



GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

February 26th, 2024

The Graduate Council met on Monday, February 26, 2024, at 2:00P.M. in Room #584, Close-Hipp Building.

Graduate Council members present: Mr. Hassan Anderson, Drs. Sourav Banerjee, Kenneth Campbell, Besim Dragovic, Fang Jing, Edie Goldsmith, Dianna Inman, William Matchin, Terrance McAdoo, Wendy Regoeczi, David Reisman, Sheri Silfies, Sriram Venkataraman, Nick Watanabe, Neal Woods, Christina Yao, and Gaurav Harshe (GSA).

Graduate Council members absent: Drs. Marketa Kubickova and Amy Lehman (excused).

Graduate School Representatives: Dr. Ann Vail, Dr. Murray Mitchell (Secretary), Dr. Andrea Fleming (excused), Dr. Jean Ellis, Dr. Angelina Sylvain, Dale Moore, Wright Culpepper, and Wanda Barr

Provost Office Representatives: Trena Houp

Guests: Dr. Mark Yancey (Joseph F. Rice School of Law) and Lisa Jerald (Student Advocacy Center).

NOTE: These minutes will become final on March 25, 2024, if not challenged.

1. Call to Order and Approval of Agenda (Hassan Anderson, Chair)

The meeting was called to order at 2:01p.m., and the Agenda was approved.

2. Approval of the Minutes from January 22, 2024. Approved actions by Graduate Council become effective 30 days after posting. A copy is available on the Graduate School website at: <https://bit.ly/3SvPO0E>.

The minutes from January were unanimously approved.

3. Report of the Chair (Hassan Anderson)

Mr. Anderson welcomed all to the meeting and welcomed Dr. Murray Mitchell back to the Graduate Council after being out for a short time.

Mr. Anderson, as Chair, desires to lay out a vision for the Graduate Council and he promises to notify members of what he would like to see happen with the Graduate Council soon. If any members have an initiative, idea, or goal that they would like to see happen are welcome to email him, Dean Vail, or Dr. Mitchell with those ideas. He encouraged Graduate Council members to be prepared to celebrate graduate students or groups of students in their departments who are doing great things and deserve to be heralded at future meetings. Dr. Edie Goldsmith, School of Medicine, offered the following about one of their senior PhD students. Thomas Cardaci is in the Pathology, Microbiology, and Immunology

department at the School of Medicine. His NIH F99/K00 application is entitled "Microbiome-Mitochondrial Interactions Driving Cancer-Induced Cachexia in the Obese State", and his mentor is Dr. Angela Murphy. The F99/K00 is a Predoctoral to Postdoctoral Fellow Transition award that supports doctoral students for up to two years while they complete their PhD and then for up to four years while a postdoc. Congratulations to Thomas!

Report of the Dean of the Graduate School (Ann Vail)

Dean Vail thanked everyone who attended the Graduate Education Summit in January. We had 220 people in attendance, which exceeded her attendance expectations. Our feedback survey indicated that participants valued the topics covered and wanted additional opportunities to explore issues and concerns.

The number of applications received continues to be unprecedented. To date, we have received 12,344 total applications with 6,430 being completed. Our challenge now is to process applications. As of today, 2,870 applications have received a decision with 1,205 receiving an invitation to attend USC. That means we have 3,560 applications awaiting a decision.

In terms of country of origin, 1,809 of the completed applications are from domestic applicants and 4,621 are from international applicants. Listed below are the top 5 countries of origin for international applicants in 2024 and 2023.

Fall, 2024 Top Countries of Origin

Nigeria
Ghana
Iran
Bangladesh
China

Fall, 2023 Top Countries of Origin

China
India
Nigeria
Bangladesh
Iran

As program due dates arrive, pressure for decisions will increase. The Graduate School appreciates all that you do to facilitate this process.

To increase program's ability to plan for their incoming students, The Graduate School has implemented an Acceptance Survey. On a monthly basis, we are sending accepted students a request to complete the acceptance survey if they have decided to attend the University of South Carolina. To date, 144 students have indicated their decision for this summer and 180 students have indicated their decision for Fall, 2024. Applicants are emailed once they open an application and are emailed a few times prior to a department's admission decision. The students are emailed the day after a student has been emailed an admission decision from the Graduate School and are kindly emailed a few times strategically reminding them to let the University know of their intention to attend USC or not. It would also help if the admitting departments would remind their admitted students to complete the survey to help us gather data.

