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TO: Academic Senate

FROM: Mike Geringer, Chair, Distinguished Teaching Award Committee

RE: Report for Spring Quarter, 2009, of the Distinguished Teaching Awards
Committee of the Academic Senate

At the beginning of spring quarter, the 7 committee members (5 faculty, 2 ASI representatives) received updated teaching materials from each of the 7 finalists for the Distinguished Teaching Award (DTA). The committee members each spent the first five and a half weeks of the quarter visiting classes of the finalists, with several members each visiting two to four classes for each of the finalists during this time. These visitations were in addition to the visitations we conducted during winter quarter.

Due to the time frame suggested by the President's Office, which requires lead time for preparing the announcement of the DTA recipients, we met during the sixth week of the spring quarter to review our experiences during visitations, discuss the candidates and their qualifications, and select individuals to recommend to Senate Chair Soares and for subsequent recommendation to President Baker for this year's award.

All members of the committee were in attendance for the meeting. The committee's deliberations were particularly challenging this year, due to the quality of finalists, and the committee took much time in its deliberations. After extensive discussion, consensus was achieved regarding 2 finalists to recommend for this year's award (these nominees are unnamed in this memo, with identities concealed

until such time as the President makes a public announcement). The committee was impressed with a number of the finalists, but did not believe that a third nominee was warranted this year, so we departed from recent practice of nominating 3 recipients.

After completing the discussion of finalists, the committee members discussed the policies and procedures to recommend for use by next year's committee. Because all of the committee members, except Chair Geringer, were new to the committee this year, we had delayed this discussion until all members had experienced the process fully. All members commented that the experience of going through the process was insightful and valuable for undertaking deliberations about committee processes. The results of our deliberations, in terms of recommended policies and procedures, are included at the end of this memo. It should be noted that there was consensus from all committee members in attendance regarding each of these policy and procedure recommendations.

After the meeting concluded, Chair Geringer prepared a memo to Academic Senate Chair Soares, as an intermediary for recommendations to President Baker, informing him of our recommendations for this year's DTA recipients. Geringer also collected and shredded the confidential information from the committee members. Letters were prepared for those finalists who were not nominated to receive this year's award, thanking them for their participation in the process.

At the time of this memo, the committee is awaiting action on two remaining items: (1) appointment of additional faculty and ASI representatives to the committee, as well as a Chair for the committee, for 2009-2010, and (2) approval by the Executive Committee of processes for the committee to use during the 2009-2010 academic year, as recommended in this memo.

As Chair, I would like to compliment each of the members of our committee: Professors Phillip Nico (Engineering), Matt Moelter (CSM), Michael Fahs (CLA), Michael Lucas (CAED), and the two ASI student representatives, Ms. Neelie Jaggi and Ms. Kelley Wigton. This committee requires extensive time commitments for classroom visitations, as well as reviewing candidate nominations and other materials. It also requires attentiveness to a range of largely qualitative instruction-related activities of the finalists, in order to adequately identify the most outstanding teachers in our teaching-oriented university. Each of the committee members demonstrated commitment to the mission of the committee, and we had a productive and successful working environment throughout the year. We were pleased to have involvement by the two student members, who provided insightful student perspectives during our deliberations, comments that we found invaluable.

I would also like to thank the 7 finalists (who will go unnamed in this memo) for their graciousness in providing the committee with a range of requested materials during winter and spring quarters, and for allowing us to visit their classes without warning. Such visitations can be disruptive and stressful, but each of the candidates demonstrated true professionalism in responding to the demands of

the process, which provides further indication of their outstanding capabilities and their value to the university and its students.

Cal Poly is an institution devoted to high quality education, and the recognition of our most distinguished teachers is an appropriate and valuable activity. Therefore, I also would like to thank the Academic Senate for identifying and appointing competent faculty candidates and the ASI for appointing competent student candidates for the DTA committee. I also thank the Alumni Association for providing financial sponsorship for the award.

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank Ms. Gladys Gregory from the Academic Senate Office. As she has for many years, Gladys has again provided truly exceptional support for our committee, including extensive administrative support in arranging promotion of the award, managing the receipt of hundreds of nominations, and vetting the nominations to eliminate non-qualifying candidates. She also handled a range of other administrative activities, including numerous contacts with the finalists, collecting and collating, and disseminating materials from the candidates to the committee members. She has taken on these tasks with commitment and grace, maintaining a positive attitude throughout. The smooth functioning and successful outcome of our committee's activities are due, in large part, to her excellent support. I would like to recognize and thank her for performance that is truly distinguished.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Michael (Mike) Geringer

DTA Committee Chair, 2008-2009