



Annual UFS Learning and Teaching Awards 2021

Call for Applications

The Centre for Teaching and Learning at the University of the Free State (UFS) is pleased to call on academic and support staff to submit applications for the Annual UFS Learning and Teaching awards for 2021.

The UFS Learning and Teaching awards recognises academics and academic support staff for their innovative learning and teaching practices within different disciplines, as well as the advancement of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at the institution.

CONFERENCE THEME:

QUALITY AND INNOVATION FOR A NEW BLENDED LEARNING FUTURE

What is innovation?

Innovation is crucial to continuing success. It is an active process involving more than just idealist thinking; it calls for concrete and practical results. Innovation creates positive conditions for student learning, and establishes approaches to educational design, delivery and assessment that are appropriate for the subject, student cohort and institutional context. It takes a reflective approach to develop and improve teaching practice over time. Some concepts associated with innovation include: change; alteration; transformation; renovation; new methods or a break from tradition; a change of direction; modernisation; novel designs; new creations; remodelling; variation; new measures; as well as the reorganisation or restructuring of curriculum and delivery methods.

“Innovation is the only true way to progress.” – Greg Satell
(Transformational change expert and innovation adviser)

AIM OF THE UFS LEARNING AND TEACHING AWARDS

- To promote, recognise and reward innovation and excellence in learning and teaching in the South African and UFS contexts;
- To generate debate and public awareness about what constitutes learning and teaching excellence;
- To share best practices, innovative ideas, and research findings in learning and teaching; and
- To promote the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in the disciplines.



CATEGORIES

The Annual UFS Learning and Teaching awards comprises of six main categories, namely:

1) **Innovation in Curriculum Development awards**

Innovation in Curriculum Development refers to creating an academic plan, which incorporates various innovative pedagogical, course design and assessment strategies. This could include the integration and meaningful design of technology in learning and teaching to increase student engagement, and/or the use of various assessment methodologies, and/or curriculum transformation practices.

There are **four** sub-categories that you can enter under the Innovation in Curriculum Development awards:

- *Innovative Methods in Assessment Practices*
Assessing students in a new, original, or inventive manner. Innovation in assessment can refer to the assessment strategies, assessment tools, and/or assessment activities (formative and summative) that form part of the overall learning and teaching strategy. This does not only include the assessment itself, but also feedback practices supporting assessment and student learning.
- *Innovative Methods in Student Engagement and Learning*
Student engagement refers to the degree to which academics create environments that support student success for all students. It includes a variety of methods and practices that create a supportive learning environment for students, such as tutorials, classroom techniques (including large classes), communication, group work and universal design for learning.
- *Innovative Methods in Technology Enhanced Learning and Teaching*
Describes the meaningful integration of information and communication technologies to support learning and teaching through online and blended learning practices. Includes the use of various technologies (Blackboard, free software and applications) to support learning and teaching.
- *Innovative Methods in Curriculum Enhancement and Transformation*
Curriculum changes to address transformation issues, decolonisation/internationalisation of curricula, and the responsiveness of curricula to the changes in the environment/profession all form part of this sub-category. Individuals or groups that have been involved in innovative curriculum/programme/module design, development and implementation that addresses challenges within the new world of work are encouraged to apply in this sub-category.

**If your project seems to overlap between categories, please contact us for assistance in identifying the most relevant sub-category for your application.*

Please note: As of 2021, the best Qwaqwa and the best Bloemfontein conference paper presentations will each receive an award respectively. The winners will be determined by the scores of the live reviews during the conference.

2) **Research in Learning and Teaching award**

As part of the promotion of scholarly teaching and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at the UFS, this award acknowledges valuable contributions that academics have made towards research within the field of learning and teaching in their discipline. Two sub-categories exist in this section.

- *Beginner*: Entries are limited to one accepted or already published article, book, chapter or full conference paper within any of the four innovation in Curriculum Development categories.

- *Advanced*: Entries should comprise a portfolio of evidence of research in learning and teaching, with examples of published articles, books, chapter or full conference papers within any of the four innovation in Curriculum Development categories.

3) Vice-Chancellor's award: Learning and Teaching

A comprehensive teaching portfolio of evidence is compiled that demonstrates all-round excellence in the field of learning and teaching.

