Wayne State University

General Education Teaching Award
Nomination Deadline: January 8, 2021
Application Submission Deadline: February 5, 2021

The General Education Program is the foundation of a Wayne State education. The General Education Program serves as a foundation for academic achievement, prepares students to participate effectively in a competitive global economy and to contribute as citizens in a diverse and engaged democracy. General Education presents a unique and powerful opportunity to develop the skills necessary for long-term academic success.

The General Education Teaching Award recognizes instructors who have demonstrated commitment and excellence in supporting the General Education Program through teaching inside and outside the classroom. This year, the General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC) will give out up to 3 awards. Each of the awards includes $500 in professional development funds.

The awards will be presented to outstanding instructors who demonstrate a commitment to the [academic mission](#) of the university through collaboration, innovation, excellence, and inclusion in general education teaching.

The award criteria emphasize reflective teaching practices and support for student learning. We recognize that General Education courses provide particular challenges – teaching students with a wide range of interests and abilities and introducing new fields of study. We embrace stories of learning, growth, reflection, failure, and subsequent improvement as evidence of dedication and excellence.

General Education instructors at all levels – full-time faculty, part-time faculty, graduate students, and academic staff – who have taught for at least three semesters are encouraged to apply. Awards are determined solely on the merits of the application. Applications must include:

- Applicant's written responses to the five questions listed in the application form
- Maximum of five artifacts that provide evidence of instructional support in general education courses (see FAQs for more information)

The award committee accepts nominations from faculty, staff, administrators, and students. We also encourage self-nominations.

Recipients will be notified in March. Awards will be determined by a sub-committee of the General Education Oversight Committee, the representative body of faculty and staff that oversees the university's General Education Program

Please submit nomination materials using this link by January 8, 2021. Nominees will be sent a link to the application form. All applications are due by February 5, 2021.

General Education Teaching Award
2020-2021 Application Form

Name:

Job Title:

Department (of instruction):

School/College (of instruction):

General Education Courses Taught (including semester/year):

Questions (500 word limit for each question):

We encourage you to refer to your artifacts to provide evidence in support of your responses to the questions. Please see the award evaluation rubric for more information.

1. What role does collaboration play in your General Education course?

2. How do your General Education courses contribute to the overall goals of the General Education Program?

3. What kinds of challenges or failures have you faced in your General Education courses? How have you responded?

4. How do you support student success in your General Education course?

5. How do you create and support a diverse and inclusive classroom?

Artifacts (Limit 5):

Frequently Asked Questions

- Multiple people in my department are being nominated for this award in the same year. Does that hurt my chances?

  The awards committee does not consider this as a criteria for evaluating any applications. Applications are evaluated based on the merit of the application alone, using criteria laid out in the attached rubric.

- Does it matter how many students are enrolled in my courses?

  Courses in our General Education Program range in size pretty dramatically. All of these courses play a vital role in our program, in the academic mission of the university, and in the educational experiences of our students. The evaluation criteria have been developed with this variation in discipline, size, scope, and form in mind. There are many possibilities for demonstrating excellence in any General Education classroom. If you need any help or have any questions, you are encouraged to contact the General Education Oversight Committee.

- Do I have to include my SET scores or Gen Ed Assessment data?

  We are aware that SET scores have been shown to be particularly unreliable indicators of instructor performance related to issues of race and gender. As a result, we do not require SET scores as part of applications. Instructors are allowed to choose to use their SET scores as one of their "artifacts", but they should be prepared to explain how they support the relevant award criteria.

  General Education Assessment data helps us assess the strengths and weaknesses of the General Education program and support the continued growth and success of both faculty and students. This assessment data cannot be required for any form of evaluation, including these awards, and is not required as part of your application. As with SET scores, however, an instructor may choose to use their assessment data as one of their "artifacts", but they should be prepared to explain how that data supports the relevant award criteria.

- What does diversity and inclusion mean in relation to this award?

  In asking applicants to talk about how they support a diverse and inclusive classroom, we do not necessarily mean assigning readings or creating assignments related to diversity and inclusion (though it may include that). There are many ways to create diverse and inclusive classrooms through the way that we design assignments, course policies, and student support, the authors we assign, the guest speakers we invite, and the tone we set. We encourage you to think broadly about what that looks like in your classroom.

- Am I eligible if I have worked as a TA for 3 semesters teaching my own sections?

This award recognizes instructors who have played an active role in the design and implementation of general education curriculum. We are aware that there is significant variation in the independence of TAs and the structure of general education courses across departments. If you designed the sections for which you were responsible and feel that you can answer the application questions and provide robust evidence to support your application, you are welcome to apply. We are happy to answer any questions you might have.

- What role do departments/chairs play in deciding who is nominated for these awards?

    While many university awards go through departmental/college systems and/or require a chair's/dean's signature, this award is specifically designed to be as open and accessible as possible. Any instructor in a general education course may self-nominate or be nominated by someone else. Chairs may choose to nominate instructors, but nominations are also accepted from all other parts of the university, and departments may not restrict applications from any instructor.

- What kinds of artifacts should I use?

    In thinking about what artifacts you wish to include in your application, we encourage you to choose evidence that supports your responses to the questions listed in the application form and the rubric. That might include: general education assessment reports, SoTL (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning) Publications, teaching-related conference presentations, anonymized student materials, syllabi, course websites, other course materials, videos, podcasts, published interviews, peer reviews of teaching, etc. This list of suggestions is not intended to be exhaustive, however, and we are open to other kinds of artifacts. We encourage applicants to reference and explain their artifacts in responding to the questions listed in the application form and on the rubric.

