



I. Background

During the spring of 2015, President Rodney Mabry approved the creation of The University of Texas at Tyler's Academy of Distinguished Teachers (the Academy) to recognize and honor outstanding teaching. The original proposal developed by Dr. Neil Gray, Fellow of the University of Texas System Academy of Distinguished Teachers and Dr. Ross Sherman, Interim Provost, stated:

"The Academy will recognize UT Tyler educators who have demonstrated leadership in education and are committed to improving learning across the university. The Academy will encourage and help sustain pedagogical excellence at UT Tyler by serving as role models for their colleagues, fostering research on university teaching and learning, and advising the institution on teaching policies and practices."

During the fall of 2022 the Academy incorporated UT System Shine Academy members; The mission of Shine Academy is to serve the University of Texas System (UTS) through the support and promotion of excellence in all aspects of health science education, educational scholarship and leadership.

Shine Academy members will adhere to the Academy bylaws as well as Shine Bylaws maintained by the UT System Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Health Affairs. Shine Academy Members as part of ADT may elect to apply to become a Fellow and active member of the Academy.

II. Name

The name of the society is The University of Texas at Tyler Academy of Distinguished Teachers.

III. Goals of the Academy

Fellows and Shine Academy Members of the Academy form an organization of distinguished scholars of the first order recognized for teaching excellence, who are committed to the advancement of teaching and learning across UT Tyler.

The goals of Academy Fellows are:

- To advocate for, promote, and celebrate teaching excellence at UT Tyler.
- To serve as a university-level advisory and advocacy group dedicated to fostering classroom innovation and teaching excellence.
- To facilitate the sharing of best practices in teaching across disciplines, colleges, and departments through workshops, seminars, discussion panels, etc.
- To promote an understanding of the complex and diverse nature of discovery, teaching, and learning and the importance of scholarly and creative activity to the learning process.
- To foster the integration of the scholarship of teaching and learning with the scholarship of discovery to reinforce a culture of teacher-scholars.
- To provide a forum that brings together faculty, staff, and students to share opportunities for teaching, learning, and scholarship.

IV. Organization

- A. **Members.** Membership as a Fellow of the Academy is to be honorific, based on achievement coupled with a commitment to service to the mission of the Academy. Standards for admission to Fellow status in the Academy will be of the highest order, and only the very best teachers from across the campus will be accepted as members. Eleven founding members were inducted in 2015, and new members may be inducted each year thereafter.
- B. **Officers.** The officers of the Academy include Fellows who are elected to President, Past-President, President-Elect, Treasurer and Secretary. All members will be eligible to hold office their first year of membership as an active Fellow in the Academy.
- C. **Board.** The officers of the Academy and the chairs of standing committees shall together constitute the Executive Board charged with direction of the Academy's mission. The Executive Board shall include Fellows from at least three departments. Their duties include nominating slates of new officers and committee chairs. To do this, the Executive Board will convene at least four weeks prior to the Spring induction and business meeting and submit a slate to the entire membership two weeks prior to that meeting.
- D. **Committee Chairs.** Fellows who are elected to committee chair will serve two-year terms. Nominations for chairs will be solicited and accepted; in the event there is only a single person nominated that person may be appointed by acclamation. In the event of multiple candidates then an election will take place. The process of installing committee chairs will take place at the Spring meeting and committees will be subsequently constituted.
- E. **Duties of Officers.**
 - i. **Executive Board Members** shall represent the Academy per request of the Office of the Provost. The Executive Board may step in to fill the role of any committee chair absence.
 - ii. The **President**, or President-Elect in the absence of the President, shall oversee all official meetings. The President shall oversee the Executive Board and ensure that the Academy is operating in compliance with the bylaws, manage the Academy e-mail, archives, and calendar invitations (including ADT events, executive board meetings, and academy membership meetings). The President shall be the direct voice of the Academy to the Office of the Provost and Academic Affairs.
 - iii. The **Past-President** shall provide guidance to the President, Executive Board, and administration.
 - iv. The **President-Elect** shall provide support to the President, Past-President and Executive Board.
 - v. The **Treasurer** shall provide oversight of the finances of the Academy, including an annual budget. The Treasurer shall manage all Academy funds as well as the Academy cost center, make disbursements under authorization of the Executive Board, and report financial statements at Academy meetings.

