PTA Nomination Guidelines

Preparing a Nomination

As nominees must demonstrate excellence in educational leadership, teaching excellence, and educational innovation, it is recommended that equal space be dedicated to each of these categories.

Below is an overview of key components of the nomination package:

- The dossier must not exceed **35 pages** (coversheet and checklist, table of contents, nomination brief, biographical notice, CV, and course evaluation data are not included in the page count);
- Use 12-point font with one-inch margins, text can be single-spaced;
- Each page must be numbered;
- The file must be compiled in one PDF;
- All dossier sections listed below are mandatory (unless otherwise stipulated).

Section Number	Section Name	Suggested Length	Included in File Page Count?
1	PTA Coversheet and Checklist	2-3 pages	No
2	Table of Contents	1 page	No
3	Introductory Material		
3.1	Nomination Brief	1 page maximum	No
3.2	Short Biography of Candidate	1-2 pages	No
4	Decanal Letter of Endorsement	1 page	Yes
5	Nomination Letter	4-7 pages	Yes
6	Educational Leadership		
6.1	Nominee's Statement on Educational Leadership	2 pages maximum	Yes
6.2	Evidence of Educational Leadership	2-5 pages	Yes
7	Teaching Excellence		
7.1	Teaching Responsibilities	1-2 pages	Yes
7.2	Nominee's Statement of Teaching Philosophy	2 pages maximum	Yes
7.3.1	Evidence of Teaching Excellence (narrative)	2-5 pages	Yes
7.3.2	Evidence of Teaching Excellence (summary of course evaluation data)	Required, no page limit	No
8	Educational Innovation		
8.1	Evidence of Innovation and Impact of Innovation	2-4 pages	Yes
9	Letters of Support		
9.1	Letters of Support from Colleagues (2-3 letters)	1-2 pages per letter	Yes
9.2	Letters of Support from Students (2-3 letters)	1-2 pages per letter	Yes
10	Curriculum Vitae	Required, no page limit	No

The Nomination Dossier

Section 1: PTA Coversheet and Checklist

Section 2: Table of Contents

Section 3: Introductory Material

3.1 Nomination Brief

The brief should outline the following on **one** page:
- Name of nominee
- University faculty/division and unit (department/program/school)
- Nominee's full University mailing address (with phone number)
- Nominee's education (degrees and experience)
- Recent academic employment history (administrative and/or teaching appointments)
- Name and contact information of academic unit (department/program/school) to be notified of nomination results (other than the nominee)
- Name(s) and contact information of person(s) who prepared the nomination file (if different from above)

3.2 Short Biography of Candidate

500-700 words (suitable for public release); the biography should address the nominee's teaching achievement while also providing a sense of their teaching philosophy and approach to educational leadership.

Section 4: Decanal Letter of Endorsement

This letter, addressed to the Vice-President & Provost, should be written by the appropriate Dean indicating support for the nomination. If possible, the Dean should provide a succinct rationale for why this nomination is supported, briefly identify any impact the nominee has had at the divisional level and speak to any broader impact within and beyond the University.

Section 5: Nomination Letter

Effective nomination letters provide an overview of the whole dossier and can be seen as being like an Executive Summary. As it is the first impression of the nominee, this is one of the most important components of a successful dossier and offers reviewers a roadmap of what to look for and where it can be found. Key to a successful nomination letter is a level of familiarity with both the nominee and the dossier. The most compelling letter will evoke a holistic, robust, and three-dimensional sense of the nominee as a teacher and leader.

- The nomination letter can be written by a Principal, Dean, Academic Director, or Chair.
- The letter should include a concise explanation of why the nominee should be considered for the award.
- Letters may include a list of bullet points, at the outset of the letter, highlighting the candidate's key contributions. The body of the letter can be used to elaborate more extensively on these items.
- The nomination letter should demonstrate a commitment to teaching excellence, educational innovation, and educational leadership.

- Nominators are also invited to speak to:
  - the candidate's ongoing commitment and contribution to principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility
  - the candidate's course evaluation data, nominators may reference any sustained trends or patterns of excellence in the quantitative data over time, but also excerpt a few select comments from the nominee's qualitative data.

- The letter must include at least **4 (four) supporting signatures** from at least **2 (two) academic units/divisions** within the University (one can be the nominee's home academic unit/division).

Section 6: Educational Leadership

6.1 Nominee's Statement on Educational Leadership (2-pages maximum)

Nominees **write their own** Statement of Educational Leadership, providing a personal account of what leadership in education means to them.

Like a teaching philosophy, an effective statement on educational leadership is personal and genuine. Key to a statement on educational leadership are personalized beliefs about educational leadership, a nominee's reasons for engaging in leadership and the form their leadership has taken. Guidance on how to craft an effective personal statement on educational leadership is available through the University of Calgary's Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning.

6.2 Evidence of Educational Leadership

Leadership occurs at different levels and takes many forms. Nominees are encouraged to document the impact of their educational leadership at the academic unit, faculty, institutional, national, or disciplinary level. To demonstrate educational leadership, nominators should highlight specific projects, recognition, and assessments of impact. It is important to document the impact of leadership over time.

