

THE PROVOST AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING DESIGN AND PRACTICE

The Provost Awards for Excellence in Teaching Design and Practice are intended to recognize faculty at Vancouver Island University (VIU) for excellence in teaching. The Awards celebrate and promote innovations in the design and practice of teaching. Award recipients become leaders who can then share their innovative approaches to teaching.

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF AWARDS

These Teaching Design and Practice Awards formally recognize excellence in all facets of teaching and learning at Vancouver Island University. They are concerned with how a faculty member designs, develops, and offers learning opportunities for students across discipline-specific learning outcomes. They also recognize critical reflection on teaching and learning practice.

The awards are open to regular faculty holding full- or part-time appointments. Nominees must have completed three years of teaching at VIU and be currently employed. Nominations can be put forward in any relevant category (**Early Career, Established Educator, Educational Leadership**), except those where the nominee has previously been recognized.

The awards are also intended to build a community of practice around teaching and learning. Successful recipients, with the support of their Departments and Dean, will become leaders who contribute to systemic change in learning and teaching through ongoing knowledge sharing and dissemination processes, inspiring and supporting peers. Although “Educational Leadership” is a separate category, evidence of leadership qualities is an expectation for all nominees. Successful recipients may be asked to offer presentations within the learning and teaching community, engage in collegial mentoring, and/or involve themselves in university and higher-education committees.

Nomination packages should reveal teaching design and practice that employs innovative methods, which may be characterized by initiative + risk-taking, inquiry, creative thinking, the implementation of new ideas or programs, project-based learning, innovations with learning technologies, exemplary assessment and evaluation techniques, etc.

Awards will be made in three categories:

Early Career Award: (individual)

This award category is for those within our community who are closer to the beginning of their teaching journey (typically within 6 years of beginning their teaching career at the post-secondary level). In most situations, this award is most suitable for individuals who are at a stage of their careers where they may be mapping the contours of their own teaching philosophies, though applications would be expected to contain reflection on work they have undertaken with others. Applicants to this category might be expected to have less experience in the classroom and, as a result, fewer concrete examples to reflect upon.

Established Educator Award: (individual or collaborative)

This award category is for those within our community who have laid solid foundations for their teaching practice, and are continuing to grow. This award may be applied for by one individual or by individuals who have collaborated on initiatives, thereby forming a collective body of work that will be recognized as a whole.

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Applicants to this category will be expected to have considerable experience in the classroom, and to have many examples to draw upon. Their teaching philosophies should be well established, clearly articulated, and woven seamlessly through the application (revealing them to be the foundation of the practice).

Educational Leadership Award: (individual)

This award category is for those within our community who have supported their colleagues in adopting and adapting new and innovative approaches to teaching and learning. Applicants to this category would normally be expected to demonstrate sustained and ongoing leadership activities and have multiple examples of how their activities have supported their colleagues in the development and transformation of their teaching practice. This could include writing textbooks or Open Educational Resources (OER), engaging in scholarship of teaching and learning, or participating in other teaching-related pursuits not included in the list below.

Applicants are expected to reflect on the following themes or aspects of teaching and learning practice and include facets of any that are *most relevant* to their philosophy and practice. These are prompts that are intended to guide a reflective process, not a list of elements, all of which must all be included.

- **Enhances Active Learning**

The use of techniques that results in genuine understanding through long-term retention of learning material, the capacity to retrieve it, and the ability to apply it to unfamiliar concepts. Active learners are not only engaged in their learning but are able to understand *how* they learn. They adapt their learning strategies to the particular situation, and they constantly plan and re-evaluate their approach.

- **Involves Interdisciplinary Learning**

Teaching practices that create learning that bridges theory and practice across disciplinary boundaries. Interdisciplinary students become critical and creative thinkers, have a high curiosity for learning, and develop the ability to synthesize and apply learning in new situations.

- **Employs Experiential Learning**

Teaching practices that make use of simulation, field trips, original assignments, community-based learning experiences, and the like, offering a hands-on approach to learning whereby the learner subsequently reflects on, conceptualizes, analyzes, and finally applies the new ideas gained from the experience. Experiential learners are curious problem-solvers who can transfer what they have learned from one context to another.

- **Focuses on Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being**

Teaching and learning practices that embody and enrich Indigenous perspectives. Such teaching is not only focused on exploring what Indigenous knowledges are, but also on developing the relational aspects for integrating such knowledge into our learning. Students who embrace Indigenous perspectives demonstrate inclusivity and self-awareness and are grounded in an understanding of traditional teachings and place-based learning, as well as the capacity to engage in respectful relationships.

- **Focuses on Intercultural Learning**

Teaching practices that incorporate diverse contexts and multiple perspectives in globalized and inclusive classrooms. Students who embrace intercultural learning develop an appreciation of diverse peoples, cultures, and lifestyles, are empathetic and flexible in changing environments, and are likely to become citizens of the global community.

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- **Increases Student Persistence and Resilience**

Various teaching practices and techniques such as the use of challenging, inclusive, and relevant curriculum that encourages personal agency and creates a sense of belonging in the classroom, leading to persistence and resilience among learners. Resilient students demonstrate motivation, self-efficacy, and a commitment to life-long learning.

- **Focusses on Community-Based Learning**

Teaching practices that connect students to partners and communities within the region through collaboration and cooperation, strengthening community partnerships and integrating academic learning with real-world experience. Students who benefit from community-based learning experiences become active and self-directed learners, are career-focused, and demonstrate personal and social responsibility.

- **Other**

Note to Nominator: it is recommended that a chosen theme or aspect not on this list be confirmed with the Associate Vice-President, Academic before proceeding with the nomination package.