    You should only submit evidence from courses that fulfill a General Education requirement. If you are unsure whether your course fulfills a General Education requirement, you can check the [Undergraduate Bulletin](#).

    Previous awards and recognition (i.e. teaching awards from departments, colleges, universities, or professional associations) will not be considered as part of the evaluation process. Applicants are evaluated solely on their responses to the questions and the artifacts that they provide to support their responses to those questions. Please see the attached rubric for more detailed information.

- How long should my application be?

    We do not intend for this application process to be difficult. We know that our General Education instructors are busy people, and we do not want this form of recognition to create a burden. We also want to ensure that applications are evaluated fairly and equitably. There are word limits for all questions listed in the application form. We understand that submitted artifacts will vary in length and in type. In most cases, we

encourage you to submit a single document or piece of media for each artifact. If you are using student work as an example, you are welcome to include multiple pieces of student work in a single file, but we encourage you to look for representative examples (strong, average, and weak student assignments; a formative and summative assignment, etc) rather than submitting all student work for a semester.

- How do I write a strong letter of nomination?

  The GEOC has provided some guidelines and templates for writing letters of nomination or recommendation on our website. These are particularly geared toward helping students who may have never written these sorts of letters before. Nomination letters are merely a mechanism for encouraging submissions for the award and giving faculty, staff, administrators, and students the ability to recognize excellent instructors across campus. The GEOC does not consider nomination letters in the final evaluation of the application, and letters can be brief and factual. However, we will determine whether a nominee is eligible for an award before sending an application, so we do recommend that letters pay close attention to the application guidelines and the evaluation criteria as laid out in the rubric to ensure that nominees meet the general criteria for the award.

- Can students nominate instructors?

  Absolutely! We encourage student nominations, and the GEOC is happy to help any student who has questions about the process or needs support in submitting their nomination.

- Can an instructor win this award more than once?

  An instructor can only win this award once in a five year period.

- Which academic staff are eligible for this award?

  This award is open to all academic staff who teach a General Education course. That includes advisors and other staff members who are teaching Wayne Experience courses, but it also includes staff who teach as TAs and part-time faculty in university departments. If you meet the criteria laid out in the call for applications, you are encouraged to apply. If you have any questions, please contact the GEOC.

General Education Teaching Award
Evaluation Rubric

	4	3	2	1	Score
What role does collaboration play in your General Education course?	Evaluates examples of collaboration in General Education teaching, supported by direct evidence of impact on student achievement of Gen Ed learning outcomes inside and/or outside of the classroom	Explains examples of collaboration in General Education teaching, supported by indirect evidence of student achievement of Gen Ed learning outcomes.	Identifies collaboration in General Education teaching, but disconnected from student achievement of Gen Ed learning outcomes	No clear evidence of collaboration with either faculty or students in general education teaching	
How do your General Education courses contribute to the overall goals of the General Education Program?	Evaluates the ways that their General Education course contributes to the overall goals of the General Education Program inside and/or outside of the classroom, supported by direct evidence from submitted artifacts.	Explains the ways that their General Education course contributes to the overall goals of the General Education Program, supported by indirect evidence from submitted artifacts.	Describes the ways that their General Education course contributes to the overall goals of the General Education Program, drawing only on anecdotal evidence.	No evidence of the ways that their General Education course contributes to the overall goals of the General Education Program.	
What kinds of challenges or failures have you faced in your General Education courses? How have you responded?	Applies teaching innovations, supported by direct evidence and developed in response to failures/challenges (sharing with and supporting other instructors, applying to other courses, etc.)	Explains failures/challenges and responses implemented in the classroom, supported by evidence from submitted artifacts.	Describes failures/challenges and responses, drawing only on anecdotal evidence.	No clear examples of failures/challenges and/or their responses.	
How do you support student success in your General Education course?	Evaluates support for student success, supported by direct evidence of improved student performance inside and/or outside of the classroom.	Explains their strategies of support for student success, supported by indirect evidence from submitted artifacts.	Identifies support for student success, drawing only on anecdotal evidence.	No clear evidence of support for student success.	
How do you create and support a diverse and inclusive classroom?	Evaluates their support for a diverse and inclusive classroom, supported by direct evidence of positive student performance inside and/or outside of the classroom.	Explains their strategies of support for a diverse and inclusive classroom, supported by indirect evidence from submitted artifacts.	Describes strategies for support for a diverse and inclusive classroom, drawing only on anecdotal evidence.	No clear evidence of support for a diverse and inclusive classroom	
Total					

Rubric Glossary

Artifacts - The examples or evidence that an instructor provides as part of their application packet. Applicants use artifacts to provide direct evidence or examples to support their responses to application questions.

Anecdotal Evidence – Evidence based purely on observation and/or experience, collected in a casual or informal manner, relying heavily or entirely on personal testimony (e.g. instructor's observations of student reactions to activities; individual student comments, etc.).

Indirect Evidence – Evidence that shows an activity was conducted but does not provide direct evidence of the point it is intended to support; requires evaluators/applicants to infer the point.

Direct Evidence – Evidence that directly proves the fact or establishes the point it is intended to support.

Collaboration – Collaboration can include work among instructors, work among students, or work between instructors and students. Examples of collaboration may be drawn from course assignments, course policies, course development strategies, professional development, or any other activity related to General Education teaching.

Student Success – "Student Success is *the work that we all are doing together* to create the conditions where students can be transformed by their learning, thrive in college, graduate in a timely manner, and enjoy the benefits of a university education throughout their lives."