

Kathy Nomme Award for New Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants (TAs) are vital to the success of undergraduates in the Biology Program. They play a key role in effective instruction and the smooth operation of all courses. The Kathy Nomme Award for New Teaching Assistants specifically recognizes the contributions of outstanding Teaching Assistants in their first two terms in the role. The award is named in honour of Prof. Kathy Nomme and her dedication to the training of new teaching assistants.

This award consists of a cash prize of \$200 for the winner, and certificates of recognition for the Winner and Honourable Mentions.

1. Eligibility

The award is open to any Graduate or Undergraduate Teaching Assistant from any department who has TA'ed a BIOL course during the current, and/or the preceding academic year (i.e., from September 2023 to the present term), and who qualifies as a New TA. Here we define **New TAs as Graduate or Undergraduate TAs who have held TAships for a maximum of two completed terms (i.e., not including the term currently in progress) at the time of application.** For this round of nominations, New TAs will have TA'ed for the first time in 2023W1, 2023W2, 2024 Summer, or 2024W1. If they have TA'ed for a second time, this will have happened in 2023W2, 2024 Summer, or 2024W1.

TAships held in other departments and/or at other institutions count toward the maximum of two terms to be considered a New TA.

Previous/past winners of the Science Teaching Assistant Teaching Award and of the Biology TA Teaching Award are not eligible. However, those who were nominated and did not win are still eligible for this year's award and encouraged to apply.

2. Nomination Process

Nominations are encouraged from teaching supervisors of New Teaching Assistants (this includes faculty, contract faculty, sessional lecturers, staff, or other appropriate instructional team members), from colleagues working closely with the TA, and from the students who attended the TA's class or laboratory.

While New TAs may not nominate themselves, they are encouraged to discuss their contributions to teaching with an appropriate teaching supervisor or colleague if they feel that they may qualify.

The first step is for the Nominator to notify both the TA and their teaching supervisor of the nomination. The Nominator is expected to write a 1-page Letter of Support for the Application Package.

Once a nomination has been secured, the nominated TA (the Nominee) must put together an Application Package consisting of:

- **The Nominator's letter of support (two-page maximum);**
- **A Teaching Curriculum Vitae**, which must include:
 - the TA's department and lab affiliations (undergraduate TAs may state their program affiliation), and the TA's email address;
 - a summary of the TA's teaching roles and responsibilities in the Biology Program from the past two academic years, including the course number(s), number of students, type of teaching

undertaken, hours per week in the classroom, other duties, and a brief description (1 paragraph) of the role of the TA in each of the courses.

- **A summary of the students' evaluations of instruction (SEIs) and any other evidence of teaching effectiveness**

Application Packages must reflect the judging criteria (See Appendix I) and include supporting documentation. Please submit as a single PDF file.

Nomination deadline for 2025: all application packages must be submitted to biology.taship@ubc.ca no later than Sunday March 23rd, 2025 at 11:59 pm.

The TA awards are typically announced at the graduate symposiums of Zoology Graduate Student Association (ZGSA) or Botany Graduate Student Associate (BGSA) in late April or early May. Awardees will also be contacted via email.

3. Adjudication process

Application packages will be evaluated by the same committee that adjudicates the Biology Teaching Assistant Teaching Award.

A committee will be struck by the chair of the committee for the previous year, before the submission of application packages. This year's committee will consist of three faculty members and 1-2 TAs who are recognized as effective teachers and/or are recent teaching award winners in the faculty. The enclosed criteria will be used by the committee to determine the nominees' effectiveness.

APPENDIX I

EFFECTIVE TEACHING CRITERIA for the Biology Teaching Assistant Teaching Award

Successful candidates will have demonstrated skills, abilities, and contributions that result in a high level of respect from their students and academic or course supervisors, in several of the following areas:

1. Demonstrates a broad knowledge of the field, and the ability to help students actively learn new knowledge, skills and perspectives, evidenced by student/supervisor feedback. For example:
 - a. actively helps students to learn transferable skills such as oral and verbal communication, problem solving, critical thinking, numeracy, teamwork, leadership;
 - b. is enthusiastic about biology and conveys this to students;
 - c. constructively evaluates student presentations and other work;
 - d. organizes effective presentations, fieldwork or discussion groups that maximize student learning;
 - e. explains facts or information clearly and logically.
2. Shows evidence of working in a collegial manner with students, faculty supervisors and Teaching Assistant colleagues:
 - a. works with other graduate students and faculty to improve the learning environment for students;
 - b. demonstrates rapport with and support of undergraduate students through active listening strategies and actions;
 - c. encourages student collaboration through group projects and presentations.
3. Shows evidence of incorporating new teaching skills learned through workshops, seminars and/or self-directed learning.
4. Shows evidence of reflection and action on personal and professional development within the scope of the Teaching Assistantship.
5. Acts as a role model, demonstrating high academic standards, good listening skills and ethics, such as:
 - a. encourages and supports diversity and equity within and beyond the classroom;
 - b. provides useful constructive feedback (oral and/or written) on students' work;
 - c. is involved in community service (for example, involvement in science fairs, open houses, science outreach, undergraduate/graduate events);
 - d. initiates actions which help to make the classroom a safe, supportive and inclusive learning environment.