

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

June 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans, Directors and Chairpersons

FROM: Teresa Mastin, Vice Provost and Associate Vice President for Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs

SUBJECT: Teacher-Scholar Awards 2026-2027

Each year, nominations are solicited for the Teacher-Scholar Awards (TSA). Up to six TSAs are awarded, each with a stipend of \$2,000. Recipients will be recognized in spring 2027.

Please see the page below titled “Maximum Number of Nominations” for your college/mau maximum number of nominations. Maximums are based on the number of eligible faculty assigned to colleges as of March 2026. Colleges are encouraged to forward the maximum number of nominations. You may nominate MSU faculty members who are tenure-system faculty from the ranks of assistant professor and associate professor, individuals holding NSCL faculty appointments, individuals holding faculty health programs (HP) appointments, and Law College faculty, and who meet the eligibility criteria for the TSA. Previous recipients of this award are not eligible.



An advisory (or awards) committee should be involved in the college selection process, and students should participate. Women and minorities should be included on nomination and selection committees. Efforts to submit a diverse set of nominees should be encouraged and supported.

Office of the Provost

Hannah Administration
Building
Michigan State University
426 Auditorium Road
Suite 430
East Lansing, MI 48824

517-432-6550
Fax: 517-432-9601
provost.msu.edu

Nominators may contact honorifics@msu.edu for the committee’s feedback if the nominee is not selected for the award. A nominee not selected for the TSA may be resubmitted in the subsequent award cycle if they still qualify. The candidate must be resubmitted through the college and will be included in the college’s maximum number of nominations. When resubmitting the nominee’s dossier, it is important to have requested and addressed any feedback. Also, you may review model nomination materials based on the supporting documents submitted on behalf of past recipients of the TSA by contacting at honorifics@msu.edu.

See the attached for details about the selection criteria and materials required to forward nominations to the All-University Awards Committee. Confirm the college deadline prior to gathering and preparing support materials. Colleges should forward nominee dossiers to the **Office of the Provost via the [Teacher-Scholar Award Nomination Form](#) no later than Monday, November 9, 2026. NOMINEE DOSSIERS MUST BE SUBMITTED AS A SINGLE AND COMPLETE PDF DOCUMENT.**

Colleges are encouraged to establish nomination and review procedures now and issue a call for nominations immediately to allow time to meet the All-University Awards Committee deadline. Please do not hesitate to contact honorifics@msu.edu with questions. This memorandum and the attachments are on the [All-University Awards website](#).

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
TEACHER-SCHOLAR AWARDS 2026-27

Teacher-Scholar Awards from the Faculty Handbook

Teacher-Scholar Awards are given to six members of the tenure-system faculty from the ranks of assistant professor and associate professor who, early in their careers, have earned the respect of students and colleagues for their devotion to and skill in teaching. The essential purpose of the award is to provide recognition to the best teachers who have served at MSU, in the tenure system, for seven years or less. Nominations are normally made by department chairpersons/school directors after consultation with an appropriate committee of colleagues. No department/school may make more than two nominations. “At large” nominations are also invited from an appropriate student organization. **All nominations are reviewed by a college screening committee**, which may forward the number of nominations to the Office of the Provost as shown in the table below.

Nominations

To be considered for an MSU Teacher-Scholar Award, a tenure-system faculty member must hold the rank of assistant professor or associate professor and, at the beginning of the award period, must have served on the faculty for at least two semesters but no more than seven academic years in the tenure system at Michigan State University. In addition, nominees must not have more than ten years of employment experience of all kinds since receipt of the terminal degree applicable to their discipline. Years spent in “postdoc” appointments will not be counted in determining eligibility. Nominees for a Teacher–Scholar Award must be willing to permit a member of the awards committee to visit their classrooms. Committee visitation is a part of the total evaluation procedure only for those nominees who, after preliminary screening, seem most promising. (MSU College of Law, FRIB/NSCL faculty and Health Programs [HP] faculty are also eligible for nomination).