With the increased number of international student applications, programs have expressed a need for assistance with interpreting GPAs from international institutions. Therefore, The Graduate School

added a GPA Grade Scale Conversion Calculator to the application. A guide for use of the calculator is available to programs to assist them in using the calculator. We know that this was added after many applications were received, but going forward, it is attached to over 2,000 applications.

The Admissions Improvement Project is proceeding to the next phase. The working group and The Graduate School Staff are finalizing recommendations for improvements to be implemented. Presentations will be made at the upcoming Graduate Director's meeting and the Associate/Assistant Graduate Deans Council.

Due to circumstances, we shifted the Reading Group scheduled for the spring to the fall semester. The Fall Reading Group will read and discuss *Inside Graduate Admissions: Merit, Diversity, and Faculty Gatekeeping* by Julie R. Posselt. For those who want to read it over the summer, we will offer faculty the opportunity to register in April and receive the book before the end of the academic year.

To reduce the likelihood of fraud, we are in the process of evaluating different companies who provide international transcript translations and evaluations. If we move in this direction, we anticipate that the number of international applications received will decline. We will consult with various constituencies across campus to determine how detrimental this will be for programs. An important decision will be determining when official transcripts are required. Currently, official transcripts are due prior to the end of the first semester. The admission decision is made with unofficial transcripts. If we engage an external transcript service, it would be beneficial to require the official transcript with the initial application to address the original motivation to reduce the likelihood of fraud.

The Dissertation Writing Academy is a collaboration among The Graduate School, Libraries, and the Writing Center. It will be held from May 6th to May 23rd. The purpose of the Dissertation Writing Academy is to provide guidance, instruction, motivation, and support to students completing their dissertation. The program is specifically designed to support graduate students in the final stages of writing their dissertation. Applications are now being accepted. More information can be found at the following link:

[Dissertation Writing Academy - Graduate School | University of South Carolina](#)

The website presents the objectives of the program, describes eligibility and who should apply, and describes how to apply. A link to the application is provided. A brief email of support from the student's major professor is required. Applications are being accepted from now until April 1, 2024. There are limited slots available; so, encourage students to apply soon. Applications will be considered in the order they are received.

In the meeting in January, we discussed the possibility of creating a Stats Center. Someone heard about our discussion, and she was contacted by another dean to meet about a proposal of a Stats Center. The other dean asked if Graduate Council would support it and she felt certain that they would but could not speak for the Graduate Council. The members agreed that they would support this effort. More information to come as it unfolds.

4. Report of the Secretary of the Graduate Council (Murray Mitchell)

Dr. Mitchell offered a belated welcome back to the Spring semester. He is thankful and grateful to all in the Graduate School for ensuring that graduate education remained on pace during his absence. He appreciates that everyone takes information back to their respective departments from Graduate Council. It is important that Council members bring key issues and topics from their colleagues that are critical to what the Graduate Council can do to facilitate graduate education for our students.

5. Report on Professional Development (Wright Culpepper)

Wright reminded the Graduate Council that they put on two big events for graduate students to present their research during the academic year. The Spring event is Discover USC in conjunction with the Office of Research and the deadline for graduate students to register to present is this Friday, March 1st. Graduate Students are also eligible to review undergraduate presentations. If they would like to get some reviewing and scoring experience under their belt, the deadline to apply to be a reviewer for that competition presentation is March 22nd. A reminder will be sent out about that soon. The Fall event that they do is the Three Minute Thesis (3MT) presentation competition. We are excited to have our winner from last Fall present to us today. He will be presenting and competing later in March in Greenville at the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools 3MT competition.

Three Minute Thesis Winner Presentation: Please see attachment.

Another Magic of Nanoparticles

MD Fakhruddin Patwary
Chemical Engineering

Fakhruddin did an excellent job. This is a perfect example of how a student can take a difficult topic and break it down in laymen's terms so that anyone who is unfamiliar with the topic can understand it. We wish Fakhruddin well later in March.

6. Report of the Graduate Student Association (Gaurav Harshe)

Gaurav reported the following GSA scheduled events:

- President Amiridis' visit to the GSA Full Board meeting on 2/16: discussed among other things the tuition waivers, stipend, housing, parking, Wi-Fi, enrollment, research standing.
- Special Election: Since the role of the GSA President was vacated, the current VP is now the President, and the current Treasurer is now the VP. Thus, the Treasurer position became vacant and called for a special election. After a run-off in a 3-candidate race, Ritwik Nag was elected.
- General Elections: The regular cycle election will begin on March 5th with the filing of candidacy and will close on March 27th with the results being declared. More details have been posted on the website.
- GSA Townhall (2/26): The GSA townhall will be held to listen to the concerns of graduate/professional students and field questions. This will help assist the Graduate Student Needs Assessment survey with data.
- Provost Arnett has agreed to attend the last Full Board meeting on 3/29 virtually and will be addressing graduate student needs.
- Mentorship Luncheon events: International community (3/11), Queer (3/18), Black (4/17); they are soliciting panelists and mentors to attend.