4) Most Valued Professional award

Recognises the contribution that academic support professionals have made towards the advancement of learning and teaching at the institution. This award acknowledges dedication, innovation and excellence demonstrated by specialists in the academic support sphere. **Academic support staff are encouraged to enter for this award.**

5) Departmental award

This award is presented to the department who showed the greatest commitment and involvement in improving learning and teaching through various activities and practices. Departments can be nominated by a dean, assistant dean, TLM, or other relevant stakeholders. Aspects that will be considered are participation in learning and teaching workshops, seminars, webinars, and other related activities, as well as own practices in learning and teaching (such as CoP membership and institutional presentations). Therefore, no applications are needed, although a motivation needs to be submitted by the nominator.

An award will be allocated for a Bloemfontein, and a Qwaqwa department respectively.

6) Khothatsa award

The Khothatsa project was created in 2019 to give recognition to the important pedagogical relationship between staff and students. Khothatsa means "to inspire" in Sesotho. Students are invited to write about a lecturer and how they have inspired the student. After receiving students' submissions, lecturers are then asked to respond to the submission. These writings are published in an electronic booklet on the UFS website.

Based on essays submitted by the students and staff, a panel will decide on the Bloemfontein and Qwaqwa submissions that best showcase innovation and dedication to address classroom challenges and foster the pedagogical relationship between academic staff and students.

OVERALL CRITERIA

- Teaching teams and/or individuals may submit an entry.
- Cross-campus collaboration is permitted.
- An applicant (in a group or individually) is limited to no more than two abstract submissions.
- The same entry/project/study cannot be repeated in different categories. Each entry must be unique.
- A project/study that has previously been entered and/or received previous awards, but has evolved, continued and been adjusted over time, can be submitted again for these awards.
- A two-phase review and selection process will be followed, considering the number of suitable entries per category. The review selection process consists of a panel across the institution and is not limited to CTL. A blind-review process will also be followed.



- Entries for the Innovation in Curriculum Development awards will take the form of an abstract submission for a presentation of a paper at the Annual UFS Learning and Teaching Conference.
- Entries for the beginner Research in Learning and Teaching award, will take on the format of one publication; entries for the advanced Research in Learning and Teaching award will take the format of a portfolio of evidence. Entries will form part of the presentations during the Annual UFS Learning and Teaching Conference.
- Entries for the Vice-Chancellor's award and the Most Valued Professional award will take the format of a portfolio of evidence. Entries will form part of the presentations during the Annual UFS Learning and Teaching Conference.
- The entries for all categories will be evaluated according to the criteria of relevant rubrics. Entrants will receive the rubric for the category for which they enter after submission of the expression of interest form. Entrants are encouraged to use the rubric provided to guide the formulation of their entry.
- When making a submission on behalf of a teaching team, include the contributions of each team member to the learning and teaching experience. A teaching team is a group of between 2 and 4 members who worked on the same module to initiate change and introduce innovation.
- **EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FORM** should be submitted to Thuto Mvimbe (MvimbeTL@ufs.ac.za) no later than **30 May 2021**. By submitting this form, you indicate your interest in entering and CTL is therefore able to provide you with support in your application. Please take note: your final abstract/portfolio does not accompany this form, and only needs to be submitted on 2 August 2021 (see point below).
- **COMPLETED ENTRIES** (full portfolio and complete abstract) for all categories should be submitted to Thuto Mvimbe (MvimbeTL@ufs.ac.za) before or on **02 August 2021**.
- No incomplete applications will be considered.

THE ENTRY FORMAT

Innovation in Curriculum Development Awards

Abstract submission, abstract review, followed by a paper presentation (20 minutes) at the Annual UFS Learning and Teaching awards. A live review process will take place during the conference presentation.

Abstract should be between **300 and 350 words in length**.

You should **very clearly** state the sub-category you are entering for:

- *Innovative Methods in Assessment Practices*
- *Innovative Methods in Student Engagement and Learning*
- *Innovative Methods in Curriculum Enhancement and Transformation*
- *Innovative Methods in Technology Enhanced Learning and Teaching*

The abstract should include the following:

- Introduction
- Problem statement / Research question / Aim of study
- Explain how you approached the problem statement/research question (what is your new idea?)
- Describe how you went about doing the research (outline of methods)
- State the key impact of your research

A team application must contain the names of all relevant participants. Clearly indicate the contact details of the team leader/contact person.

Research in Learning and Teaching award

Beginner:

Entries are limited to an accepted or already published article, book, chapter or full conference paper within any of the four innovation teaching and learning categories.

