

Documenting Your Teaching and Research and NIU Teaching/Research and Grant Awards

Documenting your teaching and research efforts can be useful as a way to reflect on, improve and direct your teaching and research activities. Keeping good records of both teaching and research also serves to help facilitate faculty service reports and tenure and promotion processes. The NIU community recognizes and supports faculty who excel in the practice of teaching, research and engagement through several prestigious awards. These awards are presented below.

Evidence of teaching can be derived from your own records as well as records from others while evidence of research is made apparent by publications and other activities. Most of your teaching and research documents can be stored electronically for easy access and flash drives provide storage that is both portable and secure.

The lists below highlight a range of teaching and research evidence but should not be construed as the required documentation for all department or school personnel committees. Please discuss with your department or school chair or director about those requirements necessary for applying for tenure and/or promotion.

Evidence of Teaching from Oneself

- Courses taught
- Course syllabi
- Exams, quizzes and projects
- Reading lists
- Handouts and worksheets
- Student accomplishments
- Teaching goals and innovations
- Course and laboratory development
- Theses and dissertations directed
- Independent studies directed
- Curricular and programmatic contributions
- Instructional workshops
- Teaching philosophy
- Self evaluations and reflections
- Online course development

Evidence of Teaching from Others

- Student evaluations of courses taught
- Peer evaluations
- Reports from classroom observations
- Collegial comments and mentoring
- Teaching honors, awards and grants
- Invitations to speak and interviews on teaching
- Feedback from students

Evidence of Research, Scholarly and Creative Activities

- Published research articles in national, international and state professional journals
- Exhibitions, installations, productions, performances or publications of original works, design, electronic media, film, journalism, literature, music, theater and visual arts
- Book with major and/or local publishing company
- Revised book
- Section of book with major and/or local publisher
- Editor of a book
- Editor of a national, international, or state professional journal
- Papers and speeches presented at national, international and state meetings
- Research honors, awards and grants

Teaching, Learning and Research Philosophy

Periodically reflecting on the scope and direction of your teaching and research activities can help you develop philosophy statements in these areas. Explain how your philosophy has been put into practice in course syllabi, examinations, readings and assignments to establish a context of understanding and evaluating your overall record of effectiveness as a university professor.

Other Documentation of Good Teaching and Learning

In addition to keeping records of teaching and research activities, begin to keep document outcomes that demonstrate ways your courses provide excellent learning environments. These records can also act as a means of self assessment and personal growth and improvement toward efforts as an effective educator. Here are some examples of those endeavors:

- Accommodating students with disabilities
- Student essays, creative works and projects
- Field-work reports
- Laboratory workbooks or logs
- Student publications
- Student conference presentations based on course-related work
- Graded essays (with names removed) showing *excellent*, *average* and *poor* work *with your comments* as to why they were so graded
- Information on your students who are successful in advanced study in the field or those students who have earned academic awards
- Statements by former students on your quality of instruction
- Summary of student achievement on self-made or standardized proficiency tests, possibly before and after a course, as evidence of student learning
- Information about the effect of your courses on student career choices
- Assistance you give to students as they secure employment
- Engaging undergraduate students in service learning and research
- Innovative projects and assessments
- Innovative approach to teaching such as using and involving students in
 - o Social media and podcasts
 - o Themed Learning Communities (TLCs)
 - o Multiculturalism /international perspectives
 - o Critical thinking
 - o Collaborative learning
 - o Interdisciplinary collaboration (both you with colleagues from other disciplines and your students with students from other disciplines)

NIU Awards for Teaching, Research and Engagement

Because teaching and research are of utmost importance “for attaining the educational goals of the university, outstanding teachers [and researchers are] are recognized by the university community” through a number of awards. These awards are granted yearly to those individuals who have demonstrated excellence in teaching and research and provide “support for current and future efforts” (NIU 2007, Para. 1).

Excellent instructors and researchers exhibit an intense interest in their fields and show relevance of its value to society. These individuals apply rigorous standards in the classroom and inspire students to excel. They demonstrate a strong commitment to students and their welfare, not only in subject matter and

in class preparation, but by being available outside classroom to help students with course-related projects and activities as well as personal and professional development. The following highlight the NIU awards that recognize excellence in teaching, research and engagement.

Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award

This award honors tenure-track and tenured faculty who exhibit excellent undergraduate teaching in the university, encourage improvement of instruction promote discussion among members of the university community on the subject of teaching.

