



December 12, 2025

To: Deans, Program Directors, Department Heads and Chairs, and Graduate Coordinators
From: Carolyn Pepper, Interim Vice Provost and Dean of the School of Graduate Education
Subject: **Nominations for Faculty and Student Awards for Graduate Education**

The School of Graduate Education, Academic Affairs and the Graduate Council wish to solicit nominations for the following awards: Distinguished Graduate Faculty Mentor Award, Mid-Career Graduate Faculty Mentor Award, Early-Career Graduate Faculty Mentor Award, John P. Ellbogen Outstanding Graduate Assistant Teaching Awards, Outstanding Dissertation Award, and Outstanding Master's Thesis Award. This memorandum describes the awards and the nominating procedures.

Please send nominations, including all letters and supporting materials in PDF format (*as one file*), electronically to Kaitlyn Whitlock, kwhitlo1@uwyo.edu. **The deadline for receipt of complete nomination packets is February 20, 2026, 5:00 p.m.** The Graduate Council will review nominations and select awardees. The following is a brief description of each award and its requirements.

A. Distinguished Graduate Faculty Mentor Award

Purpose: To reward distinguished academic personnel commitment to graduate student mentoring.

Eligibility: All full-time academic personnel who mentor graduate students, are currently employed by the University of Wyoming, and have a minimum 10 years of academic career at the University of Wyoming. **The committee requests that each academic program nominate no more than one individual for this award. An *academic program* is defined as one recognized in UW's master list of degrees.**

Nominating Materials: The nominee's packet should include:

- A letter of nomination from the department chair or program director (no more than 2 pages). This letter should address the nominee's commitment to graduate student mentoring, including dedication to establishing a professional mentoring relationship and a commitment to program rigor. The nominee's record of mentoring past graduate students including time to degree, student outcomes, and career successes should be included. In addition, the nomination letter should briefly describe the norms of mentoring in the nominee's academic discipline to provide a standard for comparison.
- One supporting letter from a colleague (no more than 2 pages)
- One supporting letter from a current student (no more than 2 pages)
- One supporting letter from a former student (no more than 2 pages)
- A current curriculum vitae
- If the nominee has been a past recipient of this award, the nomination letter should so indicate.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Development and teaching of graduate courses.

- Evidence of current and past graduate students and post-docs.
- Evidence of supports for graduate students and post-docs. (e.g., travel, additional mentoring effort to assist student's performance, student's presentation and/or student's publication, effort to improve student's communication skills).
- Evidence of positive impact of and exemplary research/creative accomplishment with or by graduate students and post-docs. (e.g., student's award, new faculty at other institutions, student-advisor collaboration on research, performance, publication, and/or proposal submission).
- Service and/or leadership in programs or activities related to graduate student mentorship.

B. Mid-Career Graduate Faculty Mentor Award

Purpose: To reward mid-career academic personnel commitment to graduate student mentoring

Eligibility: All full-time academic personnel who mentor graduate students, are currently employed by the University of Wyoming, and have a minimum 6 to 10 years of academic career at the University of Wyoming. **The committee requests that each academic program nominate no more than one individual for this award. An academic program is defined as one recognized in UW's master list of degrees.**

Nominating Materials: The nominee's packet should include:

- A letter of nomination from the department chair or program director (no more than 2 pages). This letter should address the nominee's commitment to graduate student mentoring, including dedication to establishing a professional mentoring relationship and a commitment to program rigor. The nominee's record of mentoring past graduate students including time to degree, student outcomes, and career successes should be included. In addition, the nomination letter should briefly describe the norms of mentoring in the nominee's academic discipline to provide a standard for comparison.
- One supporting letter from a current student (no more than 2 pages)
- One supporting letter from a former student (no more than 2 pages)
- A current curriculum vitae
- If the nominee has been a past recipient of this award, the nomination letter should so indicate.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Development and teaching of graduate courses.
- Evidence of current and past graduate students and post-docs.
- Evidence of supports for graduate students and post-docs. (e.g., travel, additional mentoring effort to assist student's performance, student's presentation and/or student's publication, effort to improve student's communication skills).
- Evidence of positive impact of and exemplary research/creative accomplishment with or by graduate students and post-docs. (e.g., student's award, new faculty at other institutions, student-advisor collaboration on research, performance, publication, and/or proposal submission).
- Service and/or leadership in programs or activities related to graduate student mentorship.

C. Early-Career Graduate Faculty Mentor Award

Purpose: To reward early-career academic personnel commitment to graduate student mentoring

Eligibility: All full-time academic personnel who mentor graduate students, are currently employed by the University of Wyoming, and have a maximum 6 years of academic career at the University of Wyoming. **The committee requests that each academic program nominate no more than one individual for this award. An academic program is defined as one recognized in UW's master list of degrees.**

Nominating Materials: The nominee's packet should include:

- A letter of nomination from the department chair or program director (no more than 2 pages). This letter should address the nominee's commitment to graduate student mentoring, including dedication to establishing a professional mentoring relationship and a commitment to program rigor. The nominee's record of mentoring past graduate students including time to degree, student outcomes, and career successes should be included. In addition, the nomination letter should briefly describe the norms of mentoring in the nominee's academic discipline to provide a standard for comparison.
- One supporting letter from a colleague (no more than 2 pages)
- One supporting letter from a current student (no more than 2 pages)
- A current curriculum vitae
- If the nominee has been a past recipient of this award, the nomination letter should so indicate.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Development and teaching of graduate courses.
- Evidence of current and past graduate students and post-docs.
- Evidence of supports for graduate students and post-docs. (e.g., travel, additional mentoring effort to assist student's performance, student's presentation and/or student's publication, effort to improve student's communication skills).
- Evidence of positive impact of and exemplary research/creative accomplishment with or by graduate students and post-docs. (e.g., student's award, new faculty at other institutions, student-advisor collaboration on research, performance, publication, and/or proposal submission).