7. Report of the Academic Policy and Practices Committee (Terrance McAdoo)

No report.

8. Report of the 500/600 Level Courses (Jean Ellis)

This report is presented to Council for informational purposes only; no action is necessary.

500/600 Courses for February 2024 Grad Council

(CCP = Course Change Proposal; NCP=New Course Proposal). Total: 2

HTMT 620 (3) Hospitality Finance Methods and Asset Management (formerly HRTM 720)
(CCP: Fall 2025)
INDE 561 (1-6) Special Topics in Industrial Engineering (NCP: Summer 2024)

9. Associate Graduate Faculty Nominations (Ann Vail)

Name: **Tammiee S. Dickenson, PhD 2005**
Program: College of Education
Term: Spring 2024 – Fall 2029

This nomination was unanimously approved by Graduate Council.

10. Fellowships and Scholarships Committee (Edie Goldsmith)

Dr. Goldsmith announced to the Council that the Committee met and sent out eight offers. Two acceptances have been received thus far. No one has declined at this point. March 1st is the deadline for Round 2 nominations.

https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/graduate_school/opportunities_support/scholarly_initiatives/presidential-fellowship/index.php

11. Graduate Student Awards (Jean Ellis)

Dr. Ellis advised that they have finalized the Graduate Student Awards program, and the application is available on the Graduate School website. Please encourage your graduate students to apply for these awards. Please note that some of these award amounts have been increased. The awards will be presented to the students directly following the completion of Discover USC on April 19th. The application deadline is March 15th. If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact Dr. Jean Ellis. Please see attachment.

https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/graduate_school/paying_for_graduate_school/fellowships/awards/index.php

12. Report of Science, Math, and Related Professional Programs Committee (Jing Fang)

Below is a list of proposals reviewed by the Committee. Total: 4

- **NURS 710** (3) Role of the Nurse Educator, (CCP: Summer 2024)
- **NURS 724** (3) Education in Nursing, (CCP: Summer 2024)
- **NURS 727** (3) Teaching Practicum in Nursing, (CCP: Summer 2024)
- **Biostatistics, Certificate**, (New Program: Fall 2025)

These proposals were unanimously approved by Graduate Council.

13. Report of the Humanities, Social Sciences, Education, and Related Professional Programs Committee (Wendy Regoeczi)

Below is a list of proposals reviewed by the Committee. Total: 1

- **MSBA-MSEM Combination Degree**, (New Program: Fall 2024)

- Master of Science in Business Analytics (Moore School of Business) and Master in Sport and Entertainment Management (College of Hospitality, Retail, and Sport Management)

This proposal was unanimously approved by Graduate Council.

14. Report of the Grievances, Appeals and Petitions Committee (David Reisman)

- Dr. Reisman moved for the Graduate Council to go into Closed Session.
- Upon returning to open session, the motion from the Grievances, Appeals and Petitions Committee to support both student petitions was unanimously approved.

15. Other Committee Reports

None at this time.

16. Old Business

None at this time.

17. New Business

None at this time.

18. Good of the Order

Reminder Dates:

