



ROYAL THIMPHU COLLEGE Academic Affairs Department

Excellence in Active Student-Centred Teaching Award - Guidelines

Last revised 2021-June 03

The Tertiary Education Policy of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2010 (p. 51) states, “There has been a paradigm shift in tertiary education; universities no longer only provide instruction but they also promote active learning.” This paradigm shift is reflected both in RUB’s *Wheel of Academic Law*, which, for example, endorses developing students’ creativity and RTC’s *Faculty Handbook*, which calls for the use of varied and innovative methods to develop not only students’ knowledge base but also their creativity and their ability to independently analyse and synthesize information and to think critically.

Although there is increasing recognition that moving from instruction that is exclusively or primarily lecture-based to utilizing range of teaching methods including those that stimulate active student involvement is desirable, doing this can be difficult, especially for faculty members whose own education was heavily lecture-based.

Thus, in order to stimulate faculty to move in the desired direction, to recognize those that do this successfully, and to publicize potential models of best practice, RTC will institute an Excellence in Active Student-Centred Teaching Award. This award is intended to recognize consistent and effective use of well-documented teaching /learning activities (debate, role play, learning games, student research or other creative projects) or pedagogical procedures that effectively stimulate active student-centred learning.

Announcement of Award: In order to maximize the potential impact of the existence of this award on teaching at RTC, it will be brought to the attention of faculty members at each year’s opening, through things like mention at the orientation sessions for new faculty members and the semester’s first faculty meeting, CPD session, etc. Also, it will be publicized around mid-term exams in the fall semester at least one month before nominations are due (Nov. 8) to both faculty members and students through at least public announcement of the college web site and bulletin board flyers so that students as well as others are reminded of the possibility of nominating individuals. Because students may also nominate faculty members up to May 5 in the spring semester, the award should be re-announced to them by the third week in April. AAD will be responsible for ensuring adequate publicity.

Selection Process: Individuals may not nominate themselves. Rather nominations come from Programme Leaders, students, the Dean AAD, and the Associate Dean AAD. (An individual who has received this award anytime in the past 3 years is not eligible for nomination).

Specifically, programme leaders may make nominations for this award, with the number depending on the size of the faculty(full and part-time) in the programme (one for programmes of 10 or fewer faculty members, two for programs of 11-22 and 3 for programmes of 23 or more faculty members).

Students may also submit nominations, as long as 50% or more of the students of the relevant module or section show their support for a nomination by affixing their signatures to the submitted nomination materials. *No student may sign more than one nomination in a given academic year.* If they do, neither signature will be counted as valid. No more than one faculty member can be nominated by students in small programmes (10 faculty members or fewer) in each semester, although more student nominations are allowed from larger programmes (two each semester if there are 11-22 faculty members and 3 each semester if there are 23 or more faculty members with class representatives selecting between possible nominees if students propose more than the allowed number of nominations). In case if the student nomination exceeds the limit, then nomination with the maximum signatures will be considered.

Finally, the Dean and Associate Dean may each also nominate one person, in order to allow for nominations of programme leaders, although they are free to nominate other faculty members as well.

Nomination Information Required

Each nomination must contain information pertinent to the selection criteria as well as: Name of Nominator; Name of the nominated faculty member; ; Details of how the information presented was gathered (i.e. number of class observations, etc.); Detailed description of behaviours/activities/procedures/approaches meriting the award and how they exemplify active student-centred teaching; Programme and modules in which nominated teaching behaviours occurred; and “Level/Year” of the students involved. The nominator must have first-hand personal experience with the nominated activities/approach by having observed one or more classes in which it occurred and reviewed student learning products stemming from this approach, assessment instruments, etc. Also, systematic input from students is encouraged (such as survey data pertinent to relevant criteria collected by the nominator from students in the relevant class, results from the student feedback surveys, etc.). Also, copies of exams and/or other assessments that support the nominator should be included. Nominations that are seriously incomplete will not be accepted. Nominated individuals will not be disqualified from consideration if they leave the college before the award is presented. However,

Selection Committee: Human Resource Manager shall serve as the non-voting Committee Member/Secretary. Voting committee members are: the Dean of Academic Affairs; the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs; and Senior Advisor (Janet Schofield, Committee Chair). (The President may also serve as a voting committee member if he is available.). There are no teaching faculty on this committee because of concerns about preference/the appearance of preference being given to colleagues in their programmes. However, all voting members of the committee have considerable teaching experience. However, the winner of this award in the immediately preceding year will serve on the committee as a non-voting member.

The membership of the Selection Committee and the Selection Criteria used to decide who receives the award shall be available publically to promote transparency and encourage the use of student-centred active teaching/learning methods.

1. Award Selection and Presentation Timeline:

Announcement of the availability of the award will normally be made within the first three weeks of the fall semester. Completed nominations are due by November 8. Shortlisting of candidates nominated in the fall will be completed by the second week of the spring semester in order to allow time for members of the committee to observe the classes of short-listed teachers should they feel that is necessary. A decision about whether any spring nominations from students will be added to the short list should be made by May 10. The Committee will meet to decide on the awardee by the last week in May (in case any further information needs to be gathered to finalize the decision). To be considered for the award by the committee, any faculty member nominated must remain in good contractual standing throughout the nomination/consideration period and up to the date of the award ceremony. Good contractual standing includes satisfactory fulfillment of the contract, even if the faculty member leaves prior to the actual date of the award ceremony. Good contractual standing would be nullified by early resignation/lack of fulfillment of the notice period, or any other departure from the contract terms. Any nominee who was in good standing at the time of the nomination but who no longer is at the time of consideration or at any point up to the awarding, may be disqualified. However, the mere fact that a faculty member will not be at RTC in August when the award will normally be given will not disqualify him/her from receiving the award.

The award will be presented at the Annual Prize Day near the beginning of the next fall semester if the selected faculty member intends to continue at the College. Otherwise it will be presented during the spring closing dinner.

Award Selection Criteria:

The teaching approach used consistently and effectively:

| Criteria | Weight |
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| 1. Stimulates broad active involvement of many/all class members | 15% |
| 2. Develops important communication skills (oral, visual &/or written) | 10% |

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| 3. Fosters analytic/critical thinking | 15% |
| 4. Fosters subject matter learning and/or application of subject matter to the “real world” or simulation thereof | 20% |
| 5. Provides well-designed assessments fostering active student centered learning | 10% |
| 6. Provides students with systematic feedback valuable in improving future performance | 20% |
| 7. Provides an inspiring model for students (love of learning, hard work, caring, etc.) | 10% |

A form containing a more detailed description of these criteria will be developed and made available to those wishing to nominate a faculty member for this award.

Frequency of the Award: If no nominations are received in a given academic year or none of those received are deemed to describe truly outstanding active student-centred teaching, no award will be given. Normally, only one award will be given per year, although in extraordinary situations up to two may be awarded.

Nature of Award: A certificate suitable for framing. Winner’s name(s) to be added to a list of award recipients kept in the main college meeting room. Very modest cash award.