Creation and Implementation of a Campus-wide Grant Award Program Recognizing Whole Departments for Excellence in Education

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Presentation Outline

- History/Rationale of Award
- AU Award details
- Selection Guidelines and Process
- Discussion and Q & A
History/Rationale of the Award

History

- Auburn University—2005 (conversations)
- Auburn University—2013

--- proposal and negotiations with Provost
--- resolution approved in Faculty Senate
--- launch
2017 Regents’ Teaching Excellence Awards
Department/Program Award Guidelines
Criteria

Nomination portfolio is limited to 10 pages, including any appendices. Written statement (100 words max) should include:

- Description of the team’s approach to teaching excellence
- Examples of student success
- Evidence of student feedback

Criteria

The award committee will look for evidence that the team demonstrates excellence in teaching, student support, and achievement. The following criteria will be evaluated:

- Student success, including improvements in student learning and achievement
- Evidence of student engagement and feedback
- Innovative teaching strategies, including active learning techniques
- Evidence of collaboration and communication among team members
- Contribution to the broader academic community (e.g., publication, conference participation, service)

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History/Rationale of Award

The **University Senate Departmental Award for Excellence in Education** will have long lasting impact and will “institutionalize” teaching excellence by creating a departmental identity, entity and structure that the university can maintain and nourish.
History/Rationale of Award

- Individual award does not inspire others per se;
  ---Departmental award incentivizes all faculty within a department to improve teaching
- Departmental award involves collaboration
  ---brings unity of purpose by enabling greater numbers of faculty to receive recognition for efforts around a common purpose
History/Rationale of Award

- **Potential to change departmental culture around T&L**
  
  ---provides opportunity for 21st century lifelong learning by encouraging continued development of faculty and students

- **Excellence more sustainable** as not dependent on one person
  
  ---stimulates pursuit of excellence through progress and change
AU Award

- AU Teaching Effectiveness Committee sponsorship
- Administrative support attained ($30,000)
- Initially named after University Senate (to secure academic buy in)
- Teaching Effective Committee developed award criteria and makes selections
- Award funds administered by Biggio Center
AU Award (grant & award hybrid)

Key elements:

• **Recognition & Development (plaques & ceremony)**

• **$30,000--$10,000 for each of 3 years**
  
  --- At least 50% of the funds must be allocated toward the support of activities that enhance teaching and learning within the department (three-year development plan required)

  --- The remaining funds can be used at the department’s discretion

• **Public / Campus recognition**

• **Review process—Pre-application then Application**
Recent Timetable

- December 9, 2015 Pre-announcement to departments and faculty
- January 13, 2016 Formal announcement to solicit proposals for Departmental Award for Excellence in Education
- January 29, 2016 Information at Conversations in Celebration of Teaching (CCT)
- March 1, 2016 Deadline for the submission of proposal
- March 11, 2016 Finalists selected for oral presentations to the Teaching Effectiveness Committee
- April 8, 2016 Oral presentations to the Teaching Effectiveness Committee
- April 15, 2016 Committee makes recommendation to President of the recipient of the 2016 Department Award for Excellence in Education
- May 6, 2016 Funds loaded to department routing
AU Award (grant & award hybrid)

Selection based on:

1) a description of the **department’s efforts to improve teaching and learning**, 

2) **evidence of teaching excellence** showing the relationship between teaching and improved student learning, and 

3) a **professional development plan** (with budget of the award funds) that outlines three years of proposed teaching and learning enhancement activities.
The written proposal is judged on the following criteria.

1. The department’s commitment to sustained teaching and learning. The narrative should contain a departmental profile that describes:
   
i. The teaching/learning mission of the department and philosophy of teaching
   
   ii. An overview of the curriculum and teaching program and narrative of department-sponsored activities that establish commitment to learning excellence.

2. Ongoing assessment and improvement of teaching and learning -- how the department engages in assessment of learning competency and applies that knowledge to continual improvement in the department culture of learning excellence.
The written proposal is judged on the following criteria.

3. Faculty development for teaching and evidence of scholarship of teaching and learning
   Provide evidence for faculty development activities and scholarship of teaching and learning.

4. Provision of resources for students.
   Provide evidence that the department is involved in helping students succeed in their classes and have the tools necessary for success upon graduation.

5. A three year professional development plan
   a. describe teaching enhancement activities the department plans to accomplish that will contribute to the teaching and learning culture at the department, college and university.
   b. Budget for the three year project
Auburn University
Departmental Award for Excellence in Education
2014 Pre-Proposal Evaluation
Please rate each section in the Pre-Proposal on a scale of 0 to 10 points using the following:
   0 = Did Not Address the Subject; and
   10 = Did an Outstanding Job in Addressing the Subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>Teaching/Learning mission of the department</th>
<th>Departmentally sponsored activities that establish a commitment to learning excellence</th>
<th>Engagement in learning assessment and improvement in learning excellence including scholarship and plans</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Section 1. Commitment to Sustained Excellence in Teaching and Learning</td>
<td>Section 2. Ongoing Assessment &amp; Improvement of Teaching and Learning Quality</td>
<td>Section 3. Faculty Develop. For Teaching</td>
<td>Section 4. Provision of Resources for Students</td>
<td>Section 5. Linking Discovery, Creative Activity, &amp; Engagement w/ Teaching and Learning</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluator: _________________________________
AU Award Summary

Results over three years:

• 20 department applications from 7 different colleges (faculties)

Winners thus far:

• Mechanical Engineering (2014)
• Biosystems Engineering (2015)
• Geosciences (2016)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=3H8fzSnemBw
Examples

- Annual department faculty retreat to discuss assessment of project activities and conduct curriculum planning
- Conduct curriculum community sessions
- Develop case studies and design activities; Pilot test case studies and design activities; Refine case studies and design activities
- Develop and implement cross cultural activities
- Develop and implement plans for alumni/industry interaction
- Curriculum mapping and course revisions
- Apprenticeship and student-student mentoring; peer teaching
- High-impact active-learning practices; redesign courses
- New approach to augment current teaching and learning initiatives - feedback from stakeholders including undergraduate students, graduate students, employers, parents and faculty.
- Programs student-produced learning modules in introductory courses; student-led tutoring in upper-level classes; faculty-led flipped segments of courses; establishing closer ties with industry through internships and guest lectures; and enhancing undergraduate research pathways.
- Professional use of technology
Observations and Learning Outcomes

- Review process
- Feedback to departments
- Posting of winners proposals
- Celebration (CCT & annual awards)
- Dissemination across campus
- Winning departments
- Other incentives
  - Low repeat submission
Next Steps/Research Plan

- Need to determine **impact** to departments and campus
- **Areas to modify** – amount, process / rubrics

**During award**
- Number of academic units involved
- Quality of discussions
- Impact on conceptions of teaching
- Impact on teaching/learning
- Student feedback/perceptions
Discussion and Q & A

Help!