

Excellence in Teaching (EIT) Committee

Annual Report 2020-2021

Nghi Thai from Psychological Science (Full-time recipient of the 2018-2019 award) and Maria Mongillo from Educational Leadership, Policy and Institutional Technology served as Co-Chairs of the EIT Committee. With the help of the following committee members, they reviewed and selected candidates and award winners: Robert Kagan, Communication, (Part-time recipient of the 2018-2019 award); Youngseon Kim, Marketing; Caleb Bragg, Psychological Science; Frederic Latour, Mathematical Sciences (Full-time recipient of the 2019-2020 award); and Namhun Lee, Manufacturing and Construction Management.

The EIT Committee began the process by meeting and planning the year's events that included virtual meetings throughout both fall and spring semesters. In the fall of 2020, a call for nominations was sent to the entire CCSU community. With the assistance of Janice Palmer (Marketing & Communications) and Derek Pierce (Information Technology) students were provided a link to a SelectSurvey nomination form via email and they also learned about the call for nominations via the student news feed on Central Pipeline. We received a large number of nominations – 118 full-time and part-time faculty. SelectSurvey allowed the committee to conveniently download student nomination responses into an Excel workbook. However, once in the workbook, every name still needed to be verified and organized to ensure that every nominee was recognized and could be notified.

Every nominee was then notified and asked to create a single pdf document that included the following materials: 1. A completed 2020-2021 EIT Cover Sheet (which was included in the email congratulating them on their nomination); 2. A full curriculum vitae; 3. A statement of teaching philosophy; and 4. Copies of student evaluations from the two most recent semesters. If nominees were only interested in Honor Roll status, they were exempt from requirement 4. In previous years, the committee asked for recommendation letters from students rather than copies of student evaluations. However, the 2019-2020 EIT Committee changed the rules to providing copies of student evaluations and this year's committee also preferred the same approach. Overall, the committee felt that students shouldn't be asked for a letter by a professor for three main reasons. First, students may feel compelled to provide a recommendation given that a professor may have some control over a student's grade (assuming they are teaching the student currently) or future opportunities (e.g., providing letters for recommendation or internship opportunities). Second, those who served on the committee in previous years felt that the student letters were not very helpful in the decision process. This was mainly because all of the letters the committee received were quite positive and did not do very much to differentiate candidates. Finally, the letter process could harm a candidate through no fault of their own. Some students never turned in the letters. So if the letters were used as a decision criterion, a professor could be excluded simply because students chose not to write letters they said they would. Since the letters did not really help to differentiate candidates, were beyond the candidate's control, and could put a student in an awkward position, the 2019-2020 EIT Committee chose to change the process and the 2020-2021 EIT Committee kept those changes.

Portfolios submitted by nominees included 48 full-time and 11 part-time faculty. By asking nominees to place their documents in a single pdf file, the process for transferring their documents to Blackboard was efficient. The EIT Committee then reviewed these 59 portfolios to select 16 semi-finalists. Twelve full-time faculty and four part-time faculty were invited for interviews via Zoom, a process that took an entire day in the beginning of the spring semester. We narrowed down the pool to three full-time finalists and two part-time finalists. Remaining faculty, who had submitted all the materials required of a nominee, were advanced to the Honor Roll.

The final part of the selection process was the visitation of the finalists' classes. Each committee member scheduled virtual classroom visits for each of the five finalists. We made a decision to observe only HyFlex and online synchronous classes to be consistent and safe during the pandemic rather than review materials on Blackboard for an online asynchronous class. We selected Elizabeth Salgado (Mathematical Science) as the 2020-21 winner of the Part-time Award, and Timothy Garceau (Geography) as the 2020-21 winner of the Full-time Award. Due to the pandemic, we celebrated the award winners, semi-finalists, and honor roll recipients via an online ceremony on Friday, April 30th, 2021 from 1:00-2:00 pm with 84 participants in attendance.

The Co-Chairs would like to note that all members of the committee worked diligently to make the process fair and comfortable for all nominees. The process of working on selecting recipients for this award was a gratifying experience for the committee members. While we experienced a slightly smaller number of portfolios submitted this year, perhaps because of the pandemic, we understand the request from the previous co-chairs for additional administrative support due to the amount of time and effort spent on the gathering, filing, and responding tasks required for this committee.

Submitted by,

Nghi Thai (Psychological Science, co-chair) and Maria Mongillo (Ed Lead Policy Inst Tech, co-chair)

Caleb Bragg (Psychological Science), Robert Kagan (Communication), Youngseon Kim (Marketing), Frederic Latour (Mathematical Science), Namhun Lee (Manufacturing & Construction Management)

Overview of Numbers:

2020-2021

118 Faculty nominated

59 Portfolios were submitted

48 Full-time faculty

11 Part-time faculty

2019-2020

140 Faculty nominated
76 Portfolios were submitted
66 Full-time faculty
10 Part-time faculty

2018-2019

170 Faculty nominated
73 Portfolios were submitted
65 Full-time faculty
8 Part-time faculty

2017-2018

Over 170 Faculty nominated
83 Portfolios were submitted
76 Full-time faculty
7 Part-time faculty

2016-2017

252 Faculty nominated
109 Portfolios were submitted
98 Full-time faculty
11 Part-time faculty

2015-2016

206 Faculty nominated
78 Portfolios were submitted
69 Full-time faculty
9 Part-time faculty

2014-2015

76 Faculty nominated
43 Portfolios were submitted
42 Full-time faculty
1 Part-time faculty