



# Debra W. Stewart Award for Outstanding Leadership in Graduate Education **Nomination Packages due: April 25, 2025**

## Description

Created by the CGS Board of Directors to recognize outstanding leadership in graduate education, this award is given annually to an individual who exemplifies the leadership qualities of the Council's fifth president, Debra W. Stewart. The selection committee gives serious consideration to nominees with a strong reputation for ethics and integrity, a history of active participation in the graduate community, and a record of strategic vision and actions resulting in meaningful impacts in areas such as, but not limited to, evidence-based innovation, program development, diversity and inclusion, student learning and career outcomes, personnel management, policy advocacy in support of graduate education and research, and fiscal responsibility.

## Eligibility

- The current senior graduate dean (IHE1) at any CGS [“Regular” or “Associate” member](#) institution in *good standing* is eligible to be nominated for the award.
- Members of the CGS Board are not eligible to be nominated for the award during active years of board service.
- Please see the *Frequently Asked Questions* below for additional considerations.

If, in selection committee's view, the award's high standards for outstanding achievement are not met in a given year, the committee may choose not to confer the award.

## How to Submit a Nomination Package

A complete nomination package includes the following five components:

1. A completed nomination form.
2. 300-word summary of the nominee's achievements in the relevant areas of leadership. (See further instructions below).
3. The nominee's curriculum vitae (5 pages maximum).
4. Signed letter of endorsement from the president or provost at the nominee's institution.
5. Three additional letters of recommendation supporting the nomination. A combination of internal letters (submitted by individuals at the nominee's home institution) and external letters is encouraged. Letters should be addressed to the “*Stewart Award Selection Committee*.”

**Note:** The nomination package must be as a **single pdf document** to Anna M. Naranjo at [anaranjo@cgs.nche](mailto:anaranjo@cgs.nche). Mailed or faxed paper submissions will not be accepted.

## Instructions for Preparing the Summary of Achievements

When preparing the 300-word summary of the nominee's accomplishments as a graduate dean, please focus on the selection committee's primary areas of consideration:

- Ethics and Integrity
- A history of active participation in the graduate community and CGS
- A record of strategic vision and actions resulting in meaningful impacts in areas such as, but not limited to:
  - Evidence-based innovation
  - Program development
  - Diversity and inclusion
  - Student learning and career outcomes
  - Personnel management
  - Policy advocacy in support of graduate education and research
  - Fiscal responsibility

Nominators are also welcomed to highlight accomplishments outside of these areas. Please be aware, however, that the committee gives priority to the criteria listed above and evaluates candidates' accomplishments in each of these areas.

## Frequently Asked Questions

*Who may nominate an individual for this award?*

Any administrator, faculty or staff member associated with a CGS member institution in good standing ([Regular and Associate level](#)).

*May I nominate an individual at an institution different from my own?*

Yes. However, please bear in mind that:

- Both the nominator and the nominee must be employed at a CGS member institution in good standing (Regular or Associate).
- The letter of endorsement included in the application must be signed by the president or provost at the nominee's institution. For that reason, it is recommended that you work closely with the leadership of the graduate school at the nominee's institution to prepare the nomination package. This will also help prevent duplicate nominations.

*May individuals self-nominate for this award?*

No. The nomination form must be signed by an individual other than the nominee.

*Does the nomination form and the letter of endorsement need to be signed by the same individual?*

No.

*What if there is a change in a nominated individual's professional status prior to the selection of the awardee?*

Nominators should make such changes known to CGS as soon as possible. Only individuals who are full graduate deans at the time when the award committee is reviewing nomination packages will be eligible to be considered for an award.

*What if a nominated individual retires or steps down from the dean's role after the selection is made but before the award is conferred?*

The award decision is final regardless of changes in a nominee's professional title after the committee deliberates and makes a decision.

*If the individual I nominated wasn't chosen last year, may I re-nominate him or her? If so, may the same nomination package be submitted?*

The committee welcomes and encourages re-nominations. However, nominators must fill out a new nomination form, and are encouraged to provide an updated version of the summary of achievements and curriculum vitae. Letters of support may be re-submitted without change as long as:

- 1) they are dated no more than two years prior to the current date of submission; and
- 2) the individual providing the president or provost's letter still holds his or her position (otherwise, a letter from the new president or provost must be provided).

*When will the award be conferred?*

If a selection is made, the award will be conferred at the December Annual Meeting Awards Ceremony in Washington, D.C. A prize of \$4,000 will be given to the graduate school (or equivalent unit) at the awardee's institution to support continuing innovations.

*Whom should I contact for more information?*

For all questions about this award, please contact [president@cgs.nche.edu](mailto:president@cgs.nche.edu).