

Theron Francis, PhD

November 2, 2021

Dears Members of the SRSU Outstanding Teaching Award Committee:

I would like to nominate Dr. Alicia Trotman for the 2021-22 Outstanding Teaching Award. Alicia helped to launch SRSU's Student Research Symposium in 2018, and she has consistently been involved as a lead planner since then. She is a core instructor for many students in the Psychology Department, guiding their research and professionalization in the field. Her emphasis on student research makes her teaching transformational. To this end, she has been awarded two grants from the SRSU Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Her approach to teaching addresses the student holistically, so that their work is meaningful to them. This is perfect for a professor in the field of educational psychology.

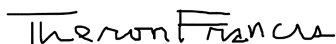
I learned to love working with Alicia when we planned the first Student Research Symposium together in 2018. For every problem, she had a ready solution. She designed the nomination forms, helped to plan the schedule, and created the initial program. Each year, she continues to collaborate on all these and others aspects of the symposium. This involves coordinating with diverse faculty, administrators and staff. She also consistently motivates several students to present at the symposium. To bear this kind of responsibility takes faith in what she and others can do. It takes as much joy as enthusiasm. And it takes gritty determination.

My sense is that Dr. Trotman views education as a growth process. She connects with her students as they mature through their college education. She founded the Big Bend Comic Con Expo in 2018 out of a shared joy in anime, comics and movies. The Comic Con too requires careful planning, but also the direct engagement of students. What better way to retain students, than to help them find meaning in what they enjoy most right here.

Dr. Trotman is also actively involved in service which directly impacts her teaching and the approach to teaching at Sul Ross. She has been a QEP Navigator, and member of the Core Curriculum Assessment Committee. She has also served on the Teaching Council. She is a member of the current provost search committee. And she serves on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee.

I cannot think of another teacher at Sul Ross who is more deserving of the Outstanding Teaching Award than Dr. Trotman. She is always an enthusiast. What we need at Sul Ross are teachers we can trust and teachers who believe in our students. That's Alicia. We are so lucky to have her here.

Sincerely,



Theron Francis



SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas State University System

ALPINE, TEXAS 79832

College of LASS

Literature, Arts, & Social Sciences

Phone 432.837.8744

7th November 2021

Dear Faculty Assembly President,

I am delighted to nominate Assistant Professor of History, Dr. Kendra DeHart, for the SRSU Outstanding Teacher Award. I find Dr. DeHart deeply committed to her students and colleagues, alike, bringing one of the most positive attitudes I have experienced in many years at our university.

Dr. DeHart is an exceptional lecturer. This term, I had the privilege to observe Dr. DeHart's in-person History 1301 course, History of the U.S. to 1877. I found the course to be engaging and lively, as well as informative and thorough. Students fully engaged with the instructor and the topic and appeared to genuinely enjoy learning. The class opened with Dr. DeHart in open, free dialogue before utilizing multi-media presentations of information, including music video and power-points. To focus the class, Dr. DeHart engaged in a rapid-review question/answer session. Almost the entire class answered in tandem. Besides grounding the class before moving forward with new information, I found the exercise energized the students. It also helped exemplify the comfort the class has with Dr. DeHart's instruction.

Students further enjoyed role-playing with prompts in order to share in the analysis of primary-source materials, as well as to clarify the concept of primary-sources in scholarly inquiry. I find Dr. DeHart particularly adept at keeping students fully engaged through the liveliness of the class, well focused lecture, and fully utilizing the Socratic method of questioning students in order to encourage their critical thinking and articulation of those thoughts. The course ends with a brief quiz in which students write their reactions to the information on which the course focused. A Ph.D. in English who has taught early American literature many semesters, I learned much about the Jamestown Colony! Overall, I find Dr. DeHart's teaching inspiring. I left reminded of why we teach: to engage young minds. I highly commend her instruction.

In addition, Dr. DeHart brings a wonderful attitude, impressive energy, and plain fun to student engagement, offering games and skits at festivals, recruitment, and retention events. As a professor at a small university, it is crucial we engage in bringing our disciplines to the social aspects of campus life. It is Dr. DeHart's particularly successful participation in these events that furthers our students' feelings of belonging to a community of scholars, creating an identity as Lobos.

Dr. DeHart's scholarship largely focuses on regional Texas history. In fact, her 2020 dissertation (written while serving as a full-time faculty member at Sul Ross State University) from Texas Christian University focuses on San Angelo women's political activism in the mid-twentieth century. Dr. DeHart maintains a robust research schedule; she is destined to be renowned in Texas history scholarship.

Finally, I wish to commend Dr. DeHart for her collegiality and willingness to serve her department, especially in times of challenge. This semester, in fact, when her department's Chair unexpectedly required a period of absence from duties, she stepped in as program director, which entailed scheduling semester courses and curriculum alignment work, and helped her colleagues facilitate the covering of classes. Her calm leadership helped to take what might have been a stressful time for the department much less so. As Dean of College, I can attest to Dr. DeHart's positive willingness to assist whenever needed with a reliably positive attitude.

It is my pleasure to nominate Dr. DeHart for this prestigious award. If I may be of further assistance, please let me know. My email is lbutler@sulross.edu, and my cell number is 432.386.0554. Thank you for taking the time to consider this nomination.

