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To: Academic Senate

From: Michael Lucas, Professor of Architecture
Chair, Distinguished Teaching Award Committee, 2011-2012

Re: Report for Winter Quarter, 2012
Distinguished Teaching Awards Committee of the Academic Senate

Fall quarter was the solicitation period for the award. Digital nominations closed December 2, 2011. Gladys Gregory of the Academic Senate office received and screened all nominations. 81 faculty were nominated on a total of 111 nomination forms. Exclusions, including former award winners, Deans, Associate Deans, non-tenured or lecturer faculty, and nominations with no supporting statements, produced a pool of 40 faculty who were deemed eligible and these received 63 nominations. Of these, one nominee received 9 nominations, another one 6, another one 4, and several received 2 nominations each. This was fewer total nominations than the 2010-11 cycle, but produced more qualified nominees than 2010-11 cycle. The qualified nominees represented 25 departments across all of the colleges. The nominations for the 40 valid candidates were provided in electronic format to the committee members December 5 by Gladys Gregory.

After the end of Fall Quarter the committee member representing OCOB, Cyrus Ramezani, communicated with the Chair he would be taking a leave of absence winter and spring quarters. He was thanked for his work in fall, and he was replaced by Michael Geringer, who had previously been Chair of the DTA committee. This allowed a smooth transition and Dr. Geringer was able to immediately step in over the break. Committee members reviewed the documents over winter break and were asked by the Chair to make preliminary evaluations for each nominee prior to our January meeting.

The committee convened January 5, 2012 to determine the finalists. One of the DTA committee faculty members had been nominated, and was excluded from the initial screening meeting. All members except the nominated faculty member attended the meeting and were active in the deliberations.

Each candidate nominated was given careful consideration. It should be noted that the individual nominations run the gamut from praise for the simplest kindness or helpfulness of a faculty member, to what were testimonies to extraordinary skill in the delivery of teaching expertise, to life changing experiences with inspirational faculty and courses. The committee shortlisted seven finalists and selected two alternates. It was agreed by the committee that both the alternates would be added if one of the finalists withdrew.

The Chair subsequently contacted all seven finalists. All said that they would participate, but one, the DTA committee member, noted a nominal teaching load over winter and spring, and as a result, the Chair, after consultation via e-mail with the committee, suggested the committee member withdraw from consideration, which they did. The Chair contacted the alternates [who were not identified as such in any communications] and each agreed to be a finalist.

The eight finalists represent six departments across CSM, CENG, CAED, and CLA.

The Chair solicited syllabi, a teaching statement, recent student evaluations, and a preferred calendar for visitations. Gladys Gregory compiled these materials and sent an electronic package to the committee members.

Winter class visitations began week five and continued through the end of week nine. Several communications were sent by finalists as to locational logistics and class availability, and these were communicated to the committee.

It should be noted that the student members both requested to withdraw from the committee due to the workload of visitations. The Chair and the ASI president have been in communication to be sure that future student members realize the time involved in this committee. The Chair noted a concern for the time involved as well, and that student comment in the committee deliberations is critical. The Chair noted in conversation with ASI president that the goal is to see every finalist teach every different class. The students will return for the spring visitations and do the best they are able to do relative to their academic commitments.

The Chair contacted the finalists again during Finals week requesting syllabi and calendars for the spring visitations, which will run weeks one through five.

The Chair would like to thank all the committee members for their time, especially given the service ramifications across all the colleges and departments from the State budgetary crisis. The Chair in particular would like to thank Gladys Gregory for her work in sorting through all the communications on behalf of the committee.