2013 Excellence Awards

The Graduate School is pleased to announce its annual Excellence Awards competitions. In their third year, the Excellence Awards were created to recognize the outstanding work of directors of graduate studies, graduate coordinators, and those faculty and staff who mentor graduate students. Nominations for these awards are due on Friday, April 5, 2013. All three awards will be announced at the spring 2013 meeting for directors of graduate studies in late April/early May. Read on to learn about the nomination criteria for each award and the nomination process.

Excellence Award for Directors of Graduate Studies (DGS). The director of graduate studies or graduate program director is a faculty member charged with managing the essentials of the graduate program. This may include oversight of, or involvement in, graduate student recruitment and admissions, orientation and training, fellowships and funding, and GTF appointments, assignments, and supervision. While the quality and continuity of the graduate program, as well as the experience of the graduate students in the program, depend in part on the talents and commitment of the director of graduate studies or graduate program director, the Graduate School seeks to recognize those faculty members in this position who exceed expectations by making innovative or unique contributions that positively impact the quality of the graduate program and/or student experience. It is also a goal of the Graduate School to use the Excellence Awards to illuminate and share best practices that enhance the overall quality of graduate education at the University of Oregon.

The Award: Up to two awards will be made. Each award recipient will receive a $500 research/travel award* in his/her name to be granted to a graduate student in her/his department. The award recipient will also receive a plaque commemorating the award and will be recognized at the spring DGS meeting in late April/early May.

*Note: The research/travel award must be distributed in line with the department’s normal internal procedures for such competitions.

Eligibility and Nomination Process: To be eligible, the faculty member must have served as director of graduate studies or graduate program director for at least one full academic year at the time of nomination.

Nominations may come from graduate students, faculty members, department heads, school/college deans, or department/college staff members relevant to the graduate program. Nominations must be submitted in a single packet by the deadline stated below and must include:

✓ A letter of nomination that addresses the nominee’s years of service as the director of graduate studies or graduate program director and includes up to three specific examples of unique contributions, innovative ideas, and/or other accomplishments that demonstrate the nominee’s success in improving the quality of the graduate program. This letter is not to exceed two pages in length. The letter of nomination must include the author’s full name, role/title, and email address. This letter may be signed by one nominator or a group of nominators.

✓ Up to two letters of support, each not to exceed one page in length. One of these letters must be authored by one or more students. Additional letters can come from graduate students, faculty, or staff members. Letters of support must provide specific examples of the nominee’s
contributions, innovations, or accomplishments. These may be signed by one supporter or a group of supporters.

Selection Criteria and Process: Nominations will be evaluated by a committee including members of the Graduate School staff, the Graduate Council, and the Graduate School Student Advisory Board. Successful nominations will include examples that highlight ways in which the nominee’s contributions demonstrate wise, innovative, and effective management/leadership of the graduate program, a positive impact on program quality, and/or a positive impact on graduate students themselves and will effectively convey how/why these contributions are important to the success of the graduate program. Selection results will be provided by email to the person(s) who submitted the letter of nomination and to the nominees in late April.

Excellence Award for Graduate Coordinators. Each graduate program has a graduate coordinator or graduate secretary whose role is to support the director of graduate studies, department head, and other faculty in the coordination of all graduate student related activities in the program—recruitment, admissions, GTF appointment, the tracking of progress to degree, fellowship nominations, and so forth. Consequently, the graduate coordinator or graduate secretary plays a central role in communication between the graduate program, prospective and currently-enrolled students, and the Graduate School. The graduate coordinator or graduate secretary often is the first point of contact for students when they have questions and as they reach the various landmark events in their program, from matriculation through graduation. While the quality of support provided to students and the day-to-day operation of the graduate program depends in part on the graduate coordinator or graduate secretary, the Graduate School seeks, first, to recognize those staff members whose ability to organize, prioritize, and communicate exceeds expectations and, second, to illuminate and share best practices that enhance the overall quality of graduate education at the University of Oregon.

The Award: Up to two awards will be made. Each award recipient will receive a $250 Visa gift card and a plaque commemorating the award and will be recognized at the spring DGS meeting in late April/early May.

Eligibility and Nomination Process: To be eligible, the graduate coordinator or graduate secretary must have been in his/her current position for at least two full academic years at the time of nomination. Office managers who have responsibilities for the graduate program (that is, in offices in which there is no staff person whose role is solely related to graduate program responsibilities) are eligible.

