The Nomination Dossier Guide

DOSSIER CONTENTS

The dossier should make a persuasive case for distinguished teaching using evidence from a variety of sources, which could include: learners, peers, Indigenous community, Elder(s), Knowledge Keepers, and exemplary teaching materials. When presenting evidence in the nomination package, provide annotations that make the connection apparent between the sources of evidence (supporting letters, etc.) and the factors listed under the criterion.

1. **Cover page and table of contents** - Not mandatory, but appreciated. Not counted in the 25-page limit.

2. **Nominators' letter** - A strong nomination letter acts as an Executive Summary, giving reviewers a clear roadmap of the dossier. Written by someone closely familiar with the nominee's work, it sets the tone and highlights key contributions under each criterion, ensuring reviewers understand where to locate supporting evidence in the dossier. The best letters vividly bring the nominee to life, providing a well-rounded view of their teaching impact. This letter is essential in making a compelling first impression, underscoring the nominee's achievements and the significance of their work. Examples can be requested at awards_gmctl@usask.ca.

3. **The four (4) award criteria** - In evaluating nominations, <u>**each criterion is equally important**</u>. Nominees are encouraged to present strong evidence across all four criteria to showcase their holistic contributions. See suggestions on what to include in the award criteria section below.

4. **Achievements –** An annotated *summary, table, list or abbreviated CV* that highlights the nominee's major achievements in teaching, service, research with an emphasis on contributions to teaching and learning, such as course development, introducing new instructional strategies or technologies, presenting workshops, or publishing on teaching and learning. Examples can be requested at awards_gmctl@usask.ca.

5. **Letters of Support** – Up to four letters of support from the following groups of supporters may be included: students not currently enrolled in any of the nominee's classes or working under their supervision, colleagues/peers with personal experience of the nominee's teaching, or Indigenous or community members outlining the impact of student involvement as part of their coursework. These letters should directly reference the award's criteria and address how the nominee has met the criteria from the perspective of the person writing the letter of support. The support letters, and any supporting materials, are included in the 25-page limit for the dossier.

> **Important information:**
> 1. **The dossier must not exceed 25 pages.**
>   - Cover pages and divider pages are not included in this count, however, if additional content is included on these pages (quotes, additional text, photos, etc.) these pages will be included in the 25-page dossier limit.
>   - Nominator's Letter, Achievements and Letters of Support are included in the 25-pages.
>   - The Adjudication Committee will consider online links. However, each **hyperlink** will count for three pages in the nomination package. Nomination packages exceeding 25-pages will not be sent forward to reviewers.
> 2. **Use a standard 12-point font with one-inch margins.**
> 3. **Each page must be numbered.**

AWARD CRITERIA

In evaluating nominations, each criterion is equally important, and nominees are encouraged to present strong evidence across all four criteria to showcase their holistic contributions.

Criterion #1: Teaching Philosophy

Guiding Question: *"Who am I as a teacher, and what space do I create for my students?"*

The teaching philosophy, written by the nominee in the first person, offers a unique reflection of their teaching approach, allowing the committee an authentic encounter with the nominee's voice. Your teaching philosophy serves as a foundation for the nomination.

> **Suggestions:**
>
> o **Beliefs and Values:** Nominees may reflect on their core beliefs, discussing both personal and scholarly influences that shape their approach to teaching in higher education.
> o **Strategies and Practices:** Connecting beliefs to specific teaching strategies can bring their philosophy to life, foreshadowing later sections where alignment between beliefs and practices is demonstrated.
> o **Impact on Students:** Reflecting on how their teaching positively impacts students helps convey their effectiveness.
> o **Future Goals:** Articulating aspirations for growth signal a commitment to continued excellence.
> o **Connection with Evidence:** Foreshadowing how the teaching philosophy aligns with dossier elements—such as student feedback, peer reviews, and innovative teaching examples—can create coherence and reinforce impact and effectiveness.

Criterion #2: Teaching Excellence

Guiding Question: *"How does my teaching impact student learning?"*

This section invites nominees to show how their teaching philosophy translates into impactful practices in the classroom. Suggested structure to display evidence of teaching excellence:

1. **Teaching Context:** provide a brief description of your teaching context and a summary of your teaching responsibilities.
2. **Approach to Teaching**: Identify and describe the **approaches or innovations** you use in your teaching practice**,** and how they align with your teaching philosophy. Including a rationale to help the Adjudication Committee understand why your approach is innovative and effective in your context can be beneficial.
3. **Examples:** Showcase tangible examples (e.g., screenshots, photos, excerpts) that illustrate how you implement each approach in your classroom. *Examples below.
4. **Demonstrate impact of the approach:** Present a variety of data to highlight the effectiveness of your approach on student learning. **examples below.