Number of Eligible Tenure System Assistant/Associate Professors in College	Maximum Number of Teacher-Scholar Nominations forwarded by the College
Less than 40	2
40-45	3
More than 45	4

Maximum Number of College Nominations

Up to Four Nominations: Units with more than 45 tenure-system faculty from the ranks of assistant professor and associate professor (with at least one year but not more than seven years of service within the tenure system)

College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
College of Arts and Letters
Eli Broad College of Business
College of Engineering
College of Human Medicine
College of Natural Science
College of Social Science

Up to Three Nominations: Units with 45 tenure-system faculty from the ranks of assistant professor and associate professor (with at least one year but not more than seven years of service within the tenure system)

None

Up to Two Nominations: (Units with fewer than 45 tenure system faculty from the ranks of assistant professor and associate professor (with at least one year but not more than seven years of service within the tenure system))

College of Communication Arts and Sciences
College of Education
Residential College in the Arts and Humanities
(School of Residential Community-Engaged Arts and Humanities)
James Madison College
College of Law
Lyman Briggs College
College of Music
College of Nursing
College of Osteopathic Medicine
College of Veterinary Medicine
Facility for Rare Isotope Beams/National Superconducting Cyclotron Laboratory

Annually, up to six Teacher–Scholar Awards are conferred on MSU tenure-system faculty from the ranks of assistant professor and associate professor who, early in their careers, have earned the respect of students and colleagues for their devotion to and skill in teaching. MSU College of Law, NSCL faculty, and Health Programs (HP) faculty are eligible. The purpose of this award is **to recognize the best teachers** who have served at MSU, in the tenure system, for seven years or less. Award recipients receive a stipend of \$2,000.¹

At the time of nomination, the candidate must hold the rank of assistant professor or associate professor in the MSU tenure system and must have served on the MSU faculty for at least two semesters but not more than seven academic years within the tenure system.

A faculty member, student, or faculty/student organization may submit nominations to the screening committee in the college in which the candidate discharges his or her instructional responsibilities. Confirm the college deadline date before gathering and preparing the candidate’s support materials. The nomination form is to be completed by a “nominator,” who may be either a faculty member or a student or a faculty/student organization. The college screening committee, designated by the dean in consultation with the college advisory committee, should consist of five members: three faculty (at least one associate professor or assistant professor) and two students, undergraduate or graduate. **Each college screening committee may submit up to its maximum allowable number of nominations to the All-University**

Awards Committee via the [Teacher-Scholar Award Nomination Form](#) by Monday, November 9, 2026. **NOMINEE DOSSIERS SUBMITTED WITHOUT ALL OF THE REQUIRED MATERIALS WILL BE RETURNED.**

Criteria

All-University Awards nominations, including those for the Teacher-Scholar Award, will be reviewed for misconduct and violations of University policy to ensure alignment with the [University's Mission and Values](#) before being advanced for committee review.

In addition to the specific requirements and qualifications for each All-University Award, it is expected that all recipients will have demonstrated behavior over their career that reflects the core values of Michigan State University. Specifically, as stated in the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities policy:

As the primary functions of an academic community, learning, teaching, scholarship, and public service must be characterized by a fundamental commitment to academic freedom and maintained through reasoned discourse, intellectual honesty, mutual respect and openness to constructive criticism and change. Faculty members, as central to this community, serve as scholars pursuing the search for knowledge and its free expression, as teachers instructing students, and as professionals and citizens contributing special knowledge and skills through public service and community participation. In the performance of all these functions faculty members are held accountable to the University, in accordance with established policies and procedures.

When addressing the criteria below, nominators and referees, please keep in mind that MSU faculty members—as faculty at a leading research-intensive university—are responsible for the creation and dissemination of knowledge. The most effective teachers will have their instruction linked to and informed by their research and creative activities.

- A. Instructional effectiveness; impact on the student.** In providing evidence of the candidate's excellence and success in instruction, consider the following: SPLS forms, peer evaluation, evaluations by affected groups; teaching portfolios, including course syllabi, examinations; websites, etc.; publications and presentations related to pedagogy; guest lectures and visiting adjunct appointments; grants received in support of instruction; and instructional awards or other forms of professional or alumni recognition of teaching.
- B. Uses of innovative techniques and/or approaches in teaching. It is IMPORTANT to explain** how these techniques or approaches **are innovative and/or remain innovative** in the department or your discipline.
- C. Scholarship.** The nature of scholarship and creative activity varies across disciplines and areas within a discipline. Excellence is demonstrated in many ways: publications, presentations, poster sessions, websites, etc.; performances and exhibits; scores, showings, recordings, and curatorial activities; citations of one's work by others; evaluations by peers and affected groups including comments by outside evaluators, journal editors, referees, etc.; grants received in support of research; and research awards or other forms of professional/alumni recognition.
- D. Public Service/Outreach.**

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
TEACHER-SCHOLAR AWARDS 2026-27

Section 1. [DATA FORM](#)

Section 2. **NOMINATOR STATEMENT (LETTER).**

See criteria above and Instructions to Nominator page. Two to three pages (not to exceed three pages).

