Graduate Students’ Association Excellence Award
Terms of Reference • 2017-2018 Academic Year

Application Intake: January 29 to February 12, 2018
Fall Intake Deadline: Monday, February 12, 2018 11:59 PM MT

Submit applications online
Applications received outside of the intake period will NOT be evaluated.
Late applications will NOT be evaluated.

This document is to be made public on the GSA’s website.
Any questions or concerns should be directed to the GSA Awards Committee Chair.

Purpose
The GSA presents Excellence Awards to recognize administration staff, supervisors, research assistants and teaching assistants who have gone above and beyond their job descriptions to help and support graduate students.

Excellence awards are divided in 6 categories mentioned below (A.1, A.2, B, C.1, C.2, D.1, and D.2). The GSA will award up to one Excellence award, and up to one Honorable Mention in each category every year. If no quality applications are received for a category, it will not be awarded that year.

Award Categories

A. Excellence in Administrative Support (EAA)

A.1. Support Staff:
This category refers to staff serving graduate students in administration positions including but not limited to staff in Faculty of Graduate Students (FGS), Graduate Students Association (GSA), departmental graduate offices, etc.

A.2. Senior Administrator:
This category refers to senior administrators who have contributed directly to improving the experience of graduate students at the University of Calgary, including but not limited to department’s head, graduate program directors, Deans, Provosts and Vice-Provosts, etc.
B. Excellence in Supervision (ESA):

This category refers to university faculty members who have supervised Master’s and Doctoral students.

C. Excellence in Teaching (ETA)

C.1. Graduate Students:

This category refers to graduate students serving in different teaching positions such as sessional instructor, teaching assistant, lab instructor, and grader, among others.

C.2. Senior Instructors:

This category refers to university staff serving in teaching positions including but not limited to university professors, full time/part time instructors, and technicians in teaching positions.

D. Research Assistants Excellence Awards (ERA)

D.1. Graduate Students:

In recognition of graduate students serving in different research assistant positions such as mentoring other graduate students, undergraduate, and interns. Contribution must be beyond the graduate student thesis.

D.2. Senior Assistants:

This category addresses research assistants working full or part time in the university who assist graduate students in their research including but not limited to post docs, research associates, lab technicians serving in research positions.

Eligibility

In order to be eligible to be nominated for this award, the nominee must:

• Be affiliated with the University of Calgary
• Have worked in an administrative (EAA), supervisory capacity (ESA), teaching position (ETA) and re-
search position (ERA) during the Fall 2017 and/or Winter 2018 semesters.

For more details on criteria for ranking the applications, see Section 6 of this document.

Documents Required

Application for all the above categories is based on nomination, and requires at least 3 nominators for each nominee. The primary nominator must be affiliated with the University of Calgary and is in charge of completing the application form, submitting the full package to the Awards committee including:

• PDF copy of the application
• Up to 4 Letters of Support – the combined length of the letters must not exceed four pages in length¹ (typed, 12 pt. font, 1” margins, on 8.5” x 11” paper single spaced). They must outline why the nominee meets the criteria for this award as well as provide any information thought to be important for the committee to consider in deliberation of this application.

Note: Supporting letters can be signed by several nominators.

¹ For example, if four letters are being submitted, please do not exceed one page per letter; if two letters are submitted one letter can be 1 page and the other 3 pages (or both letters 2 pages). Please organize with letter writers so the total number of pages submitted does not exceed 4.
Submission Requirements

- Completed applications MUST be submitted online
- Applications MUST be a single PDF file
- Applications MUST be written and signed in English

Selection Criteria

A. Excellence in Administrative Support (EAA)

The Awards Committee will assess applications which show that nominees have demonstrated excellence in support of graduate students (as evidenced in the reference letters) and have contributed to fostering a positive environment for learning and research.

B. & C & D: Excellence in Supervision (ESA), Excellence in Teaching (ETA) and Research Assistants Excellence Awards (ERA)

The Awards Committee will assess applications which show that nominees have demonstrated excellence in supervision and have contributed to the student learning experience. Examples of ways nominees may demonstrate excellence (depending on the category) include:

- Displaying mastery of and enthusiasm for their subject area.
- Stimulating students’ minds and inspiring creative thought.
- Demonstrating creativity in teaching and supervision (being accommodating of different learning styles)
- Demonstrating rapport with students (being approachable, likeable and engaging)
- Demonstrating reliability and availability.
- Exhibiting fairness in all aspects of teaching and supervision (testing, grading, interacting with students, etc.)
- Returning assignments promptly with constructive feedback.
- Offering academic guidance and professional support.
- Going above and beyond the call of duty to provide support to graduate students.
- A clear commitment to improving the graduate student experience

Additional Regulations

- The Recognition of Excellence Awards are administered by a committee chaired by the GSA Awards Chair under the supervision of the VP Academic.
- Successful applications will be kept for 2 years after the date of notification of the award. Unsuccessful applications will be kept for 8 weeks after the same date. Both will be destroyed after these respective time periods.
- Questions about the application process must be directed to GSA Awards Chair at awards.gsa@ucalgary.ca.