> ***Examples of approaches to teaching excellence may include:**
>
> o **Course Design Innovations:** Details on course structure, objectives, and unique elements that support your teaching goals.
> o **Innovative Course Activities and Materials**: Excerpt relevant materials or assignments, explaining how they illuminate aspects of your teaching philosophy. Example: A critical-thinking assignment that reflects your values and has an impact on student learning.
> o **Assessment Design:** Excerpts of assignments, rubrics, or assessment methods that foster deeper learning.
> o **Land-Based Learning**: Highlight instructional activities that use the land as a context for learning, helping students connect with Indigenous perspectives, sustainability, or experiential learning.
> o **Innovative Lecturing**: Showcase how you've enhanced the traditional lecture format with dynamic methods such as interactive discussions, multimedia tools, or storytelling to foster student engagement and active learning.

o **Inclusive, Relevant, and Accessible Content**: Demonstrate the use of resources, UDL principles, and activities that remove barriers and respect diverse perspectives, ensuring all students have equitable access to learning.

o **Experiential Learning Opportunities**: Include evidence of partnerships with community members or external stakeholders, offering students authentic, hands-on learning experiences.

o **Curriculum Relevance and Responsiveness**: Show updates or changes made to the curriculum to keep content relevant and aligned with current standards, based on research or feedback.

o **Learning Charter Integration:** Explain how your strategies incorporate themes like Indigenization, sustainability, inclusivity, and interdisciplinary teaching (see box below for our Learning Charter)

Our USask Learning Charter in Action - Examples might demonstrate how the nominee integrates strategic themes from Our Learning Charter into their teaching, by highlighting:

o **Indigenization:** Include instructional activities that address or one or more of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action or incorporate aspects of ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan. For example, integrating Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum or use of Indigenous educational practices such as a focus on building relationships with and among students, competency-based outcomes or experiential learning.

o **Assessment**: Provide examples of authentic assessments aligned with the learning outcomes and accommodates a variety of learners (e.g. Universal Design for Learning)

o **Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity**: Showcase activities that create an inclusive learning environment, such as incorporating diverse perspectives in discussions or course readings.

o **Flexible Learning**: Highlight strategies that adapt to diverse student needs, such as hybrid or blended learning formats, flexible deadlines, or self-paced modules. For instance, providing multiple means of engagement, expression, and representation ensures accessibility for all students and fosters deeper learning.

o **Learning Technologies**: Highlight novel instructional activities that effectively support student learning, such as using new technologies or incorporating Generative AI.

o **Sustainability**: Highlight activities that contribute to a sustainable future, such as projects focused on environmental issues.

o **USask Student Competencies**: Provide examples of how your teaching aligns with or develops any of the six USask Student Competencies.

**Demonstrate impact of the approach - Evidence of impact may include:

o **Teaching Evaluations (SLEQ):** Summarized feedback reflecting improved student engagement or satisfaction.
  – SLEQ or other student evaluation data that has been collected and presented in an accessible manner, such as in a graph or chart is acceptable, as are sections of unabridged student comments from one class. Please do not include unannotated pages of raw data.

o **Learning Outcomes:** Examples of knowledge gains, pre- and post-test results, or performance improvements.

o **Peer Teaching Reviews:** Summaries from colleagues assessing the impact and effectiveness of your methods.

o **Student Achievement Data:** Evidence of improved grades, retention rates, or pass rates.

o **Longitudinal Impact**: Follow-up data showing students' success in later courses or alumni feedback on long-term skill retention.

o **Qualitative Feedback:** Student reflections, testimonials, or exit survey excerpts that highlight personal growth and course impact.

o **Awards or Recognition:** Teaching awards, grants, or honors received specifically for innovative or impactful teaching practices.

Criterion #3: Continuous Improvement and Professional Growth

Guiding Question: *"How do I grow and evolve as an educator?"*

This section invites nominees to reflect on both formal and informal activities that contribute to their growth and evolution as educators, along with the resulting impact on their teaching practices. It's an opportunity to share how your educational approaches have developed over time, the experiences that have influenced these changes, and how your evolving perspective as an educator shapes your practices.