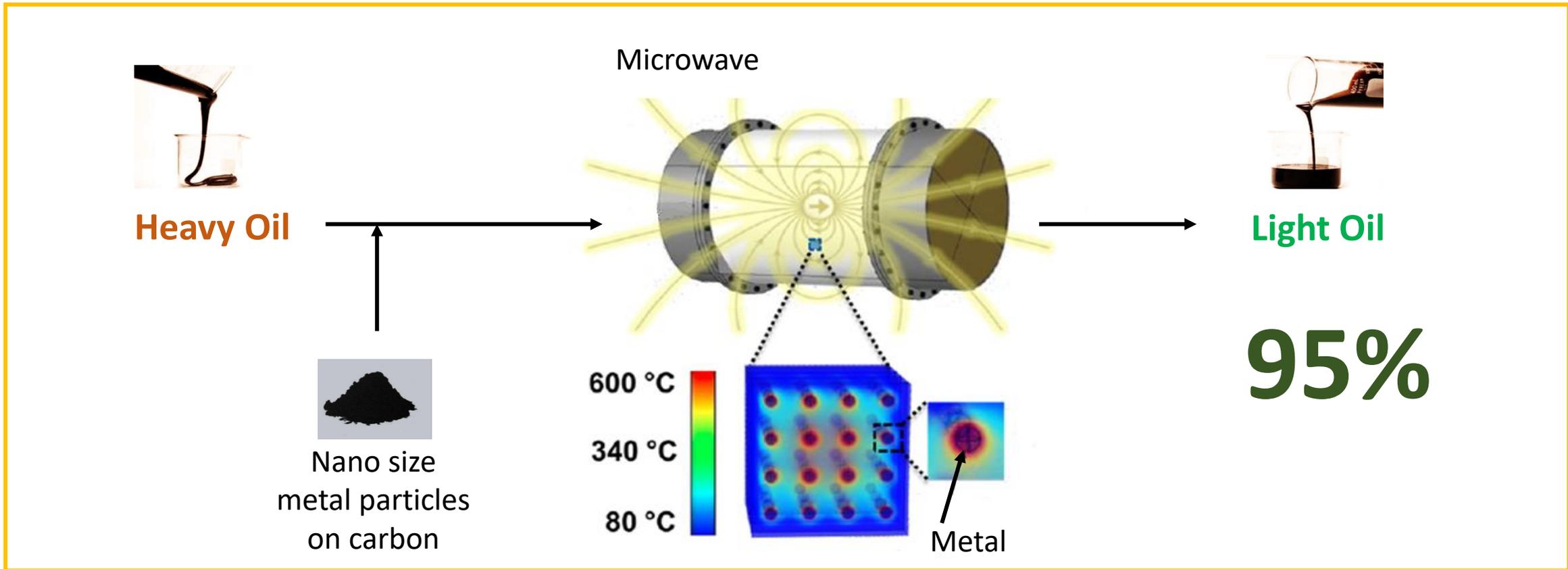
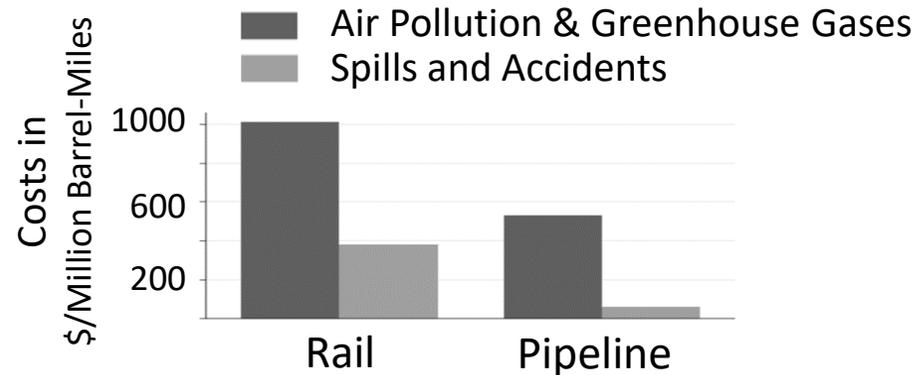
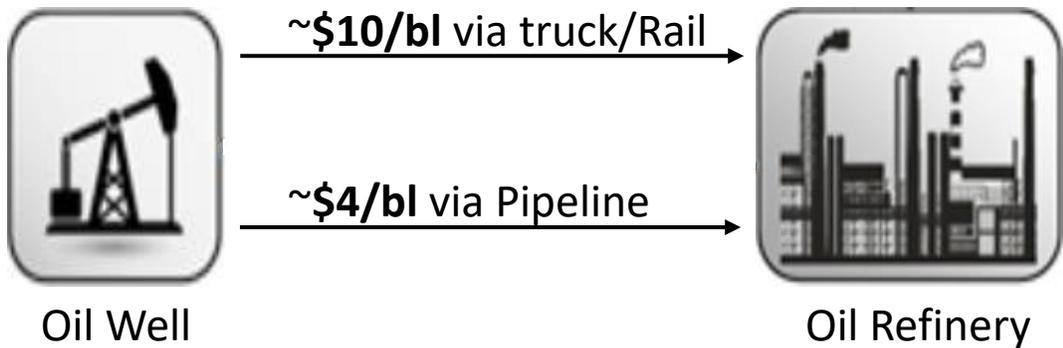
March 1 st :	Presidential Fellowship Round 2 Nomination Deadline
March 1 st :	Deadline for Students to Register for Discover USC
March 5 th – 27 th :	GSA Elections
March 11 th :	GSA Mentorship Luncheon for International Community
March 15 th :	Graduate School Awards Nominations and Internal Fellowships Nominations Deadline
March 18 th :	GSA Mentorship Luncheon for Queer Community
March 22 nd :	Discover USC Reviewer Application Deadline
April 1 st :	Dissertation Writing Academy Application Deadline
April 17 th :	GSA Mentorship Luncheon for Black Community
April 19 th :	Discover USC
April 19 th :	Graduate Student Awards
May 6 th – 23 rd :	Dissertation Writing Academy

19. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:24p.m.