- vi. The **Secretary** shall prepare minutes for each official meeting of the Executive Board and the Academy. Minutes should be distributed via Academy email a week in advance to all members of the Academy for approval at the start of each meeting. The Secretary shall maintain an Archive of pertinent material from all activities of the Academy. Committee meeting minutes should be solicited from committee chairs each semester. The Secretary shall maintain the vitae, attendance, and other vital records of all members of the Academy, as well as maintain updated Academy member bios on the website which should, at minimum, be updated following the induction of new members each spring.

- F. Election of Officers. Including the President, officers will be elected to a two (2) year term by majority vote of those present at the Spring business meeting. Nominees must be active Fellows and nominations must be circulated to Fellow status Academy membership two weeks prior to the meeting. Upon completion of such one (2) year term, the President-Elect shall succeed to the office of President for a two (2) year term. In turn, the President shall succeed to the office of Past-President for a two (2) year term. The terms of the officers will begin May 15.

- G. Vacancies. The President-Elect shall become the President in the event of a vacancy in the office of the current President. The President, with the advice and consent of the Executive Board, shall appoint an Academy member to fill any other vacant position on the Executive Board or any committee.

- H. Standing committees shall include:
 - 1. Membership Committee
 - 2. Events and Outreach Committee
 - 3. Governance Committee

Additional standing or ad hoc committees may be formed by the President with advice and consent of the Executive Board. Additional standing or ad hoc committees may include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Fund Raising Committee
- 2. Communication and Website Development Committee
- 3. Outcome and Assessment Committee
- 4. Other ad hoc committees to address specific needs of the Academy

V. Description of Standing Committees.

- 1. Membership Committee. The Membership Committee is charged with developing member selection criteria and procedures to be agreed upon by all Academy members. This committee will review nominations and recommend new Academy members annually. The selection criteria and procedures will be permanently presented on the Academy website. The Membership Committee Chair shall work with the Academy President to order plaques to be presented to new faculty fellows during the spring Faculty/Staff University Awards ceremony. The majority of this committee shall be comprised of past ROTA awardees. In addition to Academy membership recommendations, this committee is tasked with reviewing ROTA packets and providing feedback on each applicant to the Provost. Voting for or ranking ROTA nominees is limited to past ROTA awardees. All Academy Fellows who are

past ROTA awardees are encouraged to participate in Membership Committee Meetings during the time of ROTA evaluation to be eligible to vote for or rank ROTA nominees.

2. Events and Outreach Committee. The Events and Outreach Committee is charged with conceiving, planning, promoting, and running Academy events that may include, but are not limited to, such things as the new member induction ceremony event, campus outreach for events including scheduling on the professional development calendar and disseminating event information to the campus community, hosting faculty forums/panel discussions, and teaching conferences. The events committee will propose Academy events to the full Academy membership and all approved events will be advertised and presented on the Academy website as well as the UT Tyler Professional Development calendar.
3. Governance Committee. The Governance Committee is charged with periodic review, adherence, and updates to the Academy's by-laws.

The Executive Board will identify the need for new standing and ad hoc committees and shall formulate statements of charge for such committees. Committee chairs and members will be appointed by the President with advice and consent of the Executive Board, after consultation with the members. All committees will have a chair and representative members. The President, with the advice and consent of the Executive Board, will decide how many members will serve on each standing or ad hoc committee.

VI. Meetings

The Executive Board will call all meetings of the Academy membership. These shall be three in number, with specified business as follows:

- Fall Meeting (usually in September)
Business: Planning, induction of new Academy Fellows
- Winter Meeting (usually in February):
Business: Planning
- Spring Meeting (usually in April):
Business: Selection of new Academy Fellows, and—every other year—election of new officers and committee chairs

Besides the business specified above, the general purpose of each meeting may also include committee reports, new business, and strategic discussion of the Academy's mission. The Executive Board may call a meeting after written petition from 1/3 of the active members of the Academy, or when the Executive Board deems appropriate or critical to the Academy's mission.

