

NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY
President's Distinguished Teaching Fellow
Revised 9/26/2025

Background: Northern Arizona University has an historical and philosophical commitment to excellence in teaching and advancing student learning. Faculty commitment to continuously strengthening teaching is reflected in high student appraisal of NAU faculty, strong levels of student satisfaction in surveys such as the National Survey of Student Engagement, and attention to pedagogical innovation in support of student success.

Faculty who are designated as President's Distinguished Teaching Fellows ("Teaching Fellows") are scholarly teachers whose teaching represents the highest levels of excellence and whose pedagogical expertise has a positive impact at NAU and beyond. Scholarly teachers pursue teaching as an intellectual activity as they engage in systematic observation, reflection and analysis to improve their teaching and student learning. Scholarly teaching reflects a thoughtful engagement, integration, and implementation of research/literature-based strategies, ideas, and resources to bring about more effective teaching and learning. The honor of being designated as a President's Distinguished Teaching Fellow also includes an expectation of leadership and generative influence on the work of others. Teaching Fellows are expected to have disseminated their pedagogically-focused scholarly work and expertise within and beyond NAU. These achievements are expected to contribute to the pedagogical excellence of others and the growing body of pedagogical-focused literature.

Membership: Up to 3 faculty per year can be designated as a President's Distinguished Teaching Fellow.

Criteria: Full-time faculty are eligible to be nominated if they have completed a minimum of five (5) years of full-time teaching at NAU. Nominees are sought who meet following criteria:

1. Demonstrate substantive evidence of positive impact and influence on student learning and student success in a diverse student population, e.g., through curriculum and teaching innovations, through advising/mentoring, student assessment information, in- and out-of-class instructional activities, student achievements;
2. Demonstrate substantive evidence of scholarly teaching and positive impacts on student learning and success e.g., thoughtful engagement, integration, and implementation of research/literature-based strategies, ideas, and resources,

engagement in systematic observation, reflection and analysis to improve their teaching and student learning;

3. Demonstrate substantive evidence of leadership and generative influence on the work of others in relationship to undergraduate and/or graduate education at NAU, e.g., through faculty professional development, curriculum and teaching innovations, committee contributions, programming initiatives.
4. Demonstrate substantive evidence of dissemination of pedagogically-focused scholarly work and expertise beyond NAU, e.g., through publications and/or presentations, peer-reviewed scholarship, invited presentations, leadership of workshops/training sessions.

Nomination Process

The call for nominations for Teaching Fellows will be made during the fall academic term for the subsequent academic year. A screening committee* representing multiple constituencies across the university, appointed by the President, will be convened to review nominations. The committee will, after review of the nomination materials, select faculty to invite to submit portfolios for further consideration. The committee will then review the full applications (i.e., both the original nomination and the candidate portfolio) submitting their evaluation to the Provost and President. The President, in consultation with the Provost, will make the final selection(s) for the designation.

Nominations: A faculty colleague or academic administrator with detailed knowledge of the faculty member's overall excellence, creativity and impact in their teaching endeavors may submit nomination letters and support packets that address the award criteria. The nomination packets need to include each of the following (and are not to exceed 13 pages):

A cover sheet identifying the nominee's name, departmental affiliation, number of years at NAU, a paragraph description of the nominee's teaching assignment over the past three years, and a list of different courses taught over the past five years with a brief description (a few sentence annotation) for each (one page).

1. A letter of nomination that provides a descriptive overview of the nominee's work in relationship to the four criteria (two pages maximum).
2. Nominee's statement that provides a brief description of the ways in which their work addresses the four criteria (two pages maximum).
3. Three letters of support that provide specific details about the impact of the nominee's work in relationship to at least one of the four criteria (two pages maximum for each letter).

4. An abbreviated CV (two pages maximum) from the nominee that summarizes education, professional experiences, and other information applicable to the President's Distinguished Teaching Fellow award criteria.

An electronic copy of the complete nomination packet must be submitted to the Office of the Provost (provost@nau.edu) by 5:00pm on the last Monday of October. Nomination packets must be a single, comprehensive electronic document that includes all required elements (minimum of 11pt font and 1" margins; pages can be single or double-spaced, maximum of 13 pages). Nominations that fail to adhere to these format requirements will not be considered.

Portfolios: Nominees who have been invited to submit a portfolio should develop a representative (not comprehensive) view of their work at NAU related to the multiple dimensions of teaching and learning. The purpose of the portfolio is to provide readers with an understanding of the scope, quality, impact, and influence of the faculty nominee's work. The portfolio packet should demonstrate a sustained record of teaching excellence marked by vision, design, analysis and reflection and needs to include each of the following (not to exceed 11 pages in total):

1. Substantive evidence of positive impact and influence on student learning and student success in a diverse student population, e.g., through curriculum and teaching innovations, through advising/mentoring, student assessment information, in and out-of-class instructional activities, student achievements;
2. Substantive evidence of scholarly teaching and positive impacts on student learning and success, e.g., thoughtful engagement, integration, and implementation of research/literature-based strategies, ideas, and resources, engagement in systematic observation, reflection and analysis to improve their teaching and student learning;
3. Substantive evidence of leadership and positive impact on colleagues' scholarly teaching and undergraduate or graduate education at NAU, e.g., through faculty professional development, curriculum and teaching innovations, committee contributions, programming initiatives;
4. Demonstrate substantive evidence of dissemination of pedagogically-focused scholarly work and expertise beyond NAU, e.g., through publications and/or presentations, peer-reviewed scholarship, invited presentations, leadership of workshops/training sessions; and
5. Proposed efforts or project of significance for the improvement of teaching, student learning, and/or student success at NAU.

An electronic copy of the full portfolio must be submitted to provost@nau.edu no later than posted due date. Portfolios must be a single, comprehensive electronic document that includes all required elements (minimum of 11pt font and 1" margins; pages can be single or double-spaced, maximum of 11 pages). Portfolios that fail to adhere to these requirements will not be considered.

Terms: Faculty designated as President's Distinguished Teaching Fellow receive an annual salary stipend of \$5000 and a professional development fund of \$3000 for each of four years. The Teaching Fellows will be announced and recognized at the Professional Achievement Awards in April with the designation of Teaching Fellow taking effect the subsequent academic year. Teaching Fellows are entitled to indicate their status as a President's Distinguished Teaching Fellow with the year of their designation noted (e.g., President's Distinguished Teaching Fellow, 2016).

Teaching Fellows are expected to be active members of the NAU Teaching Academy and serve as board members of the Academy. Fellows are expected to continue to have a positive impact and influence on student learning and student success as scholarly teachers; sustain a record of teaching excellence; lead and have an impact on colleagues' scholarly teaching; build and maintain reputation as expert scholarly teacher beyond NAU; and pursue their proposed effort or project of significance. As Teaching Academy members, Teaching Fellows are expected to submit an annual report; with the additional requirement of providing an annual status update on their proposed effort or project of significance. Teaching Fellows are invited to remain active members of the Teaching Academy following their term as a Teaching Fellow.

Terms of Service and Sabbatical or Other Leaves of Absence: Teaching Fellows who are granted a sabbatical or other leave will be placed on inactive status as a Fellow during the term of their leave. During sabbatical or other leave, the Teaching Fellow is not eligible to receive stipends (salary adjustment or professional development). Salary stipend and professional development funds will resume upon return from leave and continue until all four years of payments have concluded.

*When possible, the committee membership will include representatives from all academic colleges as well as the Teaching Academy, department chairs, deans, and the Faculty Senate.