

MINNIE STEVENS PIPER PROFESSOR AWARD PROCEDURE

Revised April 2026

Each May, the Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation grants the Piper Professor Award to 10 Texas college or university professors in honor of their teaching excellence. Current and former students and faculty at the University of Houston-Clear Lake have an opportunity to submit nominations for this award during the fall semester. Faculty self-nominations are permitted.

1. PROCEDURES

Around mid-October, the Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation sends UHCL an invitation to nominate one eligible faculty member for the award along with information about the award process. Deadline for nominations is usually the middle of November.

1.1 Minnie Stevens Piper Professor Award Committee (Award Committee)

1.1.1 Formation

The Vice Provost supervises the formation of the Awards Committee to manage the nomination process. The Award Committee consists of one faculty member and one student from each college (eight members).

1.1.2 Faculty representatives

The prior year's UHCL Piper nominee serves as the representative for their college. The Faculty Council Executive Committee is asked to select the remaining three faculty representatives and confirms their availability and willingness to serve before submitting their names to the Vice Provost.

1.1.3 Student representatives

The Student Government Association is responsible for selecting one student representative from each college. The Dean of Students or their designee from Student Services confirms the students' availability and willingness to serve before submitting their names to the Vice Provost.

2. ELIGIBILITY

Full time tenure, tenure track and non-tenure track teaching faculty members (Clinical Professors of Practice and Lecturers) who have taught for a minimum of at least five academic years prior to the nomination may apply. Members of the Award Committee are not eligible to apply.

3. NOMINATIONS

The deadline and submission requirements for each year's nominations is announced by the Student Government Association and Faculty Council by methods such as campus television monitors, the website and campus e-mail distribution. Faculty Council Executive Committee coordinates a mass e-mail to the faculty.

The Piper Award nomination submissions are sent electronically to the Vice Provost Office and are distributed to the award committee. The submission includes:

3.1 Narratives

Two short narratives written by the applicant describing why the applicant is teaching and also a short narrative describing the highlights of their teaching career.

3.2 Current Curriculum Vitae

A curriculum vitae similar to what is generated as part of the faculty annual report process.

4. NOMINEE SELECTION PROCESS

The Awards committee chair reviews the criteria for reviewing the applications with the committee including what things that members should focus on in reviewing the narratives and the vitae that align with the scoring rubric with an emphasis on confidentiality. The Award committee members individually review each of the applications using a scoring rubric provided by the Vice Provost Office and ranks the applicants according to their scores on the rubric. All members are responsible for reviewing and scoring each of the applications.

The Award Committee sends the names of the faculty applicants with the five highest scores to the Vice Provost as semi-finalists.

The Vice Provost notifies the semi-finalists and provides them with a UHCL Piper Semi-Finalist Form which they complete and submit to the Awards Committee through the Vice Provost office.

The Vice Provost notifies the Deans and Associate Deans of faculty members in their college who were nominated and selected as semi-finalists.

The Award Committee reviews and scores the semi-finalists' nomination packages on a scoring rubric and selects one of the semi-finalists as the University's nominee for the Piper Professor Award. The name of the winner is sent to the Vice Provost.

5. NOTIFICATION AND ANNOUNCEMENT

The Vice Provost sends a congratulatory email to the semi-finalists and finalist UHCL Piper nominee regarding the committee's decision. The e-mail goes to the Deans, Associate Deans, Provost, President and Marketing/Communication.

The Vice Provost prepares a draft of the announcement for the university community and sends the draft to the Provost, the President and Marketing/Communication for review. The announcement contains the name of the UHCL Piper nominee and the reasons the Award Committee deemed that person an outstanding teacher. Any student quotes included in the announcement should specify student majors and anticipated graduation date(s) but should not include student identifying information (e.g. name, initials, student id, etc.)

6. NOMINEE SUBMISSION TO THE PIPER FOUNDATION

The Vice Provost sends the Texas state level Piper Professor Nomination form link to the nominee. The nominee completes the form giving additional information about their teaching, including narratives and submits it to the Vice Provost along with up to five letters of recommendation from administrators, colleagues and/or former or current students.

An administrator from UHCL also completes portions of the form describing the faculty member's teaching, interaction with students, comparison to other members of the faculty as a teacher, scholar and contribution made to the achievement of the purposes of the institution. The administrator also describes how the campus nominee was selected. The original form and documentation is sent to the Piper Foundation in San Antonio for consideration for the state level Minnie Stevens Piper Award. The Vice Provost retains a copy of the state level Piper form on file.

7. PROCESS CONCLUSION

The UHCL Piper finalist nominee's name is added to the UHCL website with the names of the previous nominees and award recipients. Should the nominee be selected by the Minnie Steven Piper Foundation for the statewide Piper Professor Award, the website will be updated to indicate the nominee received the award.