A useful framework for this reflection could be: **"I used to do this… I learned this… Now I do this."** Highlight how intentional practices have enhanced student learning and engagement.

Examples may include:

- **Seeking and implementing feedback**: I actively seek feedback from my students and colleagues through surveys, classroom observations, and informal conversations. For example, after receiving feedback that my lectures could be more interactive, I began incorporating polling tools and group discussions. These changes have helped create a more inclusive and engaging classroom environment, as evidenced by improved student participation and positive course evaluations.
- **Engaging in reflective goal-setting**: I regularly reflect on my teaching practices and set intentional goals for improvement. After noticing lower engagement during online classes, I set a goal to explore active learning strategies. I integrated breakout rooms and collaborative digital tools, then assessed their impact by tracking participation rates and gathering student feedback, which confirmed increased engagement and satisfaction.
- **Professional development and collaboration**: I stay current with advancements in pedagogy by participating in workshops, webinars, and professional learning communities. For example, attending a workshop on inclusive teaching inspired me to redesign my course materials to reflect diverse perspectives, fostering a greater sense of belonging among my students.
- **Building informal connections**: I value informal interactions with colleagues as opportunities for growth. Regular coffee chats with my department have sparked ideas for new teaching methods, and mentoring junior faculty has allowed me to refine my own practices through shared experiences. These connections help me stay adaptable and open to new approaches.
- **Demonstrating impact through evidence**: I continuously evaluate the impact of my teaching improvements through measurable outcomes. For example, after implementing case-based learning activities, I observed improved critical thinking skills in student assignments and higher scores in related assessments. Additionally, my insights into these methods have led to a conference presentation and a co-authored publication.

Criterion 4: Exemplify Leadership

Guiding Question: *"How do I lead, beyond my own hallway?"*

A USask Distinguished Teacher demonstrates leadership of teaching and learning that has a meaningful impact on the institution and the broader academic community. In this section, provide examples where you have driven or inspired significant change. Use the outline below to emphasize the depth and reach of your contributions to teaching and learning within the profession or academic organizations in teaching & learning.

1. **Identify leadership actions:** Describe specific initiatives you have led or contributed to, such as curriculum improvements, policy changes, chairing committees on teaching quality, leading collaborative processes for teaching innovation, publishing pedagogical research, presenting on teaching innovations, mentoring colleagues or graduate students, or engaging in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL).
2. **Describe measurable impacts:** Highlight the tangible outcomes of these initiatives, focusing on how they have enhanced student learning or teaching practices beyond your immediate classroom or department. This could include institution-wide changes, community engagement, or contributions to professional organizations that promote teaching excellence.

Our USask Learning Charter in Action - Examples might explain the leadership impact relative to the pursuits from the Our Learning Charter, including:

The Pursuit of Truth and Understanding
- Applying critical and creative mamitoneyihtamowin1 (ma-mito-neh ih-ta-mo-win)/naakatwayhtamihk2 (naaka-tway-hta-mihk) (i.e., thinking) to problems, including analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.
- Being open to and adept at different ways of knowing and learning, including independently, experientially, and collaboratively.
- Possessing intellectual flexibility, ability to manage change, open-mindedness with the unfamiliar and an enthusiasm for life-long and life-wide learning.

The Pursuit of Knowledges
- Achieving a comprehensive knowledge of one's subject area, discipline, or profession.
- Understanding how one's subject area may intersect with related disciplines, perspectives, and worldviews different than one's own, including Indigenous worldviews.
- Understanding how one's subject area, discipline or profession connects to and impacts Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan, and beyond where applicable.
- Utilizing and applying one's knowledge with manacihtowin/manachihitoohk[2] (i.e. respect of all individuals).

The Pursuit of Integrity and Respect
- Exercising intellectual integrity and ethical behaviour with kitimakeyichikewin /kitimakaymitoohk (i.e., kindness by self to others).
- Recognizing and thinking through moral and ethical issues in a variety of contexts, perspectives, and alternative worldviews.
- Recognizing the limits to one's knowledge, skills and understanding, and acting in accordance with these limits.
- Developing understanding and appreciation for one's own perspectives, strengths and worldview, while demonstrating mutual and reciprocal respect for the diverse perspectives, strengths and worldviews of others and their communities.

