

2025 CAFA DISTINGUISHED ACADEMIC AWARDS

The Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations (CAFA) is inviting nominations for the **Eighteenth Annual CAFA Distinguished Academic Awards**. The 2024 Awards received considerable public attention, and we are hoping to build on this success.

CAFA is a federation of Academic Staff Associations in Alberta. The four contributing members are: Athabasca University Faculty Association, Grant MacEwan University Faculty Association, Mount Royal Faculty Association, and the University of Lethbridge Faculty Association. The objectives of the Confederation are to promote the quality of education in the province and to promote the well-being of Alberta universities and their academic staff.

The CAFA Awards are open to academic staff at all Public Universities. Academic staff at the University of Alberta and The University of Calgary are encouraged to apply. The goal of the Awards is to acknowledge and highlight academic excellence in our provincial universities.

There are four awards:

2025 CAFA Distinguished Academic Award

Recognizing an academic staff member, or group of staff members, who through their research and/or other scholarly, creative, or professional activities have made an outstanding contribution to the wider community beyond the university.

2025 CAFA Distinguished Academic Early Career Award

Recognizing an academic staff member at an early stage of their career, who through their research and/or other scholarly, creative, or professional activity has made an outstanding contribution to the wider community beyond the university.

2025 CAFA Distinguished Teaching Award

The purpose of the Award is to recognize an academic staff member who excels in teaching and goes above and beyond in their role as a teacher and made an outstanding contribution to the wider community beyond the university.

2025 CAFA Distinguished Teaching Award for Precarious Faculty

The purpose of the Award is to recognize a precarious academic staff member who excels in teaching. (Note: the focus of this award is teaching-within-employment: while awards often privilege those who go “above and beyond” their employment requirements, we believe that such a focus can contribute to the exploitation of precarious employees. In this case, we are particularly interested therefore in innovative classroom techniques, stories of pedagogical success, and so on, within the employment situation).

Each Award recipient will receive a cheque for \$2,000 and an original piece of artwork.

Eligibility (Distinguished Academic, Early Career and Teaching)

Nominees must be current members of the academic staff association of at least one of an Albertan public university: The Universities of Alberta, Calgary, and Lethbridge, Athabasca University, Mount Royal University, or MacEwan University. For a group nomination, a majority of the group members, including the primary researcher or group leader, must be a Member of the Academic Staff at an Albertan public university.

An early career researcher is a researcher defined by the Canada Research Chairs programme Tier 2: within ten years from the date of their first research-related appointment, minus eligible delays in research, where:

- research-related appointments are defined as those where the individual has the autonomy to conduct research independently; and
- all eligible leaves (e.g., maternity, parental, medical, bereavement) are credited as twice the amount of time taken, and professional leaves (e.g., training, sabbatical, administrative) are not credited.

Eligible Contributions (Distinguished Academic, Early Career and Teaching)

Any type or form of research and/or other scholarly, creative, or professional activity, which contributes to the community beyond the university, is eligible for consideration by the Selection Committee. This is especially the case for the CAFA Distinguished Academic Early Career and the CAFA Distinguished Academic Award but will be a lesser consideration for the CAFA Distinguished Teaching Award.

For the CAFA Distinguished Teaching Award, the focus will be on pedagogical accomplishments: inside and outside the classroom. These pedagogical accomplishments will be the main consideration for the CAFA Distinguished Teaching Award but teaching achievements will also be taken into lesser consideration for the two Distinguished Academic Awards as well.

In making its decision, the Selection Committee, at its discretion, may also consider such factors as a nominee's service record, as well as other aspects of their professional life (this is not true of the Distinguished Teaching Award for Precarious Faculty).

Award recipients must be willing and able to attend the annual CAFA Distinguished Academic Awards dinner and to make a brief presentation on their research and/or other scholarly, creative, or professional activity and its contribution to the wider community. The Teaching Award recipient will also present on their teaching accomplishments and pedagogical methods. Some contact with the media may also be required.

Eligibility (CAFA Distinguished Teaching Award for Precarious Faculty)

Nominees must be precariously employed members of the academic staff at one of Alberta's public universities (U of A, U of C, U of L, AU, MRU or GMU. Broadly, this means a contract that has limited job security relative to tenured faculty – a limited-term or contingent appointment.

Their duties must include teaching or teaching-adjacent activities (lecturing, preparing teaching materials, pedagogical design or review).

Specifically, individuals in the following categories of employment at each institution are eligible:

U of A: Academic Teaching Staff (ATS)

U of L: Sessional instructors, Term-limited position (instructor/professorial)

GMU: Sessionals

MRU: Fixed Term, Continuing and Sessional Instructors, Contract Laboratory Instructor, Contract Clinical Instructor

AU: Term limited professoriate, academic coordinator

U of C: Sessionals, Term limited appointments

Beyond this, applicants may have other precarious appointments at public or private institutions: if the individual teaches (as precarious academic staff) at one of the public institutions, they are encouraged to include all their non-CAFA institution's precarious employment in their application.

The 2025 CAFA Awards Dinner will take place in Edmonton on Thursday, September 25th, 2025.

Nominations (a signed pdf copy of the package should be e-mailed to admin@cafa-ab.ca)

All Nominations for the Awards must include the following:

1) A completed Nomination Form:

[CAFA Awards 2025 Nomination Form](#)

2) A Nomination Letter (**please limit to one page**): Academic Awards - describing specifically how the research and/or other scholarly, creative, or professional activity of the nominee(s) have made a contribution to the community beyond the university. Teaching Award – describe the contribution of the nominee towards their students and the broader community. Nominations from any source are welcome.

[N.B. The work of the Selection Committee is dependent on the quality and completeness of the information it receives in the Nomination Letters.]

3) **Two (2) Letters of Reference (please limit each letter to one page).**

[N.B. Letters of Reference should be from persons qualified to comment on the research, teaching and/or other scholarly, creative, or professional activity of the nominee(s), and the contribution it has made to the community outside the university.]

*For the teaching award (for clarification) – **three** letters (the nomination letter plus two reference letters). At least one of the reference letters must be from an academic colleague, but the second one can be from another source that you think best fits your application. The letters should address your teaching contributions both inside and outside the classroom, as well as relevant information on your teaching philosophy, innovative pedagogical methods, and curriculum design].*

4) The current CV (last 5 years of information) of the nominee(s).

Nominations for the CAFA Awards must be received by April 30, 2025

Selection Process

The Selection Committee consists of the president of CAFA, as Chair, and the presidents of the four CAFA member associations – AUFA, GMUFA, MRFA and ULFA, or their designates.

Selection of the CAFA Distinguished Academic Award for Precarious Faculty will be selected by a committee of three precarious teaching staff, appointed by CAFA member associations that have precarious academic staff (GMUFA, MRFA, & ULFA). The committee will be chaired by the CAFA president or, if that is not possible, another member of the CAFA Executive. The committee will meet in person or online. Their decision will be made no later than two weeks after the CAFA May meeting.

The Selection Committees may deliberate, consult, and arrive at their decisions, as they shall determine, subject to the Terms of Reference of the CAFA Distinguished Academic Awards. The decisions of the Selection Committees are final.

Award recipients will be selected by May 23, 2025.

Recipients

Travel and hotel expenses for Award recipients attending the Awards dinner will be paid by CAFA. For more information, please visit the CAFA website at www.cafa-ab.ca or contact Lori Morinville, Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations, (780) 232-6812. e-mail: admin@cafa-ab.ca