

## **NOMINATION GUIDELINES**

### **Association of Atlantic Universities**

### **Anne Marie MacKinnon Educational Leadership Award, 2026**

**Application deadline: Friday, May 8, 2026**

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this award is to encourage excellence in educational leadership in the universities of the Atlantic region by acknowledging individuals who exemplify such leadership and who contribute more generally to the improvement of the quality of university teaching.

#### **Award Description**

This award recognizes an individual who demonstrates a sustained commitment to excellence in teaching and learning through educational leadership beyond their assigned role, responsibility, and teaching context. A single Anne Marie MacKinnon Educational Leadership Award is given annually.

An individual nominated for this award will have had a significant influence on their colleagues' teaching practice and on the quality and breadth of student learning experiences. The nominee's accomplishments will be attributed, in part, to the ability to develop trusting relationships and collegial networks. The nominee will demonstrate critical reflection on teaching and learning issues and needs and will have evaluated the effectiveness of initiatives designed to address them. The award adjudication committee will consider the number and variety of educational leadership activities undertaken and the scope and impact of those activities. For example, the nominee may contribute their knowledge and expertise, within or beyond the local context, through activities in the following roles:

- advocate for policies, processes, structures, or resources that support teaching excellence and enhance student learning experiences, such as in Indigenization and decolonizing approaches, universal design, culturally responsive pedagogies, etc.;
- role model of scholarly teaching;
- mentor in teaching to colleagues, new faculty members, and/or graduate students;
- designer, facilitator, and/or organizer of formal teaching development opportunities including sustaining educational Communities of Practice;
- contributor to program or curriculum development, review and renewal;
- chair or member of committees or working groups with a teaching-related mandate;

- leader of or contributor to special teaching and learning programs or initiatives such as faculty development opportunities, micro-credentials, etc.;
- contributor to the scholarship of teaching and learning;
- innovator of teaching and learning programs, methods, or strategies.
- organizer of or participant in community outreach activities related to educational leadership, such as providing educational opportunities to equity-deserving groups or otherwise increasing access to education opportunities.

**Given the superb quality of nominees, simply fulfilling the nomination criteria may not, in itself, be sufficient to receive the Anne Marie MacKinnon Educational Leadership Award. Therefore, the Committee encourages nominees to demonstrate not only how they meet, but how they surpass these criteria.**

## Eligibility

1. Full-time, part-time, and limited term faculty members are eligible for nomination. Those nominated must be members of the teaching faculty, with a load normal for their discipline, level, or term of appointment as determined by their nominating institution.
2. Chairs and department heads who continue to teach a minimum of half a normal teaching load are eligible for nomination.
3. Academic administrators, such as Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Deans and full-time Directors of teaching centres who do not teach this minimum load and/or whose primary role includes educational leadership or promoting teaching excellence are **not** eligible.
4. Previous recipients of 3M National Teaching Fellowships are **not** eligible to be nominated for an AAU Anne Marie MacKinnon Educational Leadership Award, as the AAU awards are intended to be a progression to this award.
5. No current member of the AAU Coordinating Committee on Faculty Development may be nominated.
6. A nominee may be selected according to a procedure established by the university.
7. A nominee need not have received an institutional award.
8. An individual cannot be nominated for both a Distinguished Teaching Award and an Anne Marie MacKinnon Educational Leadership Award in a given year. However, recipients of an award from one category may be nominated for an award in the other category in a succeeding year.
9. Re-nominations of previously unsuccessful nominees are welcomed and encouraged; however, nominators are reminded that the award criteria may change from year-to-year—please ensure that re-nominations conform to the current guidelines.

## Nomination Information & Procedure

Nominations materials need to be in English for adjudication purposes.

The AAU will reimburse each of its two French-language institutions up to a maximum of \$2,000 per year for the cost of translating a nomination dossier from French to English. Original French-language dossiers should be available upon request from the chair of the Coordinating Committee on Faculty Development which serves as the Selection Committee for the awards.

### Application Deadline

The deadline for applications is set annually, usually during the first week of May.

The nomination dossiers must be submitted by the AAU Coordinating Committee on Faculty Development representative from the institution. When an institutional AAU Coordinating Committee of Faculty Development representative is not available, the office of the Vice-President Academic or Provost may submit the nomination materials. Please consult the list of Committee members, available at <http://www.atlanticuniversities.ca/committees/faculty-development-committee>.

Re-nominations of previously unsuccessful nominees are welcomed and encouraged; however, nominators are reminded that the award criteria may change from year to year.

### Award Category

Each university may submit a maximum of two nominations in the Distinguished Teaching Award category and **one nomination in the Educational Leadership Award category**. All dossiers will be considered in the category for which they have been nominated, unless in the following exceptional circumstance: When an institution nominates only **one** person and the Selection Committee believes the nomination is more appropriately suited to the other category, the nomination may be switched.

### Supporting Materials

Each nomination shall be accompanied by material supporting the application in accordance with these Anne Marie MacKinnon Educational Leadership Award Guidelines for Nomination. Please submit a PDF to the AAU Secretariat ([ckent@atlanticuniversities.ca](mailto:ckent@atlanticuniversities.ca)).

