

MEMORANDUM

TO: Heads of Undergraduate Academic Departments

FROM: Shirley Eoff, Chair
2019-2020 Academic Excellence Committee

SUBJECT: Departmental Nominations
2019-2020 Presidential Award and Distinguished Student Awards

The Academic Excellence Committee seeks your assistance in soliciting nominees for the 2019-2020 Presidential Award and Distinguished Student Awards. These awards are given each spring to outstanding individuals selected by the committee and approved by the college Deans, the Provost, and the President. The committee will meet in mid-April to make its selections from the departmental nominations. Complete nomination packets, as described below, must be delivered to the committee chair, **Dr. Shirley Eoff** (Honors Program Office, Library A304) **no later than 5:00 p.m., Wednesday, March 25, 2020.**

The following guidelines should be used in submitting recommendations:

I. **Nomination Criteria**

- a. Nominees shall be selected on the basis of outstanding academic performance and extracurricular accomplishments in the university and community.
- b. Nominees must have senior standing during the current academic year (to be interpreted to include candidates who complete their degree requirements in December 2019 or May 2020 or students within 6 hours of graduation in May who can reasonably be expected to complete degree requirements during summer 2020).

Students enrolled in joint bachelor and master's programs will be considered only if near enough program completion to ensure graduation within the award year. The nomination materials may only include the student's undergraduate GPA and awards, service, scholarly papers, and other activities. Any project or research used in support of the application must arise from undergraduate rather than graduate coursework.

- c. Nominees must have completed a minimum of 60 hours at Angelo State University and have an overall institutional and cumulative GPA of 3.50 or higher.

- d. Nominees are expected to attend the awards luncheon and ceremony to be held from noon to 3:00 p.m. on Monday, April 27, 2020.

II. **Selection Procedure**

- a. Each department granting undergraduate degrees in the Colleges of Arts and Humanities, Business, Education, Health and Human Services, and Science and Engineering may submit a single nomination.
- b. All department members should participate in the selection process, and the nominee should have consensus support.

III. **Preparation of Nomination Packet**

- a. Department heads or their representatives should check the nominee's record carefully to see that the reported grade point average is correct, that the information presented is accurate, and that the student will graduate on schedule barring unforeseen circumstances.
- b. Any faculty member in the department who is not currently a member of the Academic Excellence Committee may prepare the nomination letter. Please work with the nominee to ensure that all relevant information appears in the written submission.
- c. Draft the application and nomination letter with care, keeping in mind the diverse membership of the selection committee. The Presidential Award and the Distinguished Student Awards are prestigious honors, and the committee's ability to make wise selections depends on the quality and clarity of the submitted materials. Submit both the nomination form and a single letter of recommendation no longer than two pages in length listing additional information and impressions not covered by the form.
- d. In addition to the nomination letter, a complete nomination packet requires:
 - a one to two page personal statement addressed to the Academic Excellence Committee in which the nominee outlines career plans and aspirations
 - one official transcript attached to the original application
 - the signed FERPA agreement, granting or denying permission to publicize or announce the grade point average. (Denial of permission will not impact the selection process.)
- e. After the nominations have been received, each nominee must have the University Photographer shoot a formal photograph suitable for publicity purposes should the nominee be selected as one of the award recipients. By

April 15, nominees must also submit several good quality informal digital photographs showing the nominee engaged in activities related to their academic credentials (e.g., working in a lab or clinical setting, presenting a paper, teaching a class) or their most significant extracurricular activities (e.g., participating in a sport or intramural contest, sculpting or painting, taking part in a community service activity) used to support the application.

IV. Submission of Nomination Packet

- a. The faculty member authoring the nomination letter should verify that all application materials are in order.
- b. The nominating department or the nominee must submit **the original and 13 copies of the packet** (nomination letter, completed nomination form, student's personal statement, student's transcript, and FERPA waiver) to the chair of the Academic Excellence Committee no later than **5 p.m., March 25, 2020**. Department heads or their representatives may make copies of the original transcript.

V. Committee Procedure

- a. Committee members will individually review the nomination packets and rank the applicants. Student members must be familiar with FERPA guidelines, agree to abide by those guidelines, and view the packets in a secure area designated by the committee chair.
- b. The committee members will meet collectively to discuss and compile their individual rankings. The committee will then select one nominee to recommend for the Presidential Award.
- c. The remaining nominees will then be regrouped by college and considered for the Distinguished Student Award, with the selection submitted to the appropriate dean for approval via email.
- d. The committee chair will forward the committee's recommendations to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs for review and submission to the President of the University for final approval.
- e. Upon final approval, the Provost's Office or committee chair will notify the University community of the selections. The Academic Excellence Committee will arrange a public reception to honor the nominees and award recipients.