



St. Thomas University

POLICY:	Special Merit Awards
Effective Date:	January 26, 1994
Revised Date:	June 2003, April 2006, November 2011, February 2014, May 2018
Review Date:	May 2023
Approving Body:	Board of Governors
Authority:	Act creating St. Thomas University
Implementation:	Vice-President (Academic and Research)
Contact:	Vice-President (Academic and Research)
Applies to:	Full Time Faculty

1.0 Reason for Policy

This policy identifies the conditions under which special merit awards will be granted.

2.0 Policy Statement

2.0.1. Preamble

The spirit of article 18.02.5 of the collective agreement is to provide recognition and remuneration for individuals who make outstanding contributions in the course of their work for the University. A standard definition of the duties and responsibilities of faculty members is embodied in the collective agreement. Therefore, the contributions which will be recognized through special merit awards will arise from the following activities as described in article 8.02 of the collective agreement:

- a) Quality and effectiveness as a teacher;
- b) Scholarly productivity, including research, publications, and work of creative or cultural significance; and,
- c) Other contributions to the University, the professional field (where relevant), the Union and the community.

To reflect these areas of professional responsibility, three awards of \$1500.00 each will be presented annually:

- a) The John McKendy Memorial **Teaching Award**,
- b) The University **Scholarship Award**.
- c) The University **Service Award**.

The operative question in granting a special merit award should not be whether an individual has achieved a stated standard of competence; rather, activity in any area of responsibility should constitute a contribution greater than is usually expected from faculty members.

2.0.2. Function

Special merit awards have been established for the purpose of recognizing, on a year-by-year basis, particular faculty members who have demonstrated excellence in their professional activities. In order to determine the recipients of special merit awards, a Special Merit Awards Committee is established and will function according to the following procedures.

2.0.3. Membership

The Special Merit Awards Committee shall consist of the following members:

- (a) Vice-President (Academic & Research) (*ex officio*) as Chair
- (b) The Dean of Humanities and the Dean of Social Sciences
- (c) Two faculty members elected by Senate
- (d) One student elected by Senate
- (e) For the adjudication of the John McKendy Memorial Teaching Award only, the Director of Learning and Teaching Development will sit as a non-voting member of the Committee.

The membership of the committee should, as far as possible, reflect both gender equity and a diversity of disciplines.

2.0.4. Activities of the Special Merit Awards Committee

- (a) Identify, through nominations and by Committee initiative, suitable candidates for special merit awards; The Committee should make every effort to encourage nominations from groups that have been traditionally under-represented, including women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and visible minorities.
- (b) Review and evaluate candidates for special merit awards;
- (c) Review periodically the criteria and procedures for the awarding of special merit awards.

2.0.5. Guidelines for Selecting Candidates

- (a) Any full-time faculty member is eligible for a special merit award.
- (b) Although a special merit award is presented in recognition of individuals who make outstanding contributions in the year in which the award is made, this in no way is intended to exclude achievements which represent the culmination of several years' work.
- (c) The nomination and recognition of faculty members not already so honored should be encouraged.
- (d) The names of nominees not selected will remain before the Committee for three years
- (e) Self-nominations will be accepted.

2.0.6. Committee Procedures

- (a) Nominations for a given year normally shall be solicited by the Vice-President (Academic and Research) by January 10. The call is publicized by the university. A reminder will be sent out January 20.
- (b) Nominations presented to the Committee will be in the form of a letter to be submitted to the Vice-President (Academic and Research) normally by February 15. Such letters may be multiply signed, but the primary consideration will be the content of the letter rather than the number of signatories.
- (c) The Committee will request, from the nominators and/or the candidates, documentation of the achievements being considered for the special merit award by March 20. For the John McKendy Memorial Teaching Award ONLY, nominees are required to submit a Teaching portfolio.

Portfolios are to follow the following specifications

- I. a maximum of thirteen (13) pages in length; anything beyond 13 pages will not be considered;
- II. • 12 point font;
- III. documents must be stapled only; documents that are bound or in binders will not be accepted.

Portfolios should contain the following (in this order):

Part 1: A one-to-two page summary highlighting the candidate's major academic career achievements in teaching, service, and research; and emphasizing demonstrated teaching excellence over an extended period;

Part 2: A one-to-two page statement (dated and signed) from the nominee about his/her philosophy of teaching and how this has worked in the classroom;

Part 3: Evidence of excellence in teaching. Ideally, this evidence will reflect the criteria for the award (above), and may include the nominee's most effective teaching and learning strategies, learning activities or assessment strategies, and a reflective statement about how this evidence reflects the teaching philosophy statement;

Part 4: A summary of student ratings from three (3) recent courses, normally not more than 18 months old, which can include quantitative and/or qualitative data. This section should also contain a brief statement of each course context and a brief description of the University's course evaluation procedures;

Part 5: Any further documentary evidence, which might help the selection committee reach a decision.

- (d) Decisions of the Committee will be made by secret ballot with the Chair not participating. Tie votes will be decided by the Chair.
- (e) By April 15, the Special Merit Awards Committee will provide the President with its recommendations. The Committee may recommend a maximum of three awards. If there are no suitable candidates for any of the awards, the Committee may choose not to make a recommendation.

2.0.7. The Awards

- (a) The awards shall consist of a credit in the winner's Professional Development Allowance in accordance with Article 18.02.5.
- (b) The awards shall be presented at spring convocation.
- (c) The Special Merit Awards Committee will seek ways to bring attention to the award winners through such things as publicly-displayed plaques, listings in the University Calendar, and University talks.

3.0 Accountability

The Vice-President (Academic & Research) will be responsible for communication, administration and interpretation of this policy.

4.0 Secondary Documents

None.

5.0 Review

This policy shall normally be reviewed every five (5) years and the next review is scheduled for May 2023.

6.0 Effect on Previous Statements

This policy supersedes all previous policies on the subject.

7.0 Cross References

None

Vice-President (Academic & Research)

May 2018