Section 3. **NOMINEE'S PROFILE/SKETCH.**

To familiarize committee members with the nominee's academic background, areas of interest, and accomplishments. One to two pages (not to exceed two pages).

Section 4. **LETTERS OF SUPPORT.**

At least two and not more than two FACULTY letters, and at least three and not more than three STUDENT letters. Letters should be provided by students at all levels—undergraduate and graduate. When the nominee's primary teaching responsibility has been teaching undergraduates, please include letters from undergraduates. Encourage students to explain how the design and challenges of courses stood out. When addressing the criteria (below), nominators and referees should keep in mind that faculty members at MSU—a leading research-intensive University—are responsible for the creation and dissemination of knowledge. The **most effective teachers** will have their **instruction linked to and informed by their research and creative activities**. Letters are not to be repetitive. **Selection committee members suggest that more than the required number of letters of support be solicited, so that the nominator may select those in combination that make the most complete and compelling case in addressing the criteria.** Letters should be illustrative and provide examples and details. Letter writers should be aware that the selection committee is comprised of faculty and students from across campus and the colleges and may not be familiar with the nominee's discipline, so care should be given to properly contextualize why the nominee is particularly outstanding in their field.

- a. Instructional effectiveness; impact on students.
- b. Uses of **innovative techniques and/or approaches in teaching (include examples)**. It is **IMPORTANT** to **explain how techniques and/or approaches are innovative in the department and/or in the discipline and consider how they REMAIN INNOVATIVE**.
- c. **Scholarship**. The nature of scholarship and creative activity varies across and within disciplines. Excellence is demonstrated in many various ways: publications, presentations, poster sessions, websites, etc.; performances and exhibits; scores, showings, recordings, and curatorial activities; citations of one's work by others; evaluations by peers and affected groups including comments by outside evaluators, journal editors, referees, etc.; grants received in support of research; and research awards or other forms of professional/alumni recognition.
- d. **Public service/outreach**

Section 5. **CURRENT CURRICULUM VITAE (CV).**

The CV is to be **SELECTIVE AND NO MORE THAN 15 PAGES**.

- a. **Separate or identify (or indicate by asterisk (“*”)) peer-reviewed or refereed items** (including reports, meetings, and other evidence of merit).
- b. **For multiple author listings, indicate how the primary/lead author is identified or that all authors have made an approximately equal contribution.**
- c. Fellowships, grants and contracts:
 - o **include stipend or dollar amounts;**
 - o **indicate nominee's degree of responsibility (PI, Co-PI, etc.)** in the acquisition.
- d. **Awards** given by professional associations, societies, or other relevant organizations (provide NAME of the association, etc.).
- e. Memberships on national and international committees, associations, and boards.
- f. Editorships of professional journals.

Section 6. TEACHING PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT.

One page only. The candidate provides this.

- a. **Candidate's teaching philosophy.**
- b. Describe its **implementation.**
- c. How do you determine its **effectiveness?**
- d. If not effective, how do you make **modifications?** Describe modifications.

Section 7. TEACHING SCHEDULE AND ADVISING RESPONSIBILITIES.

At least 2-4 semesters, including summers when relevant. Please provide a separate sheet.

Section 8. TEACHING TABLE.

Allows you to PROVIDE DETAILED INFORMATION ON COURSES, AND STUDENT EVALUATION OF TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS IN SUMMARIZED FORM. Complete TEACHING TABLE for the last eight classes taught. If the nominee has not taught eight classes, then complete the classes the nominee has taught.

- **Student Perceptions of Learning Survey (SPLS).** The six composite profile factors are found in the Teaching Table (SPLS) and should match reports to instructors, department chairs, and deans.
- When **Unit-Specific Student Evaluation Instruments** are used rather than SPLS, fill in the table as completely as possible for classes taught. You may modify the table according to the categories your unit uses in its teaching evaluations.
- If the table cannot be modified to provide evaluation in summary form, you are still required to provide teaching effectiveness **in summary form**. Do this on a separate 1-2 pages (not to exceed two pages) to complete the requirement for SECTION 8 (list classes in the table and provide the details indicated and note that the teaching evaluation summary is attached).
- An example of a unit-specific student evaluation instrument would be *Summary Statistics of Student Responses* (College of Human Medicine).
- Evaluations from training or educational **workshops** may be provided in summarized form in this section. Teaching in **nontraditional settings** should be explained in this section. Is teaching in the nontraditional setting evaluated? Is there a means to summarize student/participant evaluation of the course? If so, please provide in this section.
- There **MUST be evidence of teaching effectiveness IN SUMMARIZED FORM.**

Section 9. DRAFT CITATION.