Advanced:

The portfolio should comprise (but is not limited to):

- A brief introduction highlighting your roles and responsibilities at the UFS,
- A description of your learning and teaching context,
- Publications (including discipline specific, and those in learning and teaching),
- Conference papers delivered (including discipline specific and those in learning and teaching),
- Findings and successes of your research and what they have meant for your learning and teaching context.

The content can be structured in any way the applicant prefers. If the portfolio is online, the total narrative should be no longer than **10 pages** when printed. All claims made in the narrative section need to be substantiated with evidence. This can be in the form of examples described within the reflective narrative itself, or references or hyperlinks to appendices. If appendices are included, they should be no more than **20 pages** and should only include excerpts pertinent to particular statements in the narrative. Appendices should be sensibly included. A template will also be provided to guide applicants. Total length of portfolio: **30 pages maximum.**

Vice-Chancellor's award: Learning and Teaching

The following information must be provided:

A brief introduction to highlight your current role and responsibilities at the UFS and your philosophy of teaching (why you teach the way you do).

The portfolio should comprise a reflective narrative on:

- Teaching approach, practice and effectiveness
- Promotion of student learning
- Student development and support
- Curriculum and course development
- Assessment practices
- Mentoring and coaching (pertaining to learning and teaching)
- Reflection and use of feedback to improve learning and teaching
- Professional development and teaching recognition
- Research and Scholarship towards Learning and Teaching

The content can be structured in any way the applicant prefers. If the portfolio is online, the total reflective narrative part should be no longer than **10 pages** when printed. All claims made in the narrative need to be substantiated with evidence. This can be in the form of examples described within the reflective narrative itself, or references or hyperlinks to appendices. If appendices are included, they should be no more than

20 pages and should only include excerpts pertinent to particular statements in the reflective narrative. Appendices should be sensibly included. A template will also be provided to guide applicants. Total length of portfolio: **30 pages maximum**.

Most Valued Professional award

The portfolio should comprise:

- An introduction containing your learning and teaching context (what you do and why you do it this way),
- A description of your project and/or your contribution to learning and teaching, and
- A reflective narrative about your development.

The content can be structured in any way the applicant prefers. If the portfolio is online, the total narrative should be no longer than 10 pages when printed. Contributions should be substantiated with evidence. This can be in the form of examples in the narrative itself, or references or hyperlinks to appendices. If appendices are included, they should be no more than 20 pages and should only include excerpts pertinent to particular statements in the narrative. Appendices should be included sensibly. A template will be provided to guide applicants. Total length of portfolio: **30 pages maximum**.

Khothatsa award

A separate invitation will be sent to students to nominate academic staff, with specific details around requirements. These nominated lecturers will be contacted individually and guided with regards to their submissions.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants complete the **expression of interest form** (page 8) for all award categories and submit it to Thuto Mvimbe (MvimbeTL@ufs.ac.za) before or on **30 May 2021**.

Completed **abstracts** (innovation awards), **portfolios** (Vice-Chancellor's, Advanced Research and Most valued Professional) and **publications** (Beginner Research) are to be submitted to Thuto Mvimbe (MvimbeTL@ufs.ac.za) before or on **02 August 2021**.

Abstracts will be sent to an abstract review team for evaluation. Successful abstracts will be notified by email and invited to present at the Annual UFS Learning and Teaching Conference in September 2021. Invitees will be expected to prepare a short presentation on their work for the Conference where their project will be subject to live review.

Portfolios and publications will be sent to reviewers for evaluation. Winners will be notified by email and invited to present at the Annual UFS Learning and Teaching Conference in September 2021. Invitees will be expected to prepare a short presentation on their submission at the Conference.

SUPPORT

Support will be provided in the following ways:

- Facilitated portfolio writing workshops
- Unfacilitated writing retreats
- Individual consultations per request

Please submit your expression of interest form so that we are able to add your details to the invite list for the above-mentioned support events. For more guidance or questions related to category submissions, please contact Thuto Mvimbe (MvimbeTL@ufs.ac.za).

LEARNING AND TEACHING REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR 2021

The review panel may consist of, but is not restricted to, Faculty Teaching and Learning Managers, Academic Support Professionals, members of Management, and previous award winners.

THE AWARDS

Up to nineteen awards may be allocated in total across all six main categories.

The award winners in the Vice-Chancellor's award, Research in Learning and Teaching and Most Valued Professional categories will be notified by email and will receive their certificates at the Annual UFS Learning and Teaching Award ceremony, which will take place in October 2021 at the University of the Free State. The award winners will be expected to present on their work at the conference.

