

Sociology Department, Honors/Awards Criteria & Procedures 3/14/07

This document concerns three awards: J. Michael Armer Award for Best Teacher, Best Paper and Best Teacher Awards for Graduate Teaching Assistants, and Best Paper Award for an Undergraduate student

Former sociology department chair Mike Armer started these awards in 1980 to celebrate the excellent teaching that so many of our faculty and graduate students regularly do and to recognize outstanding papers by our graduate students. To preserve institutional memory, the guidelines that traditionally have governed these awards are noted below.

Eligibility. Anyone on the committee is ineligible for an award. (Should a graduate student want to be considered, she/he must resign prior to the time the committee meets.) All faculty with *permanent* appointments (whether tenure track or non-tenure track) are eligible and automatically considered annually; adjunct and visiting faculty are ineligible. Faculty members can win again after a lapse of five years.

Full-time sociology graduate students are eligible for both the Best Teacher and Best Paper awards (although no student can win the same award twice). Graduate students wanting consideration for the teaching award must have taught at least one course on their own and must apply for the award. They may, but are not required to, submit a teaching portfolio. A submission for the Graduate Student Best Paper must be solely the work of the graduate student who submits it.

Undergraduate students in any major are eligible for the Undergraduate Paper Award but the paper must have been written in a sociology course and must be sociological in character.

Criteria/evidence. Faculty members' cumulative (at least 2-3 years) SUSSAI and SPOT are reviewed. The committee may also consider extraordinary contributions--e.g., leading the Sociology Club, serving as faculty sponsor for Alpha Kappa Delta, serving as undergraduate or graduate director, directing many dissertations, developing many new graduate seminars. (*Peer evaluations of faculty teaching performance are unavailable to the Honors/Awards Committee, due to confidentiality issues.*) Graduate students are judged on their SUSSAI and SPOT evaluations and are invited, but not required, to submit a teaching portfolio. For paper awards, the paper must be written using non-sexist language. Graduate student papers that are most apt to be selected will be well-written and organized, will apply sociological theory, and will report the analysis of sociological data. In short, excellent papers resemble a journal article. For guidance on avoiding sexist language, see <http://www.ncte.org/about/over/positions/category/lang/107647.htm>.

Committee staffing. The Honors/Awards Committee is chaired by the recipient of the Michael Armer Best Teacher in the previous year. The student members are the prior year's winner of the Best Teacher and Best Paper awards. Additional faculty include the Best Teacher from two years previously plus one (or more) additional faculty, appointed by the department chair. The committee does its work in late Spring in time for our Honors Luncheon in April. Departmental staff will update the SUSSAI/SPOT results for faculty each spring for review by the Honors/Awards Committee.