To be included in the Awards Ceremony booklet. Please enclose a citation of about 325 words to appear in the awards brochure if the nominee is selected for the award. Please list the nominee's name as they wish it to appear in the awards brochure. List joint appointments, with the primary appointment listed first. See "Tips for Writing Draft Citations" below.

Section 10. TEACHING DOCUMENT

Please provide ONE document. For example, course syllabus, course outline, student assignment, student quiz, or examination. No books, journals, offprints, or journal articles, and the like.

INSTRUCTIONS TO NOMINATOR

CRITERIA. When addressing criteria, please keep in mind that faculty members at MSU, as a leading research-intensive University, are responsible for the creation and dissemination of knowledge. The most effective teachers will have their instruction linked to and informed by their research and creative activities. As is specified by the award, **evidence of excellence in teaching is required.**

INSTRUCTION. In providing evidence of the candidate's excellence and success in instruction, consider the following: SPLS forms or other student evaluation instruments, peer evaluation, evaluations by affected groups; teaching portfolios, including course syllabi, examinations; websites, etc.; publications and presentations related to pedagogy; guest lectures and visiting adjunct appointments; grants received in support of instruction; and instructional awards or other forms of professional alumni recognition.

The Quality of Instruction

1. What evidence do you have that the candidate's courses are highly regarded?
2. Briefly discuss the candidate's skill in various teaching situations (e.g., large lecture, recitation, seminar, other).
3. What innovative techniques has the candidate used in their courses? **It is important to explain how these are innovative** in the department or discipline. Provide examples. Have these techniques **remained innovative**? Has the candidate modified techniques so that they remain innovative? Explain.

Contributions to the Instructional Program. Be as specific as possible.

1. How has the candidate contributed to the work of departmental committees responsible for curriculum revisions?
2. How has the candidate developed innovative and effective instructional approaches in course(s) in which they have been involved?
3. How has the candidate improved course(s) they have taught? For example, by course outlines or assignment sheets? Please explain.
4. How effective is the candidate in supervising teaching assistants?
5. How has the candidate excelled in academic advising?

SCHOLARSHIP. The nature of scholarship and creative activity varies across disciplines. Excellence can be demonstrated in many ways: publications, presentations, poster sessions, websites, etc.; performances and exhibits; scores, showings, recordings, and curatorial activities; citations of one's work by others; evaluations by peers and affected groups including comments by outside evaluators, journal editors, referees, etc.; grants received in support of research; and research awards or other forms of professional/alumni recognition.

1. Please describe the candidate's primary scholarly and creative interests and accomplishments, with special reference to current work.
2. List articles or monographs, either published or accepted for publication, or papers presented to professional groups.
3. Include comments of peers and other evaluations on the quality of scholarship.

PUBLIC SERVICE/OUTREACH

1. Comment on the candidate's quality of contribution to outreach activities and/or public service. These should involve the application of the faculty member's professional training and competence to issues and problems significant to external constituencies and which are related to the academic program objectives of the faculty member's department.
2. Include comments of peers and other evaluations on the quality of the candidate's contributions.

SUMMARY

Evaluate the overall quality of the candidate as a teacher-scholar in comparison with relevant peers.

SECTION 9

TIPS FOR WRITING DRAFT CITATIONS

(Use this outline as applicable to the award)

IMPORTANT:

Please print the name as it should appear in the awards brochure. Draft citations should be approximately 325 words. *If you wish to see examples of draft citations, please reach out to honorifics@msu.edu.*

The citation will be printed in the program booklet. The citation should be an accurate statement of the person's achievements, but it should also be:

Distinctive. The citations should reflect an honoree's distinction; a relevant tidbit about the person (as opposed to the person's achievements) is helpful (e.g., "An advisor who is also broadly versed in music, literature, and the fine arts, Ms. X.")

Creative. Search for unusual and descriptive adjectives, varying cadences and turns of phrase.

Easily understood by a lay audience.