D. John P. Ellbogen Outstanding Graduate Assistant Teaching Awards

Purpose: To reward a graduate teaching assistant for excellence in teaching

Eligibility: All graduate teaching assistants with significant teaching responsibilities. **The committee requests that each department or program nominate no more than one student. If, in exceptional circumstances, a department head wishes to submit multiple nominations, the nominations must be ranked.**

Nominating Materials: The nominee's packet should include:

- A brief letter of nomination from the department chair or program director (no more than 1 page) to ensure no more than one nomination per unit.
- A supporting letter from the graduate assistant's teaching supervisor or instructor of record (no more than 2 pages). This letter should describe the assistant's teaching

assignment (e.g., lecture, laboratory, discussion, etc.) indicating the level of responsibility the assistant had for the particular assignment (e.g., solely responsible for the entire course including assigning grades; responsible for a laboratory or discussion section which contributed to students' grades; the grade was assigned by the faculty person in charge of the course, etc.). The supporting letter shall address the student's incorporation of pedagogical best practices (<https://www.uwyo.edu/ctl/knowledge-base/best-practices/index.html>) in her or his teaching.

- A teaching statement (no more than 2 pages) by the nominated graduate teaching assistant. The statement shall address the student's incorporation of pedagogical best practices (<https://www.uwyo.edu/ctl/knowledge-base/best-practices/index.html>) in her or his teaching.
- A summary list of classes taught as a graduate assistant in the 2025 calendar year with class enrollments.
- Student evaluations of teaching performance including comments. Please provide an explanation for any courses that do not have evaluations.
- A current curriculum vitae or resume.

E. Outstanding Dissertation Award

Purpose: To recognize graduate students for exemplary doctoral dissertations

Eligibility: Dissertation *completed* in the 2024 or 2025 calendar years. *Completion*, as used here, implies the dissertation has been uploaded to ProQuest during the calendar years under consideration. **The committee requests that each *academic program* nominate no more than one individual for this award. An *academic program* is defined as one recognized in UW's master list of degrees.**

Nominating Materials: The nominee's packet should include:

- A copy of the dissertation abstract.
- A letter of nomination from the department chair or program director (no more than 2 pages). This should specify norms for the relevant field, and explain how the nominee meets/exceeds them.
- A letter from the nominee's major advisor or other committee member if the advisor is the department chair/program director (no more than 2 pages) addressing:
 - Impact of the research
 - Dissertation outcomes
 - Publications submitted, accepted, in press, or published that are derived from the dissertation
 - Presentations based on the dissertation, made by the nominee to meetings of scientific or professional societies, and
 - Other information such as honors and awards from the dissertation research
- One supporting letter from a faculty member familiar with the nominee's dissertation (no more than 2 pages).
- A current curriculum vitae or resume.

F. Outstanding Master's Thesis Award

Purpose: To recognize graduate students for exemplary master's theses

Eligibility: Theses *completed* in the 2024 or 2025 calendar years. *Completion*, as used here, implies the thesis has been uploaded to ProQuest during the calendar years under

consideration. **The committee requests that each *academic program* nominate no more than one individual for this award. An *academic program* is defined as one recognized in UW's master list of degrees.**

Nominating Materials: The nominee's packet should include:

- A copy of the thesis abstract.
- A letter of nomination from the department chair or program director (no more than 2 pages). This letter should specify norms for the relevant field, and explain how the nominee meets/exceeds them.
- A letter from the nominee's major advisor or other committee member if advisor is the department chair/program director (no more than 2 pages) addressing:
 - Impact of the research
 - Thesis outcomes
 - Publications submitted, accepted, in press, or published that are derived from the thesis
 - Presentations based on the thesis, made by the nominee to meetings of scientific or professional societies, and
 - Other information such as honors and awards from the master's research
- One supporting letter from a faculty member familiar with the nominee's thesis (no more than 2 pages).
- A current curriculum vitae or resume.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration and nomination of strong candidates. The nomination itself is a significant recognition.

The recipients will receive a monetary award.

- Distinguished Graduate Faculty Mentor Award - \$3,000
- Mid-Career Graduate Faculty Mentor Award - \$1,000
- Early-Career Graduate Faculty Mentor Award - \$1,000
- John P. Ellbogen Outstanding Graduate Assistant Teaching Awards - \$6,000
- Outstanding Dissertation Award - \$3,000
- Outstanding Master's Thesis Award - \$3,000

The nominees and recipients will be recognized during a planned Graduate Awards event in the spring.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the School of Graduate Education at (307) 766-6478 or graded@uwyo.edu.

Cc: Graduate Council
Rob Godby, Chair, Faculty Senate
Paula Medina, ASUW President
Mary Ellbogen Garland
Office of the President
Nycole Courtney, Vice President for Student Affairs
Parag Chitnis, Vice President for Research and Economic Development
Anne Alexander, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs
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