University Undergraduate Teaching Award
Candidate Packet Guidelines

Please share this document with the candidate so they know what the review committee expects.

This process has been designed to ensure that compiling the candidate packet is straightforward and creation of new material is minimal. Candidates will be considered for all awards for which they are eligible. **Do not label packets with a specific award name.**

**Packet Structure**

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| *Sample Syllabus      | N/A          |
| *Sample Assignment    | N/A          |

* Please include copies of the originals provided to students in a course; no modifications or annotations are necessary.

1. **Teaching Philosophy Statement** *(1 page maximum; 1” margins, min. 11 pt. font)*
   
   A teaching philosophy is more than a statement of the candidate’s beliefs about teaching and learning, they are intensely individualized and personal descriptions of why a faculty member does what they do in their courses. The most effective teaching statements use examples to explain how faculty enables student learning. The least effective statements never mention students and discuss only the faculty member. The teaching philosophies of previous Atherton, Eisenhower, and Alumni Fellow award recipients are available on the Penn State Teaching Awards webpages.

2. **Biographical Sketch** *(2 pages maximum; may be excerpted from current CV)*
   
   Please include the following subheadings:

   a. **Appointment**
      
      Please include all Penn State ranks, titles, and appointment types, with beginning and ending years for each.

   b. **Evidence of Growth and Development as an Instructor**
      
      These items should demonstrate the broader impact of the individual's professional and scholarly activities related to teaching and learning. This is not a traditional CV. It may include, but is not limited to:

      i. **Teaching and learning scholarship** (e.g., articles, presentations, grants, websites, CDs, blog posts, podcasts)
      
      ii. **Teaching and learning innovation** (e.g. new/revised curricula, new teaching materials, new pedagogical methods, activities that engage students from marginalized or underrepresented groups, outreach activities related to teaching and learning)
iii. **Disseminating effective teaching to other faculty** (Penn State or external)

iv. **Advocacy for teaching and learning** (e.g. through disciplinary or learning communities, committee membership, program assessment activities)

v. **Instructional professional development activities** (e.g. participation in workshops, short courses, teaching conferences)

vi. **Serving as a teaching mentor** for:
   - other faculty
   - undergraduate students (e.g. Learning Assistants)

3. **Letters of Support** (6 pages total) Each letter must include the author’s name and email address. Please provide all letter writers with the following guidelines.

   Every letter of support should:
   - reference examples of teaching excellence exhibited by the faculty member
   - specify why the writer believes the faculty member is an excellent teacher
   - be less than one page in length.
   - Include the email address of the writer

A maximum of six letters of support may be included in the packet. Fewer than six letters is acceptable, but is not advisable as this may be misinterpreted as lack of interest; packet preparers should endeavor to obtain all letters.

a) **Recent Undergraduate Students** (3 students maximum; 1 page each)

   Letters from 3 students who have taken an undergraduate course with the faculty member during the previous two years, excluding the semester in which the packet is being prepared. If a student has graduated during the past two years, they may still write a letter as a recent undergraduate student.

   Letters from the following are not appropriate:
   - students who have only served as an undergraduate Learning Assistant or TA
   - undergraduate research advisee
   - graduate TAs or research advisees

b) **Past Undergraduate Student** (1 page)

   Each candidate is limited to only one letter from a former undergraduate student who took an undergraduate course at Penn State from the instructor more than two years ago.

   If unable to obtain a letter from a past undergraduate, you may include 4 letters from current undergraduate students and 0 former undergraduate students.

c) **Peer Teaching Reviewer** (1 page)

   The writer may be a colleague or an administrator who has previously conducted a peer review of the candidate in an undergraduate course (online or face-to-face). This letter should be an original letter from the observer focused on information relevant to the teaching awards. This letter should not be a repurposed letter from a promotion dossier.

d) **Administrator** (1 page)
This letter should describe why the unit supports this candidate, but need not summarize the candidate’s packet. The letter author may be program director, head, associate dean, director of academic affairs, dean, or chancellor.

4. **SRTE Summary Table** (1 page maximum)
   Please use the table template and include only undergraduate courses. List the most recent courses first. Use the template provided. Do not include written comments collected with SRTEs.

5. **Example Syllabus**
   Include a copy of one original course syllabus used by the instructor in an undergraduate course; no modification is necessary. Syllabi will be examined for alignment with the teaching philosophy and award review criteria. High resolution screenshots from the LMS are appropriate for courses without a syllabus document.

6. **Example Assignment**
   Include a copy of one original course assignment used by the instructor in an undergraduate course; no modification is necessary. The type of assignment is up to the instructor, both in-class and outside of class assignments are acceptable, but should provide an example of one aspect of the faculty member’s teaching philosophy.