

RECOGNITION OF OUTSTANDING ADVISING

One way to promote best practices of advising of graduate and professional students is to sponsor a program or department award that recognizes an outstanding adviser, nominated and selected by the students in the program. All too often the diligent care and hard work of seeing students through from matriculation to graduation goes unnoticed by all but the advisees themselves. While there are several all-University awards, recognition by the students at the program level can be very meaningful.

This award can be conferred on an annual basis, perhaps toward the end of the academic year, and administered locally, with the recipient chosen from the graduate faculty members in your department. The recognition need not be expensive or elaborate.

Some ideas to consider:

- a simple and nicely framed letter, signed by the DGS and chair;
- a small cash award;
- a gift card from the U of M bookstores;
- a plaque suitable for display in the faculty member's office; or
- the adviser's name as part of a permanent display in the department that includes the names of the award's recipients.

To make the award more meaningful, the announcement and presentation of the award can be combined with a year-end departmental event such as a picnic or open house that involves student, staff, and faculty. The program may also wish to post the names and year of adviser award winners on their departmental webpage, and contact University Relations to help publicize the award within the larger U of M community. You may wish to consult with your departmental budget officer regarding gift-giving policies.

Attached for your consideration and use is a sample email message to the students in your program, soliciting nominations and outlining criteria for such an award, along with a nomination form. Please feel free to adapt both of these pieces to make them specific to your department or program.