TeMPO, STEP, Ethics in Teaching and Learning, IFE)
- Presented a TLPDC workshop
- Led graduate student development presentations
- Mentored other faculty peers or graduate student instructors
- Service as a reviewer for teaching-related conferences or journals

- Service to teaching related organizations
- Others

E. Evidence Supporting the characteristics of Engaged Teaching (15%)

(Not to exceed 4 pages)

Definition of Engaged Teaching:

Excellent teachers help learners develop as independent, creative, and critical thinkers by actively engaging students in the learning process. These teachers develop and share their genuine interest in the topic and demonstrate the applicability of content to academic and professional pursuits.

Possible materials that could be submitted to demonstrate engaged teaching:

- Letters from past students
- Comments from student evaluations that demonstrate engaged teaching
- Letters from teaching observations or peer review feedback
- Examples of teaching strategies that focus on content application
- Others

F. Evidence of Teaching Excellence from Students (15%)
(not to exceed 2 pages):

Create a one-page summary of student evaluations from the past three years for each course taught that includes the following information (no raw data, please):

- Course/section number and name
- Designation as undergraduate or graduate level enrollment
- Selected responses from student evaluations for each course/section
- Evaluation response rate (including the number of students responding, total number of students in the class, and response percentage)
- Departmental and college comparisons