



University of Calgary Teaching Awards

Preparing a nomination letter

The nomination letter provides the readers' first impression of the nominee and is one of the most important documents in a successful nomination package. This letter provides a key opportunity to highlight the nominee's unique strengths, accomplishments and contributions. A strong nomination letter will carefully summarize the whole nomination package and speak directly to each award criteria. You may think of this letter as an *executive summary* that clearly and concisely summarizes the information presented throughout the nomination package.

Who should prepare the nomination letter?

Nomination letters should be prepared by someone who is directly familiar with the nominee's accomplishments. An authentic letter provides a genuine perspective and specific examples of the nominee's distinctive contributions as they are related to the specific award criteria. It provides readers with a comprehensive overview of the activities and accomplishments of the nominee, and communicates how students, the faculty and the institution have benefitted from the nominee's contributions to teaching and learning.

For the University of Calgary Teaching Awards, the nomination letter may be:

- A single nomination letter signed by one nominator
- A single nomination letter co-written and signed by multiple nominators
- Multiple nomination letters, each written and signed by a different nominator

Multiple nominators can provide an opportunity to present different perspectives and voices on the nominee's contributions and strengths. In the case of multiple letters, it is important for nominators to collaborate to ensure that all the award criteria are addressed across the letters and that each letter adds its own value. Each nomination letter should be limited to a maximum of five pages in length.

What does an effective nomination letter look like?

Nomination letters often start with a brief overview of who the nominator is and how they know the nominee. The University of Calgary Teaching Awards are adjudicated by committees composed of faculty, staff and students from across the university, and this ensures all adjudicators are familiar with the nominee's specific teaching and disciplinary context. The nomination letter should then present a summary of the nominee's contributions to teaching and learning, as they relate back to the specific award criteria. It is important that all nominators be familiar with the criteria for each award. (For a list of specific award criteria see: <http://ucalgary.ca/taylorinstitute/awards-grants/teaching-awards>). Nomination letters often conclude with a clear summary of the nominee's most important contributions to the University of Calgary's teaching and learning community.

Nomination letters should provide specific examples that illustrate the claims made about the nominee's strengths and accomplishments. Effective nomination letters will directly draw on and direct readers to evidence presented in the nomination dossier and the letters of support. It is recommended that nominators work closely with the nominee to become familiar with the evidence presented throughout the nomination dossier and letters of support. In the end, the most compelling letters will create a clear picture of the nominee's unique strengths, contributions and accomplishments.