Murray Mitchell, Secretary

CC: Michael Amiridis, President
 Donna Arnett, Provost
 Ann Vail, Dean of the Graduate School
 Deans
 Department Chairs
 Graduate Directors
 Aaron Marterer, University Registrar
 Elaine Belesky, Office of the Registrar
 Malia Kiehl, Office of the Registrar



The Graduate School – Graduate Student Awards AY 23-24

Additional award details and deadlines will be announced in February. All nominees (except the outstanding dissertation award) must be enrolled in the Spring 2024 semester.

Dean's Award for Doctoral Achievement Award (\$1000)

\$1000 is given to one graduate student in any doctoral program who demonstrates overall excellence in research, teaching, and service. The service contributions can extend beyond campus.

The committee will consider the following:

- Student's impact and accomplishments within research, teaching, and service
- The ability for the student to describe their significant accomplishments (one page)
- One-page support letter from the Graduate Director, advisor, or mentor
- CV or resume from the student (not to exceed two pages)

Dean's Award for Master's Achievement Award (\$1000)

\$1000 is given to one graduate student in any master's program who demonstrates overall excellence in research, teaching, and service. The service contributions can extend beyond campus.

The committee will consider the following:

- Student's impact and accomplishments within research, teaching, and service
- The ability for the student to describe their significant accomplishments (one page)
- One-page support letter from the Graduate Director, advisor, or mentor
- CV or resume from the student (not to exceed two pages)

Outstanding Dissertation Award (up to two awards, \$1000/each)

Winners of the USC competition will be nominated for the CGS/ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Award.

- Completed dissertations that make a significant contribution to their discipline.
- Been awarded a doctoral degree or completed doctoral degree requirements between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2023
- Nominations include a dissertation abstract, three letters of recommendation, and five-page nominee CV
- No more than one nomination can be submitted from a unit

Outstanding Community Engagement Award (\$1000)

\$1,000 is given to one graduate student who demonstrates substantial impact and engagement experiences related to community service, social advocacy, civic engagement, and/or volunteer opportunities conducted between the Summer of 2023 and the Spring 2024 academic semester.

The committee will consider the following:

- Student's contribution to community engagement
- One-page support letter from project supervisor, collaborator, or mentor
- The ability for the student to describe their activities and accomplishments (one page)
- CV or resume from the student (not to exceed two pages)

Outstanding Research Award (\$1000)

\$1,000 is given to one graduate student who conducts superlative research.

The committee will consider the following:

- Substantial research outputs relevant to the area of expertise (publications, grants, creative works, etc.)
- The ability of the student to explain their research and its importance to a broad academic audience (one page)
- Faculty assessment of the student's research significance and their contribution to the research outputs
- CV or resume from the student (not to exceed two pages)

Excellence in Access and Opportunity Award (\$1000)

One award is given annually, and one graduate student.

The committee will consider the following:

- Substantial achievements and/or advocacy related to access, opportunity, diversity, equity, and inclusion conducted between the Summer of 2023 and the Spring 2024 academic semester.
- One-page support letter from project supervisor, collaborator, or mentor
- The ability for the student to describe their achievement and/or advocacy
- CV or resume from the student (not to exceed two pages)

Outstanding Graduate Teaching Award (two awards, \$1000/each)

Two \$1000 awards are given annually. Instructors of record and GTA/Lab Instructors are eligible. There will be one award from the following academic disciplines:

- Humanities, Social Sciences, Education or Related Professional Programs
- Science, Mathematics, or Related Professional Programs

The committee will consider the following for Instructor of Record nominations:

- Teaching evaluations from Spring 2023, Summer 2023, and/or Fall 2023 semesters
- One-page teaching philosophy from the graduate student
 - The ability of the graduate student to describe their teaching philosophy and the quality of teaching as demonstrated by their teaching evaluations
 - Optional – Teaching review (conducted by a faculty member)

The committee will consider the following for GTA / Lab Instructor nominations:

- One-page teaching philosophy from the graduate student
- One-page letter from a faculty member who can evaluate the nominee's teaching during the Spring 2023, Summer 2023, or Fall 2023 semesters
- Optional – Student evaluations