

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** December 4, 2008  
**TO:** Deans, Directors, and Department Heads  
**FROM:** Jim Dubinsky, Chair, Diggs Teaching Scholar Awards Committee  
**SUBJECT:** Call for Nominations for the Diggs Teaching Scholar Awards

**Nominations are due Monday, February 23, 2009, no later than 5:00 pm.**

The Diggs Teaching Scholar Awards honor teachers of all academic ranks who forge exceptional, innovative, and mutually beneficial connections between their pedagogy and their department's academic mission and between their pedagogy and scholarship. The award was established in 1992 under the auspices of the University's Faculty Rewards Project. Sponsors of this program are the Diggs Endowed Professorship Fund and the Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (CEUT).

The Diggs program emphasizes the benefit that accrues to students when exceptional teachers work well in a collective, collegial context. The Diggs Awards are as much about the mutual connection of faculty and their departments as they are about individual achievement in the classroom. The Diggs program thus honors departments and programs, as well as individuals dedicated to excellence in teaching and student learning. The recipients of the award receive \$500 and formal recognition at the Diggs Teaching Roundtable. The departments or programs that nominate the recipients each receive a matching \$500 award preferably for use toward some special purpose related to undergraduate teaching.

Three Diggs Teaching Scholars are selected annually. These individuals agree to

- (1) Present an aspect of their teaching at the Diggs Teaching Roundtable, a public discussion by all three new Diggs teaching scholars, devoted to pedagogical and curricular issues at Virginia Tech, held in the fall semester.
- (2) Present their approach in greater detail at an individual session held in the spring semester.
- (3) Participate actively in the Diggs Teaching Scholar Association, which means serving on committees and working to enhance the University's teaching/learning environment. *The Diggs is not primarily an award, though it is that too; it is intended as an activity that will continue to benefit the recipient's department and the University as a whole.*

**Eligibility:** Individuals teaching at all instructional levels at Virginia Tech (i.e., named and full professors, associate and assistant professors, adjunct faculty, instructors, and graduate teaching assistants) are eligible. Departments and programs are encouraged to re-nominate excellent teachers who were nominated in the past but not selected.

**Nomination:** The letter of nomination for the Diggs Teaching Scholar Award should meet the following specifications:

- (1) Include a description of the nominee's qualifications and a brief description of the teaching duties, abilities, and performance of the individual.
- (2) Identify the unique talents of the nominee and indicate how he/she has significantly enhanced the learning environment and overall teaching mission of the department, program, college, and/or University.
- (3) Include comments from colleagues or students, descriptions of unusual accomplishments or assignments, and mention of teaching awards or recognition.
- (4) Not exceed three pages in length, single or double-spaced.
- (5) Be signed by the department chair, head, or program director, although members of a teaching awards committee or a colleague may prepare it.

Finally, a one to two-page statement, single or double-spaced, from the nominee should be attached that describes the proposed topic, issue, or idea relevant to education, pedagogy, learning, and/or curriculum development that the nominee would contribute to the annual public forum of the Diggs Teaching Roundtable (which will take place in early fall semester 2007) and at a subsequent stand-alone session. The nominee may also use this statement as an opportunity to reflect on his/her favorite teaching/learning strategies or to report on a particularly successful experience. *No other written documentation will be considered beyond this letter of nomination.* Submission of a dossier is expressly discouraged.

**Selection:** The selection process consists of three stages:

1. The selection committee reviews the applications and generates a short list of finalists.
2. The finalists are interviewed by the committee and other members of the Diggs Teaching Scholar Association.
3. The selection committee meets to choose the three new Diggs Scholars.

**To nominate someone, send 12 copies of both the letter of nomination and the nominee's statement to:**

Jim Dubinsky, Chair, Diggs Teaching Scholar Award Committee  
Center for Student Engagement & Community Partnerships, Mail Code 0168

Nominations may **not** be submitted by FAX or email. The deadline for receipt of nominations is 5:00 pm on Monday, February 23, 2009.

Questions regarding the process may be directed to Jim Dubinsky (231-7935 or [Dubinsky@vt.edu](mailto:Dubinsky@vt.edu)). For additional information about the Diggs Teaching Scholar Award, including a list of previous recipients, see [www.diggs.vt.edu](http://www.diggs.vt.edu).