The Committee will accept **only** those dossiers submitted to the AAU Secretariat by the institution's representative on the Coordinating Committee on Faculty Development. The office of the Vice-President Academic or Provost may present the nomination materials when an institutional AAU Coordinating Committee of Faculty Development representative is not available.

### Selection Committee

The AAU Coordinating Committee on Faculty Development serves as the Selection Committee for the awards.

### **Announcement of Award Recipient**

Each September, the AAU issues a press release announcing the recipient of the Anne Marie MacKinnon Educational Leadership Award for that year. The award recipient and their guest will be honoured at a luncheon held during the September meeting of the AAU Presidents' Council. As part of the proceedings at the luncheon, the recipient will be asked to give a 10-minute presentation about the importance of educational leadership.

### **Atlantic Universities' Teaching Showcase**

The recipient of the Anne Marie MacKinnon Educational Leadership Award will be invited to participate in a session at the annual Atlantic Universities' Teaching Showcase.

### **Nomination Guidelines**

This award recognizes a sustained commitment to the improvement of university teaching and learning through educational leadership. An educational leader will influence the creation or improvement of programs, policies, processes, and environments that foster and support teaching excellence and that enhance student learning experiences. In adjudicating this award, the Selection Committee looks for evidence of leadership and influence that is broad, lasting, and pervasive within, and perhaps beyond, the nominee's own institution. Please see the list of possible leadership activities suggested on page one.

### **Dossier Format**

The Selection Committee is aware that each of the nominating universities will have its own procedures and criteria relating to internal awards, and it wishes to respect these differences. The following guidelines are presented to ensure fairness and consistency in the presentation of nominations for the AAU awards.

### **Important Information about Dossier Format**

- The dossier must be formatted as a PDF file.
- The AAU Coordinating Committee on Faculty Development representative for the institution is the person who should email the PDF file to the AAU Secretariat (ckent@atlanticuniversities.ca)
- Nomination dossiers must not exceed **20 numbered pages**. The following are **required** but **not** counted in the 20-page limit:
  - cover page which displays the nominee's name, academic unit, institution, and year of submission;
  - table of contents; and
  - separation pages that clearly identify each category of evidence.

- Dossiers must be presented in **12-point font** with all original descriptive content written by the nominee appearing in a **consistent standard font** such as Times New Roman, Calibri, or Arial. Use standard **one-inch page margins** all around.
- Nominators are encouraged to consider dossier layout carefully for ease of reading.
- Dossiers may contain up to two multimedia media artifacts. This could include a brief audio or video clip of student engagement, a peer delivering a testimonial or a recorded letter of support from a community stakeholder. The time limit for these artifacts is two minutes. Each multimedia is considered the equivalent of ½ a page of your dossier, (i.e., reduce your dossier by ½ page for each multimedia component in the dossier).
- The Selection Committee’s decision will be based on material contained within the 20-page dossier only. The dossier must **not include URLs** to supporting material other than the multimedia artifacts noted above.

**The Committee will not accept dossiers which exceed the 20-page limit or which use a font size smaller than 12-point or margins narrower than one inch all around. A dossier which does not conform to these guidelines or which lacks any of the following component parts will not be considered for an award.**

## **Dossier Contents**

The dossier should provide compelling evidence from a variety of sources to support the nominee’s case for sustained, pervasive and substantive educational leadership. Therefore, the following categories of evidence should be presented in the given order:

**Part 1: Nomination Letter**—A letter of nomination describing the nominee’s major contributions in educational leadership and the effects and outcomes of their leadership activities.

When the nomination letter has been written by someone other than the President or Vice-President Academic, the President or Vice-President Academic should endorse the nomination by appending a brief note or by adding their signature to the nomination letter. No current member of the AAU Coordinating Committee on Faculty Development may be the designated nominator.

**Part 2: Academic Career Achievements**—A one- or two-page (maximum) summary in list or abbreviated CV format highlighting the nominee’s major academic career achievements (teaching, research, and service) with an emphasis on contributions to teaching, learning, and educational leadership.

**Part 3: Philosophy of Educational Leadership**—A one- to two-page (maximum) statement from the nominee describing their philosophy of educational leadership, and how this philosophy has been implemented. In the statement, the nominee should explain educational leadership in their context (discipline, institution, or broader community). This statement provides the nominee with an opportunity to articulate their rationale for going beyond personal teaching practice to enhance teaching and learning generally.

**Part 4: Evidence of Achievements in Educational Leadership**—Varied evidence of how the nominee implements their educational leadership philosophy. This evidence may include sample documents or materials, including multimedia artifacts the nominee has created. It should not only

describe the nominee's leadership activities but also highlight their influence, impact, and outcomes in relation to the roles outlined in the Award Description section.

**Part 5: Letters of Support**—Three to six letters of support from colleagues, peers and/or students detailing the nominee's active involvement in educational leadership and the lasting value and outcomes of that leadership. The Committee will accept letters of support that are up to 18 months old. For submissions translated to English, the Committee will accept letters of support that are up to 24 months old. Letters with single signatures are valued the same as letters with multiple signatures.

**Current members of the AAU Coordinating Committee on Faculty Development are ineligible to write letters of support.**