The Pursuit of Skills and Practices
- Developing and applying appropriate skills of research, inquiry and knowledge creation and translation.
- Communicating clearly, substantively and persuasively in different academic, professional, and cultural contexts; nihtâ-âcimowin /nihta achimoohk (i.e., being a good storyteller).
- Being able to locate, understand, evaluate and use information effectively, ethically, legally and with cultural appropriateness.

Individual and Community Pursuits
- Committing to positive growth and change for oneself and for local, national and global communities.
- Acting with confidence and strength of purpose for the good of oneself and the different communities represented on our campuses.
- Embracing responsibilities to oneself and others in ways that are authentic and meaningful.
- Sharing Knowledges and exercising nîkânîwin/ nihta niikaaniiw (i.e., leadership) as acts of individual and community responsibility.

AWARD DOSSIER RUBRIC

	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
Criterion #1 - **Teaching Philosophy Statement** *Who am I as a teacher, and what space do I create for my students?*	Demonstrates initial personal insight with some teaching anecdotes, though deeper reflection could strengthen authenticity. Lists basic values or principles but lacks detailed examples or connections to teaching practices.	Integrates personal stories that illustrate a reflective approach, connecting values with specific teaching moments. Outlines values, principles, and goals, explaining their influence on teaching decisions with examples.	Provides a deeply personal, authentic perspective with rich anecdotes and detailed reflections that reveal a unique teaching philosophy and approach. Clearly articulates a comprehensive teaching framework, with values, principles, and goals that are thoughtfully connected to specific teaching practices and decision-making.
Criterion #2 - **Evidence of Teaching Excellence** *How does my teaching impact student learning?*	Describes teaching practices with general references to teaching philosophy. Demonstrates evidence of teaching approaches, highlighting key course structure or assignment elements. Shares indicators of student engagement or satisfaction without deeper analysis.	Clearly ties 2–3 specific approaches (e.g., land-based learning, innovative lecturing) to teaching philosophy and student learning goals. Presents diverse, tangible evidence of implementation (e.g., course materials, assignments, learning technologies) with clear rationales. Provides measurable outcomes (e.g., SLEQ, performance data, reflections) showing positive impact of practice on learning.	Demonstrates integration of teaching philosophy into 2–3 innovative approaches, aligned with course outcomes and student outcomes. Offers detailed evidence of innovative practices (e.g., rubrics, assessment methods, experiential learning), demonstrating excellence, responsiveness to student needs, and innovation. Demonstrates measurable impact on student learning (e.g., pre/post-tests, alumni feedback, curriculum improvements), supported by longitudinal evidence or recognition.

Criterion #3 - **Continuous Improvement and Professional Growth** *How do I grow and evolve as an educator?*	Demonstrates openness to feedback by seeking student or peer input but applies insights inconsistently or with limited evidence of change. Engages in some professional development activities but does not clearly connect new ideas to teaching practices. Provides a general description of past teaching practices but lacks clear connections to learning, evolution, or impact on students.	Regularly applies feedback to improve inclusivity, student engagement, and learning outcomes, providing examples of applied changes. Engages in formal and informal professional development, incorporating research-based strategies into teaching. Provides evidence of specific changes in teaching practices with measurable positive impacts on student learning.	Demonstrates sustained growth through continuous reflection, feedback integration, and iterative improvements in teaching practices. Actively engages in advanced professional development and shares insights through mentorship, presentations, or scholarly contributions. Provides substantial evidence of long-term impact of development on teaching practice, including measurable student success, course enhancements, or institutional recognition. Influences broader teaching communities by mentoring faculty or implementing innovations that improve student and peer learning.
Criterion #4 - **Exemplify Leadership** *How do I lead, beyond my own hallway?*	Participates in **departmental** leadership roles, contributing to localized teaching improvements. Provides **some** evidence of positive impact on classroom practices or department-level learning experiences, but with **limited** broader influence.	Leads initiatives with broader impact, such as curriculum reform, policy development, or teaching innovation, extending **beyond their college** (institutional or across discipline). Demonstrates clear, measurable impact of leadership initiatives institutional level, contributing to lasting improvements.	Drives significant, high-impact initiatives that influence teaching and learning at the institutional, national, or disciplinary level. Demonstrates substantial, sustained impact, leading to measurable improvements in student learning, teaching practices, or educational policy across a broad community.