

Academic Affairs Procedures & Guidelines

UHCL Minnie Stevens Piper Professor Award

Purpose and Scope

Each May, the Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation grants the Piper Professor Award to 10 Texas college or university professors in honor of their teaching excellence. Eligible faculty at the University of Houston–Clear Lake have an opportunity to self-nominate for this award during the fall semester.

Procedures

Around mid-October, the Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation sends UHCL an invitation to nominate one eligible faculty member for the award along with information about the award process. Deadline for nominations is usually the middle of November.

Minnie Stevens Piper Professor Award Committee (Award Committee):

- The Vice Provost supervises the formation of an Award Committee to manage the nomination process. The Award Committee consists of one faculty member and one student from each college (eight members).
- Faculty representatives: The prior year's UHCL Piper Award nominee serves as the representative for their college. For the three remaining colleges, the Vice Provost asks the Faculty Council President to select representatives. The Faculty Council President confirms faculty members' availability and willingness to serve on the Award Committee before submitting their names to the Vice Provost.
- Student representatives: Student Government is responsible for selecting one student representative from each college. To start the process, the Vice Provost contacts the Student Government Advisor, who oversees the student selection process.

Eligibility

Full-time tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track teaching faculty members (i.e., Professors of Practice and Lecturers) who have taught for a minimum of at least five academic years prior to the year of nomination may apply. Members of the Award Committee are not eligible to apply.

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Nominations

Eligible faculty wishing to apply will self-nominate. The deadline and submission requirements for each year's nominations are announced via the Faculty Council Secretary, campus television monitors, and the website. The Faculty Council Secretary coordinates a mass email to faculty.

The submission for the award will be sent to the award committee and include:

- A narrative written by the applicant that clearly states the applicant's teaching activities and why they merit serious consideration for the award. The narrative should also include the full-time equivalent student enrollment for each course in the semester preceding the nomination.
- A current curriculum vita
- Up to five letters of recommendation may also be submitted as part of the application. Letters may be from administration, colleagues, and/or former students

Selection Process

- The Award Committee will rank nominations according to a score obtained using the Piper Professor Nomination form categories.
- The Award Committee will send the names of the faculty members who earn the five highest scores to the Vice Provost as semi-finalists.
- The Vice Provost notifies the semi-finalists and provides a UHCL Piper Semi-Finalist Form, which the semi-finalists complete and submit to the Awards Committee. The Semi-Finalist Form matches the information and character counts/space limits allowed by the Piper Foundation's nomination form. Semi-finalists must also submit sample instructional materials and/or assignments so that Award Committee members may evaluate the semi-finalists' teaching. Optionally, the semi-finalists may submit a recording of a class session and/or anonymized sample work from students.
- The Vice Provost notifies the Deans and Associate Deans of faculty members in their college who were nominated and/or selected as semi-finalists.

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Notification & Announcement

- The Vice Provost sends a congratulatory email to the semi-finalists and nominee regarding the committee's decision. The email also goes to the Deans, Associate Deans, Provost, President, and Marketing\Communications.
- The Vice Provost prepares a draft announcement for the university community and sends the draft to the Provost, the President, and Marketing/Communications for review. The announcement includes the name of the nominee and the reasons the Award Committee deemed that person an outstanding teacher. Any student quotes included in the announcement should specify major(s) and anticipated graduation date(s), but should not include student identifying information (e.g., name, initials, student id, etc.)

Nominee Submission to the Piper Foundation

- The Vice Provost sends the Piper Professor Nomination form link to the nominee. The nominee completes the form and submits it to the Vice Provost along with up to five letters of recommendation from administrators, colleagues, and/or current and former students.
- The Office of the Vice Provost sends the Piper Foundation the original documents and retains a copy on file.

Process Conclusion

- A celebration at the end of the process recognizes the semi-finalists, nominee, and the Award Committee members.
- The nominee's name is added to the UHCL website with the names of previous nominees and award recipients. Should the nominee be selected by the Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation for a Piper Professor Award, the website will be updated to indicate the nominee received the award.