Nominations may come from graduate students, faculty members, department heads, school/college deans, or department/college staff members relevant to the graduate program. Nominations must be submitted in a single packet by the deadline stated below and must include:

- A letter of nomination not to exceed two pages in length that addresses the nominee’s years of service, job description (including the percentage of time devoted to graduate program-related responsibilities) and up to three specific examples of unique contributions/skills/organizational accomplishments that account for the nominee’s success in improving the operation of the graduate program and/or quality of the graduate student experience. The letter of nomination must include the author’s full name, role/title, and email address. This letter may be signed by one nominator or a group of nominators.

- Up to three letters of support, each not to exceed one page in length. One of these letters must be authored by one or more students. Additional letters can come from graduate students,
Nominations program. Other that Graduate will Selection honor mentorship, faculty, programs. Successful nominations will include examples that demonstrate the nominee’s strong organizational and communication skills as they relate to supporting the graduate program and its graduate students and will effectively convey how/why these contributions are important to the success of the graduate program. Selection results will be provided by email to the person(s) who submitted the letter of nomination and to the nominees in late April.

Selection Criteria and Process: Nominations will be evaluated by a committee including members of the Graduate School staff, the Graduate Council, and the Graduate School Student Advisory Board. Successful nominations will include examples that demonstrate the nominee’s strong organizational and communication skills as they relate to supporting the graduate program and its graduate students and will effectively convey how/why these contributions are important to the success of the graduate program. Selection results will be provided by email to the person(s) who submitted the letter of nomination and to the nominees in late April.

Excellence Award for Outstanding Mentorship in Graduate Studies. This is a new award to recognize the outstanding mentorship of graduate students. Mentorship includes fostering the academic and/or professional development of students. This new award accompanies the current Excellence Awards that honor the work of Directors of Graduate Studies and of Graduate Coordinators. This award recognizes that strong mentorship is an essential component of strong graduate programs and that valuable mentors may occupy a wide variety of academic and professional positions. In recognizing outstanding mentorship, the Graduate School hopes to reinforce and disseminate the practices that enhance the overall quality of graduate education at the University of Oregon.

The Award: One award will be made. The award recipient will receive a plaque commemorating the award and a $500 research/travel award* in his/her name to be granted to a graduate student in her/his department. The award recipient will be recognized at the spring DGS meeting in late April/early May.

*Note: The research/travel award must be distributed in line with the department’s normal internal procedures for such competitions.

Eligibility and Nomination Process: Eligible recipients include tenure-related and non-tenure track faculty, lab directors, or research assistants/associates who work closely with graduate students and other professional staff. The recipient must be an employee of the University of Oregon. Nominations may come from graduate students, faculty members, department heads, school/college deans, or department/college staff members relevant to graduate programs. Nominations must be submitted in a single packet by the deadline stated below and must include:

- A letter of nomination not to exceed two pages in length that addresses the particular ways the individual has exhibited outstanding mentorship. The letter of nomination should identify up to three specific examples of unique contributions, innovative ideas, and/or other accomplishments that demonstrate the nominee’s success in mentoring graduate students. The letter of nomination must include the author(s) full name(s), role/title(s), and email address(es). The letter may be signed by one nominator or a group of nominators.

- Up to two letters of support, each not to exceed one page in length may be submitted. The letter of nomination must include the author(s) full name(s), role/title(s), and email address(es). One of these letters must be authored by one or more students. These may be signed by one supporter or a group of supporters.
**Selection Criteria and Process:** Nominations will be evaluated by a committee including members of the Graduate School staff, the Graduate Council, and the Graduate School Student Advisory Board. Successful nominations will include examples that demonstrate the exceptionally valuable types of mentorship provided by the nominee and, if possible, indicate the outcomes that resulted from such mentorship. Selection results will be provided by email to the person(s) who submitted the letter of nomination and to the nominees in late April.

**Deadline:** Complete nomination packets are due by **5 p.m. on Friday, April 6, 2013**, to the Graduate School. Nominations must be sent as a single PDF attachment by email to marcia@uoregon.edu (scanned documents are welcome). To optimize routing, please cite “Excellence Award” and the category (“DGS”/ “Coordinator”/ “Mentor”) in the subject line.

**Contact:** Questions may be directed to Kyle Reynolds (541-346-2489; kreynold@uoregon.edu) or Mia Tuan (541-346-8425; tuan@uoregon.edu).