



University of Calgary Graduate Students' Association
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GSA Excellence Awards Terms of Reference 2020-2021 Academic Year

Intake Period: January 18 – February 1, 2021
Intake Deadline: Monday, February 1, 2021 4:00 PM MT

Submit applications [online](#)

Applications and/ or letters of reference received outside of the intake period will **NOT** be evaluated. Late applications will **NOT** be evaluated. Incomplete applications will **NOT** be evaluated this includes missing information, extra information/documents, and/or incorrectly filled out applications. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure completeness of the application package.

This document and the application form are available on the GSA's [website](#).
Questions regarding this application should be directed to the GSA Awards Committee Chair or Vice Chairs at awards.gsa@ucalgary.ca.

This information is collected following the standards set by the Personal Information and Privacy Act (PIPA). It is required to determine your eligibility for the award and may be used for research and statistical analysis. If you have any questions about the collection or use of this information, please contact the Awards Committee Chair at awards.gsa@ucalgary.ca.

Purpose

The Graduate Students' Association Excellence Awards recognize administration staff, supervisors, research assistants, and teaching assistants who have gone above and beyond their job descriptions to help and support graduate students at the University of Calgary. **Self-nomination is not permitted for these awards.**

Award Categories

Excellence Awards are divided into seven (7) categories: A.1, A.2, B, C.1, C.2, D.1, and D.2.

A. Excellence in Administrative Support (EAA)

A.1 Support Staff:

Staff serving graduate students in administrative support positions such as staff in the Faculty of Graduate Students (FGS), the GSA, and departmental graduate offices.

A.2 Senior Administrator:

Senior administrators who have contributed directly to improving the experience of graduate students such as department heads, graduate program directors, Deans, Provosts, and Vice-Provosts.

B. Excellence in Supervision (ESA):

This category refers to University of Calgary faculty members who have supervised Master's and Doctoral students.

C. Excellence in Teaching (ETA)

C.1 Graduate Students:

Graduate students serving in different teaching positions such as sessional instructor, teaching assistant, lab instructor, and grader.

C.2 Senior Instructors:

University staff serving in teaching positions such as university professors, full time/part time instructors, and technicians in teaching positions.

D. Excellence in Research (ERA)

D.1 Graduate Students:

Graduate students serving in different research positions such as mentoring other graduate students, undergraduate students, interns, or excellence as a research assistant. Contribution must be beyond the graduate student thesis.

D.2 Senior Research Affiliates:

Research affiliates working full- or part-time at the University of Calgary who assist graduate students in their research such as Postdoctoral Fellows, research associates, lab technicians, and core facilities staff serving in research positions.

Value

These awards serve as recognition for outstanding contributions made to the University of Calgary graduate student experience and are not monetized.

Eligibility

To be eligible for this award, applicants **MUST**:

- Be in **Good Standing** with the GSA;
- Be affiliated with the University of Calgary; and
- Have worked in an administrative capacity (for EAA), supervisory capacity (for ESA), teaching position (for ETA), or research position (for ERA) at some point during the Spring/Summer 2020, Fall 2020, and/or Winter 2021 semesters.

Documents Required

Nominators **MUST submit one (1) PDF file** that includes:

1. The complete application form; and
2. **Two letters of support** and the combined length of the letters must not exceed two pages.

- Letters 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 during adjudication; and
- Supporting letters can be signed by several nominators.

Submission Requirements

Application(s) for all the above categories are based on nomination. The primary nominator must be affiliated with the University of Calgary and is responsible for completing and submitting the application form.

1. Completed applications **MUST** be submitted [online](#) during the Intake Period;
2. Applications **MUST** be a single PDF file;
3. Applications **MUST** be written and signed in English;
4. Applications **MUST** be submitted with a University of Calgary email address; and;
5. **Incomplete applications (missing information, extra information/documents, and/or incorrectly filled out) or applications received after the intake deadline will NOT be considered.**

Selection Criteria

For Excellence Awards in Administrative Support (EAA – both categories A.1 and A.2), Excellence Award in Supervision (ESA), Excellence Award in Teaching (ETA – C.2 Senior Instructors), and Excellence Award in Research (ERA – D.2 Senior Research Affiliates).

The Awards Committee will evaluate applications based on how well the 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. Examples of ways in which nominees demonstrate excellence may include, but not limited to:

- Displaying mastery of, and enthusiasm for, their subject area;
- Inspiring and supporting students to think creatively and execute ideas effectively;
- Demonstrating creativity in teaching and supervision and a willingness to tailor their approach to meet the needs of their students;
- 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.);
- Providing timely and constructive feedback to students, peers, and colleagues;
- Offering academic guidance and professional support;
- Going above and beyond the call of duty to provide support to graduate students; and
- A clear commitment to improving the graduate student experience.

For Excellence in Teaching (ETA – C.2 Graduate Student) and Excellence Awards in Research (ERA – D.1 Graduate Student)

The Awards Committee will evaluate applications based on how well the nominees

have demonstrated excellence as a graduate student (as evidenced in the reference letters) and have contribute\ld to fostering a positive environment for learning and research. Examples of ways in which nominees demonstrate excellence may include, but not limited to:

- Displaying mastery of, and enthusiasm for, their subject area;
- Inspiring and supporting students and colleagues to think creatively and execute ideas effectively;
- Demonstrating creativity in teaching and supervision and a willingness to tailor their approach to meet the needs of their students;
- Demonstrating rapport with students, colleagues, and superiors (being approachable, likeable and engaging);
- Demonstrating reliability and availability;
- Exhibiting fairness in all aspects of teaching and supervision (testing, grading, interacting with students, etc.);
- Providing timely and constructive feedback to students and colleagues; and
- Offering academic guidance and professional support.

Additional Regulations

1. The Excellence Awards are evaluated by the Awards Committee under the supervision of the GSA VP Academic;
2. Submit only when your nomination/application is complete and submit your application only ONCE. Any subsequent applications received will not be accepted for review. No exceptions;
3. All applications will be prescreened for completeness before being forwarded for review. Not all applicants will move onto to the reviewing process;
4. The shortlisted applicants will be invited to the Awards Gala where the winner will be announced. A notification of shortlist status will be sent to all applicants two (2) weeks prior to the Awards Gala (to be determined);
5. Questions about the application process must be directed to the GSA Awards Committee Chair or Vice Chairs at awards.gsa@ucalgary.ca; and
 - a. The GSA Awards Committee aims to respond to all emails in a timely manner but cannot guarantee a response within the 72-hour window prior to the Intake Deadline.
6. Individual award winners and honorable mentions are not eligible for consideration in the category they were recognized in for a period of two (2) years.
7. Decisions will be made 10 – 12 weeks from the intake deadline and application feedback will not be provided.