

DEAN'S STAFF EXCELLENCE AWARD

Purpose of the Award

The purpose of the Dean's Staff Excellence Award is to formally recognize the special efforts of staff members who consistently provide outstanding contributions to the work environment of the Grossman School of Business (GSB).

Description of the Award

The goal is to present one Staff Excellence Award each academic year. The winner will be presented with a certificate of recognition and a total award of \$1,500 that the recipient can allocate between a cash award (taxable income) and a professional development fund (non-taxable). The winner will also be recognized at the annual Faculty and Staff gathering in May and on the GSB website.

Eligibility

All permanent staff members (full-time or part-time) are eligible for the Award except for:

- Staff members who received this award within the past three years

Nomination Process

Any member of the Grossman School of Business community (faculty, staff, and students) may nominate staff members for the Dean's Staff Excellence Award. Staff members may also self-nominate. The nominator must submit a letter explaining the qualifications of the nominee and a description of how the nominee exemplifies excellence as outlined in the [Award Criteria](#) section of this document. The nominator must also secure two additional letters of support addressing the nominee's qualifications. It is encouraged to seek letters of support from a diverse pool (staff, faculty, students, UVM community members, etc.)

At the conclusion of the selection process and as part of recognizing employees, the nominees (both those selected and those not selected) will be presented with copies of the nomination letter and supporting documents.

Selection Process Schedule

Steps	Dates
Call for nominations sent to GSB Faculty and Staff	January 31, 2020
Deadline for nominations (including all letters of support)	April 5, 2020
Review of nominations by the Committee	By April 20, 2020
Announcement of award winner to the Dean	End of April
Presentation of Award at the annual Faculty and Staff gathering	May

Award Committee

- 2 GSB Staff: The last two recipients of the award. (If either person is no longer with the School, the Assistant Dean will assign a replacement. In the event that the replacement person is nominated for the award, they will recuse themselves from deliberations on their nomination).
- 1 Faculty: The previous recipient of the Faculty Excellence Award. (If the recipient is no longer with the School, the Associate Dean will take their place).

The committee chooses a Chair from amongst themselves. Members of the Committee may nominate individuals and/or provide letters of support; however, they will be asked to recuse themselves from deliberations on these individuals.

Award Criteria

Strong nominees should exhibit several of the characteristics listed below:

1. **Excellence in Initiative** – examples may be through the pursuit of work-related professional development and training, innovation in process, problem solving, workplace improvements in methods and outcomes, change agents.
2. **Excellence in Service** – demonstrates commitment to provide excellent service to faculty, students, staff and/or external parties, is known in the community as a reliable go-to person, a willing volunteer or good citizen who enriches the School (e.g. reaches out to new staff; motivates others around a cause).
3. **Excellence in Collaboration** – all staff collaborate with colleagues, UVM partners, students, and/or faculty on various projects or aspects of their jobs; this includes teamwork and collegueship.
4. **Excellence in Inclusion** – demonstrates commitment to diversity, inclusion, accessibility.

Factors considered by the Award Committee

- Nature and type of contribution (e.g. improving workplaces efficiency, quality of work life, customer service, problem-solving, collaboration, etc.) Contributions may be job related or other forms of activity, participation or support that contribute to the University community.
- Scope of impact of contribution to the GSB and UVM community.
- Evidence supported by examples.

Additional Resources

Tips on Writing Letters of Nomination or Support

Below are some tips to help letter writers brainstorm ideas and then craft a recommendation that can reflect the value they place on their nominated colleagues:

- **Give context:** Be sure to detail what the person does in the GSB/UVM community, how you have seen them in their role, and why their actions/contributions to the GSB/UVM community are worthy of recognition.
- **Tell a story:** Paint a picture in the reader's mind of why these contributions are so important. Telling a story that can serve as a microcosm for what this person does in the GSB/UVM community helps the reader get a deeper understanding of and appreciation for why the nominee is outstanding.
- **Discuss the nominee's impact:** Connect the dots between the role this person fills in the GSB/UVM community and how that role is reflected in the [Award Criteria](#).

Try to think of your letter as a supportive argument on behalf of the person who has been nominated; your goal is to use context and detail to lead the reader to the conclusion that the person you're writing on behalf of should be recognized. A helpful letter structure could be:

Month, Day, Year

To Whom it May Concern:

FIRST PARAGRAPH: Introduce the person you're nominating, including their position within GSB. In addition, introduce how you know this person: Is it a close colleague in your area? Is it someone you've partnered with on a project? Is it someone you've never directly worked with, but maybe you interact with quite a bit and they've had a positive impact on your experience at GSB/UVM? Give the reader some context for how you know the person; it will help the reader to start to form a picture in their mind of who this person is and what their role is in the GSB/UVM community.

SECOND PARAGRAPH: State why you are nominating this person: Why have they stood out to you as an exemplary member of the GSB/UVM community? Tie your reasons back to the [Award Criteria](#).

THIRD PARAGRAPH: Give the reader some additional context for the reasons you state above. A helpful way to do this can be to tell a story about this person. Bring them to life through their actions by recalling one or two experiences you had with them that made you think, "Wow, this person really is the epitome of GSB/UVM values." Then, tell that story; show the reader how the actions or ideas of this person made you think of them as outstanding. That story can be a powerful way to paint a picture in the reader's mind for who this person is and what their impact is on our community.

FOURTH PARAGRAPH: Discuss impact. Build off the story you've told and highlight that as an example of how this person reflects [Award Criteria](#). Think of discussing impact in up to three ways: 1) On the individual level: How has this person's actions/contributions to the GSB/UVM community had an impact on you? 2) How have you seen this person's actions/contributions have a positive impact on those around them? 3) How does this impact on those around them have a positive impact on GSB/UVM? Remember that the Dean's Staff Excellence Award is designed to recognize staff member who have a wide variety of roles at GSB, so think about how a person's work and/or your day-to-day experience with them reflects the mission, vision and values of GSB and UVM community.

Sincerely,

A few final tips:

- Keep it conversational: An effective letter does not need to be overly-formal. The tone for this story can be casual; think of it as you're explaining this person to a friend/colleague over coffee, and you just want to give them a clear explanation of why you admire the person you're writing for.
- Don't feel obligated to address every single [Award Criteria](#): Know that your letter is one of several that are submitted on behalf of an individual. Other letter writers will be supporting this person in different ways.

- Try to keep it to no more than two pages in length.
- Read your letter once over: Make sure you've said what you want to say. You may also want to find a friend or colleague to read your letter as well; sometimes fresh eyes can be helpful to pick up on tiny spelling or grammatical errors.