Citations should include such items as:

- A quotation from a student (or a colleague) from the material submitted adds human interest to the citation. Such quotations should be specific rather than general. "One of the most important things Ms. X communicates is her conviction that service in a university can be the heart of an honorable way of life." is preferable to "She was the best advisor I've ever had." Don't overlook humorous quotations.
- Statements of the person's area of expertise and the overall significance of the person's contributions/achievements to the world/the university, especially across disciplines. How far does their influence reach? State? National? International? Public/private sector? What constituent groups?
- Specific ways in which her/his excellence has been evidenced. Undergraduate, graduate, or both. Extension. Advancing diversity. Textbooks and curriculum development. Student advising and mentorship. Where do students go after MSU? Support for funding for equipment or scholarships.
- Specific evidence of scholarship and contributions to other areas of the university's mission, such as research. Avoid citing numbers of things unless they are phenomenal. Instead, cite capstone examples. Use layperson's terms where possible and cite the usefulness or results of the person's work in their largest context. Grants, professional societies, and awards are appropriate here, but only the most significant.
- Other - Professional affiliations, consulting service/outreach. MSU committee service. Again, use only the most significant examples.
- Summary sentence of the person's worthiness for the award.

CHECKLIST

ONE COPY. Must be readable when scanned. NOMINEE DOSSIERS SUBMITTED WITHOUT ALL OF THE MATERIALS REQUIRED WILL BE RETURNED. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS. Arrange materials in the order below. Awards committees have suggested that a Table of Contents be submitted as well.

1. Completed **DATA FORM**
 - a. Candidate has **not had more than ten years of experience of all kinds since receipt of the terminal degree applicable to their discipline.** “Postdoc” appointments are not counted in determining eligibility.
 - b. Candidate is in the MSU tenure system at the rank of assistant professor or associate professor. MSU College of Law and Health Programs (HP) faculty are also eligible.
 - c. Candidate served on the MSU faculty for **at least two semesters but not more than seven academic years.** The candidate’s primary involvement is teaching.
2. **NOMINATOR STATEMENT (LETTER).** The letter should be both informative and illustrative of why the nominee is most deserving. Because the selection committee is comprised of faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students from across campus, care should be taken to contextualize why the nominee is outstanding in the discipline.
3. **NOMINEE’S PROFILE/SKETCH** to familiarize the committee with the nominee’s academic background, areas of interest and accomplishments. You may use bios on the department’s website. 1-2 pages. Not to exceed 2 pages.
4. **LETTERS OF SUPPORT:**
 - a. **At least TWO and not more than two FACULTY** support letters.
 - b. **At least THREE and not more than three STUDENT** support letters.
5. **Current CURRICULUM VITAE.** The CV is to be **SELECTIVE AND NO MORE THAN 15 PAGES**, including evidence of research and creative activities, including—as applicable—detailed evidence of research and creative activities. However, omit long lists of minor activities.
 - a. **Separate (and identify) or indicate by asterisk (“*”) peer-reviewed or refereed items** from other items (including reports, meetings, and other evidence of merit).
 - b. List authors the way they appear. **For multiple authors, indicate how the primary/lead author is identified and/or that all authors have made an approximately equal contribution.**
 - c. Fellowships, grants and contracts:
 - **include stipend or dollar amounts.**
 - **indicate nominee’s degree of responsibility in the acquisition.**
 - d. **Awards** by professional associations, societies, or other relevant organizations (provide NAME of association, etc.).
 - e. **Memberships** on national and international committees, associations, and boards.
 - f. **Editorships** of professional journals.
6. **TEACHING PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT.** One page only. **The candidate provides this.**
 - a. Candidate’s teaching philosophy.
 - b. Describe its implementation.
 - c. How do you determine its effectiveness?
 - d. If not effective, how do you make modifications? Describe modifications.
7. **TEACHING SCHEDULE and ADVISING RESPONSIBILITIES** for 2-4 semesters, including summer when applicable. Include a separate page for this.
8. **TEACHING TABLE: Provide detailed information on courses and results from SPLS Composite Profile Factors** or other student evaluation instruments used by the department. **You MUST provide a summary of student evaluations.** If your unit’s student evaluation instrument does not fit into any categories comparable to the Composite Profile Factors on the TABLE, you are still required to provide evidence that student evaluations of the nominee’s teaching effectiveness are exemplary. Place in this section and limit to 1-2 pages.
9. **CITATION.** Draft citation of 325 words for awards brochure. List the candidate’s name as they wish it to appear in the awards brochure and list joint appointments, with the primary appointment listed first.
10. **ONE DOCUMENT USED BY THE CANDIDATE IN TEACHING.** For example, course syllabus, course outline, student assignment, student quiz, or examination. No books, journals, offprints, or journal articles.

¹ The Tax Reform Act (1986) eliminated the general exclusion of awards made in recognition of educational or scientific achievement. All MSU recognition awards are taxable income and subject to withholdings and FICA.