VII. Membership

- A. Criteria for Fellow Members. Eligible members in the Academy will represent only the very best teachers at The University of Texas at Tyler. The requirements for membership as a Fellow in the Academy will be of the highest order. The Academy is intended to be an elite organization, with membership based on excellence in teaching at the undergraduate or graduate levels combined with extraordinary contributions to the educational mission of UT Tyler.
- B. Criteria for Shine Academy Membership. Members of the Shine Academy actively participate in its mission to serve the University of Texas System through the support and promotion of excellence in all aspects of health science education, educational scholarship and leadership. New members are selected annually from the faculty and professional education staff of The University of Texas System health institutions. For more information regarding the nomination

and selection process, see the Members' Documents and the Candidate Application Form on the UT System Shine website.

- C. Detailed nomination and Election Procedures for Fellow Members are posted on the Academy web site. The Membership Committee will seek diversity in Fellow Academy membership. The Membership Committee will utilize criteria to ensure diversity in membership across all disciplines. Membership in the Academy will be lifelong. The Academy expects the members to continue to perform educational effort at or above the level which qualified membership in the Academy. All members will act as ambassadors of the Academy to promote educational excellence. The Academy expects all members to participate actively in committees, formal and informal programs, and activities that promote the Academy's mission.
- D. Categories of Membership.
- 1) "Founding Fellow" – members of the original cohort of academy members inducted in 2015.
 - 2) "Fellow" - member who is selected as a Fellow in the Academy through a rigorous application and approval process who maintains active participation as reflected in the Bylaws.
 - 3) "Associate Fellow" – a former Fellow member who fails to maintain active participation in the Academy or fails to maintain a distinguished record of teaching excellence, as well as a record of promoting continuous development of teaching excellence and improvement among their colleagues.
 - 4) "Emeritus Fellow" – a Fellow/Founding Fellow who has resigned or retired from The University of Texas at Tyler.
 - 5) "Shine Academy Member" – member of the UT System Shine Academy. Shine Academy Member may also apply for ADT Fellow status.
 - 6) "Fellow, Shine Academy Member" – member who is selected as a Fellow in the Academy through a rigorous application and approval process who maintains active participation as reflected in the Bylaws. Lifetime member of the UT System Shine Academy.

Upon induction into the Academy, a new member gains "Fellow" status. Academy Fellows shall serve on a minimum of one committee (or Executive Board), actively engage in general and committee meetings, and attend and/or participate in Academy events, unless extenuating circumstances prevent such engagement. The Academy expects members to participate in activities that promote the Academy's missions. Active Academy Fellows shall engage in at least two ADT events each academic year with the exception of university excused absences (i.e., teaching, conference, mandatory university/departmental meetings, etc.). A review of all Fellows' Academy participation will take place each academic year by the Executive Committee following the winter meeting but prior to the spring meeting and subsequent installment of new officers. Upon recommendation by the Executive Committee and a 2/3 vote of those present at the spring Academy meeting, inactive Fellows' membership category will be changed to "Associate Fellow." An "Associate Fellow" may be reinstated as a "Fellow" following two consecutive years of attendance at meetings or other events. An "Associate Fellow" may serve on committees but may NOT vote in Academy meetings. In May of each academic year, an updated membership roster will be sent by the Academy President to the Provost for conferral of the honorific title of "Distinguished Teaching Professor".

- E. Criteria for "Emeritus Fellow." A "Fellow" or "Founding Fellow" qualifies to become an "Emeritus Fellow" when he or she resigns or retires as a faculty member of The University of

Texas at Tyler, or no longer meets the criteria for Academy membership. This honorific status must be requested by the member and confirmed by final approval of the Executive Committee. An "Emeritus Fellow" may not serve on committees, but is encouraged to attend meetings, although not as a voting participant; apart from ROTA awardees who may vote on future ROTA nominees. An "Emeritus Fellow" who returns to any University of Texas institution will be automatically reinstated as a "Fellow". An Associate Fellow who resigns or retires is not eligible to hold the title of Emeritus Fellow. "Emeritus Fellow" status shall be awarded to an active "Fellow" that passes away.

VIII. Honorific Title

Academy "Fellows" may use the title of Distinguished Teaching Professor in accordance with the UT System Regents' "Rule 31001: Faculty Appointments and Titles" and the University of Texas at Tyler Handbook of Operating Procedures. "In recognition of their significant contributions to education, members of an institutional academy of distinguished teachers may use the honorific title Distinguished Teaching Professor." Any "Associate Fellow" and "Shine Academy Member" may not use the title of Distinguished Teaching Professor.

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