

2018-2019
UNIVERSITY SENATE ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Name: _____ *Faculty Senate Awards Committee* _____

Number of Meetings Held this Year: _____ One _____

Committee Chair: _____ Stephen A. Royek, M.A. _____

Committee Members: (list here)

Amanda Adams	Lori Block	Melissa Klapper
John Quinesso	Natalie Schell-Busey	Robert Wieman
Kelly Young		

Purpose of/Charge to Committee:

The task of the Faculty Senate Awards Committee is to solicit nominations for, coordinate the selection of, and facilitate the presentation of three Graduating Senior Awards: The Dr. Robert D. Bole Humanitarian Award, the Dr. James M. Lynch, Jr., Courage in Adversity Award, and the Dr. Thomas E. Robinson Leadership Award. The Committee also facilitates the presentation of the Dr. Lawson J. Brown Senior Scholarship Award, which is an academic performance honor.

Summary of Activities this Year:

The 2018-2019 academic year for the Faculty Senate Awards Committee was routine, calm, and peaceful for all but the final two weeks or so of our selections process.

Our year began with a reorganization meeting on October 11 in a conference room on the fifth floor of Victoria Hall, the home of the Writing Arts Department (just down the hall from my office). As I did last year, I volunteered to host the meeting.

The first item of business for the meeting was to select a chair, and I was chosen by unanimous acclamation. Next up was the selection of a submission deadline for nominations, which we discussed based on the schedules and obligations of our members. We settled on Friday, February 22 at 5 p.m.

I then volunteered to take care of updating the various materials the committee uses to solicit and accept nominations:

- *Our Call for Nominations that appears every six business days in the Rowan Announcer from mid-October to late February*
- *Our Electronic Nomination Forms through which members of the campus community – students, faculty, and staff – can nominate individuals for the three awards. These nominations are based on specific criteria included on the nomination form.*
- *We also discussed a new way to publicize the nomination process: Sending a letter to all department chairs on campus encouraging them to share the reminder with their faculty members and staff. This letter was sent out on February 6, 2019, about three weeks before the nomination submission deadline.*

With the website up and running, successfully accepting applications, and with our weekly Announcer items running as scheduled, we settled in to wait for the Feb. 22 deadline when we would meet again to review the nominations and make our selections.

This is when the angst and excitement began.

I sat down on Saturday morning, February 23 to download the nomination forms from the three sites and put them in a shared Google Drive to share with the committee. They were going to read each document in the three categories and make their selections. We then planned to meet about a week later to discuss our thoughts on the nominations as a group and decide on the winners.

When I went into the site, I found out I only was able to see the names of the seniors that were nominated, but was not able to download the accompanying files. This revelation set off a series of email exchanges over the next two weeks with current and former

committee members, the university IRT office, and eventually with Faculty Senate President Bill Friend, who helped bring the problem to resolution.

The problem ended up being that a former member of the committee – the person who set up the automated system to collect nominations a few years ago – did not make the Google Drive public, meaning only she could access the data stored within.

This two-week delay caused us to cancel our in-person meeting for discussion and selection of our winners and I created a new group Google Drive as soon as the files were accessible. We received nine nominations for the Lynch Award, eight for the Robinson Award, and one for the Bole Award.

Now that everyone could read and evaluate the nominations, we held an online vote where committee members sent me their top three selections for the two awards being contested. (After reviewing the one Bole Award nominations, we agreed this person was deserving of the honor and his “win” was confirmed.)

As the committee ballots began hitting my inbox, the results could not have been clearer. Both votes were 7-1 in favor of the eventual winners. I shared the results with the full committee and thanked the members for their service.

One additional point on the nominations and voting: One student nominated one of her professors, on separate electronic forms, for each of the three student awards. We discussed this via email among the committee and decided no change was needed to the verbiage of our materials. It was obvious, in our opinion, that the awards were designed for students only and we chalked this up as an isolated event.

Once we had our winners, the process calmed down; the Medallions were ordered and presented as scheduled at the Celebrating Leadership Awards Ceremony on Sunday, April 14.

2018-2019 COMMITTEE SUGGESTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- *First of all, the committee as a whole strongly recommends we stay together as a group, and the members said they would like me to remain as chairman. We believe this will bring consistency and continuity to the committee and that it's important to have people in place who have gone through the process before and have encountered problems they then went on to solve.*
- *We plan to meet maybe a week or two earlier in October (maybe even late September) to open the nomination process a bit earlier and begin getting the word out about the awards.*
- *We will redesign, and open to all committee members, the websites and Google Drive files that are used to collect and distribute the nominations.*
- *In addition to using Rowan Announcer, we want to get publicity on campus through The Whit and on WGLS. This would be accomplished with a fall and a spring feature article and various announcements in the newspaper along with several Rowan News Minute and Campus Calendar items on the radio station.*
- *We also plan to send out the solicitation letter to department chairs twice instead of just once. The first missive should go out in the fall, followed by a second one, a reminder, when we all return to campus after winter break.*

We welcome comments and suggestions from the Senate as we understand we serve at your pleasure. Please feel free to contact me for any additional information and to offer any feedback. Thank you.

*Faithfully submitted,
Stephen A. Royek
Chair, Faculty Senate Awards Committee*

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