Educational leadership goes beyond assigned duties, transcending the confines of the institution, the discipline, or program. It makes a difference through deep and significant change. Key to this section is explaining why a contribution or activity is important, why and how it makes a difference, and what specifically the nominee did to make that difference.

What constitutes educational leadership will vary depending on the teaching context but regardless of what evidence is provided, it is important to indicate the impact the work has had on others. Nominees are also encouraged to include evidence of leadership in initiatives related to equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility across these categories.

Evidence can include:

- Active engagement in the professional development of others (e.g., colleagues, graduate students, trainees, etc.), for example:
  - delivery of workshops, seminars or presentations on teaching and learning
  - acting as a teaching mentor, providing meaningful pedagogical guidance to graduate students/teaching assistants/instructional team members
  - sharing of teaching resources; evidence that teaching resources or professional development materials have been adopted by colleagues at the University of Toronto or at other institutions is particularly powerful

- Engagement with teaching/learning committees, centres, associations, or organizations, for example:
  - development/delivery of teaching-focused programming (e.g., sessions, conferences)
  - design of educational resources
  - consultation to these groups provided by the nominee
  - editing a pedagogical journal/newsletter
  - serving on executive/steering/advisory committees leading change initiatives
  - contributions pertaining to educational planning or policy development (beyond one's own unit)

- Engagement with the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), for example:
  - research on teaching and/or learning, this may include formal or informal studies conducted by the nominee that demonstrate a scholarly investigation of a specific teaching issue within a higher education context
  - dissemination of the nominee's pedagogical research (e.g., scholarly articles, conference or workshop presentations, educational resources); a descriptive overview would suffice, or an abstract or two from representative publications/presentations
  - details on any educational grants to support SoTL activities could also be included here

- Professional development in relation to teaching and evidence of how the professional learning impacted the teaching practice of the nominee or others, for example:
  - impact/outcomes of workshops, sessions, courses, training, mentoring, consultations, or other professional activities to improve teaching skills and develop pedagogical expertise
  - links between professional learning related to teaching and key changes and impacts the nominee has played a role in instigating
  - commitment to continued learning and engagement to further understand and advance Indigenous ways of knowing
  - commitment to continual learning and engagement to further the integration of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility-related considerations in post-secondary education and practices

- Community engagement in relation to teaching:
  - adopt a leadership role in outreach and relationship-building with local communities
  - collaborate with local communities to create inclusive teaching and learning models
  - building reciprocal and meaningful relationships with Indigenous peoples, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and communities to inform teaching practices

Section 7: Teaching Excellence

7.1 Teaching Responsibilities

Please include a list (ideally a table) of all the nominee's teaching responsibilities (courses, supervisory roles) for the past 5 years. Where possible, please indicate the course code and name, enrolment numbers, and course level (undergraduate/graduate).

7.2 Nominee's Statement of Teaching Philosophy (2-pages maximum)

The Teaching Philosophy Statement, **written by the nominee**, is a personal document narrating what is most important to the nominee about teaching and learning in their field. This piece of writing should be personal and authentic and should reference a commitment to the principles of equity, diversity,

inclusion, and accessibility. The best teaching philosophies provide a conceptual framework that explains the values, principles, and goals that underpin the nominee's teaching decisions and actions. It is recommended that nominees highlight a few specific examples of the pedagogical approaches they employ in their teaching to point to how these values and goals are enacted. Furthermore, the statement should consider the rationale for adopting these approaches and should reflect on the effectiveness of these strategies through assessment. Nominees and nominators may wish to review CTSI's resource on preparing a teaching philosophy.

7.3 Evidence of Teaching Excellence

Evidence for teaching excellence takes many shapes and should come from several sources such as, course evaluations, peer reviews of teaching, course development efforts, or course materials.

7.3.1 Evidence of Teaching Excellence (narrative)

It is key to address how course design and teaching approaches have impacted student learning within the discipline or professional field (or beyond). It is up to the nominee to decide what evidence to put forward in this section, although **student feedback data is required**. Please find suggestions below:

- Teaching practice (instructional methods, course and program design, curriculum development, etc.):
  - highlights of key contributions to the design and delivery of undergraduate/graduate courses, professional practica or clinical teaching, within a broader education context (i.e., signaling impact beyond one's own set of courses)
  - significant and ongoing contributions to curriculum/program development
  - development of educational materials (e.g., textbooks, teaching guides, learning objects, online modules)
  - syllabus for a representative course that showcases course development innovations (can be excerpted to save space)
  - sample assignments and assessment methods (can be excerpted)
  - descriptions of internship programs, mentoring opportunities, or field experiences
  - evidence of the meaningful integration of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility within their teaching
  - examples of the development of community partnerships that inform the design and/or delivery of undergraduate/graduate courses
  - incorporation of significant Indigenous curricular content (e.g., Indigenous oral traditions, creative expressions, ways of knowing)
  - significant and meaningful collaboration with Indigenous peoples, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and communities.
  - evidence pertaining to the nominee's integration of their own research into teaching practice and/or curriculum
  - examples of successful efforts to involve undergraduate/graduate students in the research process (e.g., co-publishing, presenting at conferences, mentoring/coaching students, etc.)
  - evidence of improved targeting and integration of professional competencies across curricula