Winners and runners-up of the Innovation in Curriculum Development awards will be announced at the Annual UFS Learning and Teaching award ceremony, which will take place in October 2021 at the UFS after the conference proceedings.

Additional recognition may be awarded during the award ceremony by means of certification for the best conference paper for the Bloemfontein and the Qwaqwa campus.

Winners in each category are incentivised as follows:

	1 st place	2 nd place
Innovative Methods in Assessment Practices	R10 000	R5 000
Innovative Methods in Student Engagement and Learning	R10 000	R5 000
Innovative Methods in Curriculum Enhancement and Transformation	R10 000	R5 000
Innovative Methods in Technology Enhanced Learning and Teaching	R10 000	R5 000
Most Valued Professional	R10 000	R5 000

Research in Learning and Teaching award	Beginner R10 000	Advanced R10 000
Best Innovation in Curriculum Development conference paper	BFN R10 000	QQ R10 000
Departmental award	BFN R10 000	QQ R10 000
Khothatsa award	BFN R10 000	QQ R10 000
Vice-Chancellor's award	R25 000	

****Incentives are intended to be used for research purposes and will only be paid into the recipient's research entity.***

Should you require more clarity or information regarding the awards or the conference, please contact Thuto Mvimbe (MvimbeTL@ufs.ac.za) or phone on 051 401 9298. You can also enquire with your Faculty Teaching and Learning Manager.



EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

ANNUAL UFS LEARNING AND TEACHING AWARDS

This form should be submitted on or before 30 May 2021

Applicant particulars

Name		Title	
Surname			
Faculty		Position occupied	
Department			
Campus			
Email address			
Telephone number			

Categories

Select relevant category:

- Innovation in Curriculum Development award ☐
(In any of the four subcategories)

Please indicate the Innovation category/ies you are interested in entering:

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- Research in Learning and Teaching: Beginner ☐
- Research in Learning and Teaching: Advanced ☐
- Vice-Chancellor's award for Learning and Teaching ☐
- Most Valued Professional ☐
- Departmental award ☐

Head of Department / Subject-head / Assistant Dean / Teaching and Learning Manager

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Name and Surname

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Signature



Submission and evaluation process

Applicants may enter in no more than two categories and/or innovation sub-categories:

- Should an applicant have won in the same category the previous year, they will not be able to enter for the same category again. If the entrant would like to enter for the awards again, they are advised to enter in a different category.
- Applicants for the Innovation in Curriculum Development award should understand that they will be invited to present at the Annual Learning and Teaching Conference if their abstract is chosen. These applicants will undergo a live review at the conference to determine a winner in the relevant innovation category.

All abstracts and entries need to be submitted according to the following deadlines:

- Closing date for submission of **expression of interest** form is **30 May 2021**.
- Closing date for submission of **entry** is **02 August 2021**.
- Late entries will not be forwarded to the reviewers, however, extensions will be considered in certain cases only if arrangements are made timeously.

Entries are evaluated according to rubric criteria:

- Rubrics will be shared with applicants.
- Generally no less than three reviewers are selected per category.

All presentations can be displayed on the Academic Staff and Leadership Blackboard organisation after the award ceremony.

Receiving of awards:

- Award winners receive their certificates at the Annual UFS Learning and Teaching award ceremony, which will take place in October 2021 at the UFS.
- Entrants can be invited to prepare a short presentation on their work at the conference.
- All applicants will be invited to the award ceremony.
- Up to nineteen awards can be allocated across all six categories.
- Award winners receive a monetary research incentive which will be paid into their research entity.
- In the case of a tie, the award money will be divided equally between the recipients.
- Should a category only receive two entries, the reviewers, along with the CTL management team, may decide whether to award a second incentive or not depending on the merit and quality of the entry.
- Award recipients are kindly requested to supply Academic Staff and Leadership Development with a research entity number in order to complete an entity transfer.

Expression of interest form submission and support:

- Expression of interest form should be signed by the Head of Department, Subject-head, Assistant Dean or Teaching and Learning Manager.
- Submit expression of interest form to Thuto Mvimbe (MvimbeTL@ufs.ac.za) via email.
- Please refer to the call for applications document to learn about entry formats and available support systems. ***Please submit your expression of interest form to be added to the invite list for support events.***

We look forward to your submission!