Excellence in Undergraduate Instruction Award

The purpose of the award is to honor excellent undergraduate teaching in the university, specifically among non-tenure track educators not recognized by the NIU Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award, to encourage improvement of instruction and to promote discussion among members of the university community on the subject of teaching.

Presidential Teaching Professor Award (PTP)

Presidential Teaching Professors are acknowledged to be among the most notable teachers at the university who have demonstrated continuous excellence in the teaching of under-graduate and/or graduate students.

Presidential Research Professor Award (PRP)

Each PRP is to be a person who has received national or international acclaim for his or her scholarship, to be among the researchers or artists of highest stature in his or her speciality, to have made significant positive impact on the discipline nationally or internationally, and judged to be likely to continue to make such impact.

Board of Trustees Professor Award (BoTP)

These faculty are recognized who have achieved a consistent record of excellence in teaching, scholarship or artistry, service and outreach, and academic leadership; have earned a national/international reputation for professional achievements; and are deemed likely to make continued and substantial contributions in higher education. Special emphasis is placed upon the recognition of faculty who are renowned scholars/artists who have engaged students in their research/or and other professional activities.

Presidential Engagement Professor Award (PEP)

This award honors those tenure-track and tenured faculty through their engagement with the community through research, economic development, service and instruction. Establishment of these professorships places NIU in the company of the growing number of institutions which now recognize and reward this increasingly critical function.

Grants at NIU

Committee of the Improvement of Undergraduate Education (CIUE) Grants

CIUE makes grants to faculty members who wish to carry out research on teaching, developing new course materials and instructional methods for teaching. Grants are offered for projects which will very likely improve undergraduate education at NIU, but for which no departmental funds are readily available. The maximum amount for these grants is \$3500.

Instructional Research and Improvement Grant (up to \$1000)

This award must be directed toward the improvement of instruction. Research into instructional method, curriculum development for instructional use, and media development for instructional use are all areas within the realm of improvement of instruction. The project application must contain proposed means for

determining whether an addition to knowledge about instruction or improved applications or deliver of instruction is actually achieved. A request for computer equipment, software or other equipment must include a non-technical introductory paragraph that explains the purpose and need for the item requested.

Student Instructional Research and Improvement Grant (up to \$1000)

This award must be directed toward the improvement of undergraduate instruction. Research into instructional method, curriculum development for instructional use, and media development for instructional use are all areas within the realm of improvement of instruction. The project application must contain proposed means for determining whether an addition to knowledge about instruction or improved applications or deliver of instruction is actually achieved. A request for computer equipment, software or other equipment must include a non-technical introductory paragraph that explains the purpose and need for the item requested.

Eligibility to apply for this grant requires that students be enrolled in at least 12 semester hours (9 semester hours for graduate students) and that the applicant must not be on academic probation. Proposals will be supported to a maximum of \$1000 unless special circumstances dictate increased support.

Microcomputer Software Acquisition Grant (up to \$1000)

This grant focuses on software acquisition that must be directed toward the improvement of instruction, either directly or indirectly. The project application must contain proposed means for determining whether an addition to knowledge about instruction or improved applications or delivery of instruction is actually achieved.

Eligibility to apply for this grant requires that faculty and staff wishes to obtain or develop computer software relevant to research in and projects toward improvement of instruction. Proposals will be supported to a maximum of \$1,000 unless special circumstances dictate increased support.

Instructional Research and Improvement Grant (\$3500)

Proposals should offer imaginative and innovative approaches to the improvement of undergraduate education, including general education, and should be for projects which extend beyond the normal responsibilities of a department's attention to its curriculum and courses. Proposals for projects relating to the development of new courses or to routine course revision are usually not supported. The application should include an explanation of the extent to which the project is beyond normal departmental responsibility. Proposals submitted by faculty members who will be continuing at NIU in the next academic year will be considered, such proposals must clearly state the faculty member will not be continuing at NIU and must address the specific details of how the results of the project will be utilized by other faculty.

To align with NIU engaged learning activities there are opportunities for faculty to enhance or develop a new course that incorporates a service learning component.

Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis to current faculty members who are full-time, regular, and tenure-track or tenured individuals for the completion of a project of one month's duration. Each grant will pay a salary up to \$3,500. Funds may be available for supplies, travel. Or other items that might be necessitated by a given project up to a maximum of \$500 unless special circumstance justify increased support.

**For further information on the CIUE instructional and
research improvement grants please visit**

<http://www.niu.edu/provost/awards/ciue.shtml>