- Teaching awards:

- list of internal and external teaching awards received along with those for which the nominee has been nominated
  - for internal awards, please indicate how many awards are given each year
  - for external awards please include a brief description of the selection criteria/purpose and significance of the award

7.3.2   Evidence of Teaching Excellence: summary of course evaluation data:

Please include a **summary of the most recent 5 years** of evaluation data; **do not** include raw data (i.e., instructor reports or departmental summary sheets).

- Quantitative Data (scores): **(required)**
  - for instructors in units using the institutional online course evaluation system, include a Course Evaluation Summary Sheet Template (instructions for the template are available here) that lists:
    - courses taught (course code, course section, semester, number of respondents per course, number of students invited to complete the evaluation per course)
    - scores for the core institutional items along with the corresponding qualitative response scales (i.e., questions 1 – 6) and the underlying response scales (i.e., mostly, a great deal, etc.)
    - Institutional Composite Mean (the average scores of questions 1-5)
  - for instructors in units not using the online system, similarly, include a table that lists the courses taught (course code, course section, semester), the enrolment data (number of students per course), the items and their relevant scales, the scored ratings, and the mean rating for the global question for each course if applicable
  - comparative departmental/divisional data should be included where available

- Qualitative Data (comments): **(optional)**
  - if desired, include the student comments from one or two (max.) representative courses taught in the past 5 years
  - comments to be reproduced in full for each course and not be edited or paraphrased
  - to not disadvantage instructors teaching in very large classes, the **pages with student comments are excluded from the total page count**

Section 8: Educational Innovation

8.1   Evidence of innovation and impact of innovation

Educational innovation can occur inside the classroom, across the institution, or in the larger community. Key to innovation is highlighting how the nominee's innovation goes beyond their own classroom. Describe how the nominee's practices represent innovation in the field. Equally important in this section is the willingness of a nominee to experiment. While impactful innovation is ultimately the goal, innovation requires continual experimentation and exploration, and this section should provide the context for these efforts and highlight the nominee's capacity and initiative to try new things.

This section should include unique examples of educational innovation that have not been used in other sections of the dossier. Examples include:

- adoption of innovation by others

- production or refinement of technological tools or multi-media resources that enrich teaching and learning
- grants and awards won for innovation and/or experimentation
- new techniques and strategies for impacting equity, diversity, inclusion and access within the classroom or beyond
- development of initiatives or innovations that have had a significant impact on higher education (at the institutional level or beyond)
- data showing impact (performance measures, institutional change, baseline data for comparison purposes, learning impact, learner feedback, outcome evaluations)
- innovative work around effective implementation of instructional design principles for effective teaching and learning experiences and evidence of success
- fostering of ongoing relationships with local communities
- creative work around designing educational development activities for faculty and others and evidence of impact
- development of new educational resources that have been used by others
- external recognition for teaching innovations beyond U of T (e.g., other institutions, disciplinary organizations or societies, industry or professional groups, community partners, etc.)
- the advancement of Indigenous ways of knowing to support the transformation of an academic course or program or teaching practices
- course delivery tools resulting from innovations
- resultant scholarship

Section 9: Letters of Support

Nominators should carefully select individuals to write letters of support (a mix of internal and external contacts, people who have known the nominee for many years as well as recent contacts who are familiar with one highly impactful project, etc.). The best letters are specific and authentic. Letters should clearly demonstrate the nominee's effectiveness as a teacher, colleague, mentor, collaborator and/or educational leader. These should not be letters produced for tenure or promotion files or any other purpose and should speak directly to the criteria of the award. Letters written by a group of colleagues or students are acceptable.

9.1 Letters of Support from Colleagues

No more than **2 or 3 letters from colleagues** should be included. If a colleague is both signing the nomination letter and providing a separate letter of support, the colleague should ideally offer evidence and/or describe specific contributions that have not already been addressed in the nomination letter.

In the case of letters from colleagues, please include a brief note on **why each of these individuals was selected** to speak to the nominee's teaching effectiveness. Where appropriate, nominees might also consider including a letter of support from an Indigenous Elder, knowledge keeper or community member who is acknowledged by their community. The letter might speak to the collaborative and reciprocal relationship the nominee has built with their community and the significance of the teaching practices adopted.

9.2 Letters of Support from Students

No more than **2 or 3 letters from students** should be included. For student letters, it is recommended to not ask for letters from current students. Power dynamics indicate the student is in a vulnerable

position, even if they express a strong, unprompted desire to play an active role in supporting the nomination.

Section 10: Curriculum Vitae