Warmest regards,

Laura Payne, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Literature, Arts, and Social Sciences
Dean, College of Graduate Studies
Professor of English

To: The Curriculum Council,

From: Dr. Mark Saad Saka

Subject: Nomination of Dr. Kendra Dehart for Teacher of the Year Award

October 27, 2021

Dear Esteemed Colleagues,

It is my honor and privilege to nominate Dr. Kendra Dehart for the 2021-2022 Teacher of the Year Award. As a former recipient myself, (1997)), I feel strong I my recommendation as I value high quality and attentive teaching here at Sul Ross. I have worked with Dr. Dehart as a fellow historian and having served as her chair. I am very familiar with her teaching style, student engagement, research interests and her ability to transfer her research interests to the classroom, and her commitment to the overall Sul Ross mission through various committees and faculty councils.

Dr. Dehart has the highest teacher evaluations in our department, her teaching style and student engagement makes her classes the most popular in not only history but also the Behavioral and Social Sciences. I have observed her in the classroom at the first year seminar level (History 1301 and 1302) as well as advanced history courses (Texas, Women's etc.) and have always come out of there highly impressed as to her teaching skills and inclusive classroom management skills so that every student in the classroom feels part of the teaching and learning process. In addition to highly developed teaching skills, Dr. Dehart holds more office hours than required and is always available for student advising, both professionally and personally.

Dr. Dehart is a very strong asset to our university serving on a number of professional organizations, both at the university level as well as the state and regional level; including *Humanities Texas the West Texas Historical Association*, and *the Rural Women's Studies Association*. At the University level she currently serves on the *Academic and Integrity Committee*, *the Athletic Council*, *the LASS Extravaganza Planning Committee*, *the SRSU Man and Woman of the Year Committee*, serves as the faculty navigator for the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) and regularly is an active participant in Sul Ross recruiting drives (faculty call-a-thon, Sully Saturdays, etc.). She also coordinates and is a judge the History Fair for the Big Bend Historical Association which brings junior high and high students to our campus for the annual history fair.

I could continue pronouncing Dr. Dehart's successes and teaching, research, and service but I feel strong in my recommendation for Dr. Kendra Dehart s Sul Ross Teacher of the Year. Please feel free to contact me for further reference and recommendation.

Thank You,

Dr. Mark Saka

Chair: Behavioral and Social Sciences

10 / 27 / 2021

Re : Oguzhan BASIBUYUK, Ph.D.
Outstanding Teaching Award (OTA) Nomination

Dear Members of the Faculty Assembly Executive Council,

It is a pleasure for me to write this letter to nominate Dr. Oguzhan BASIBUYUK for the Outstanding Teaching Award (OTA).

Dr. Basibuyuk has been working at the Department of Homeland Security & Criminal Justice since 2018. This is his 4th year at SRSU. He has been a very active member of SRSU. He started to work as an Associate Professor and promoted to full professorship after 2 years. He has also been serving as the Training Coordinator of the H. Joaquin Jackson Law Enforcement Academy since 2019, and the Department Chair since 2020.

Even though he had a lot of administrative duties and university council memberships, he always found time to help the students. In his first year he worked as the Graduate Advisor and after that, he has been working as the Undergraduate Advisor. He is also the faculty advisor of the Blue Badge Unit Club where he has been working to create a safer learning environment at SRSU. Dr. Basibuyuk was awarded the Top Administrative Assessment Evaluation Report back-to-back in 2019 and 2020 for his curriculum evaluations.

Dr. Basibuyuk has taught a total number of 35 sections of graduate and undergraduate courses including the Fall-2021 semester at SRSU. He did not receive even a single negative student evaluation in any of these courses. He not only taught courses but also created "Crime Mapping" and "Crime Analysis" courses which have been a great success.

I believe, recognizing Dr. Basibuyuk as the winner of the Outstanding Teaching Award will be a way of thanking him for his significant contributions to the Department of Homeland Security & Criminal Justice and the SRSU community in the last four years.

Kindest regards,



Ismail D. Gunes, Ph.D.

Associate Professor & Graduate Advisor

Department of Homeland Security & Criminal Justice

October 20, 2021

To the Membership of Faculty Assembly:

Please consider this nomination for Professor Jessica Kelsch, Instructor of Geology, for the 2020-2021 Outstanding Teaching Award. Professor Kelsch is eligible to receive this award as a full-time faculty member teaching at least 9 SCH in both the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters. Hired as a lecturer in 2012, Professor Kelsch has taught for Sul Ross State University for nearly ten years, and since August 2019 as an Instructor of Geology. She is a current PhD Candidate in Geological Sciences at the University of Texas at El Paso.

I am nominating Professor Kelsch with a focus on her teaching outside of the classroom, however overwhelmingly positive student evaluations from recent semesters bolster my confidence in her traditional classroom teaching. Professor Kelsch is a geologist with a professional background in hydrogeology and petroleum exploration, as well as a researcher with multiple publications and a dynamic roster of research activities. Further, her experience both as a yoga instructor and business owner contribute to her calm, confident articulation and ability to provide constructive criticism and feedback. Her time spent in various teaching and support roles at SRSU has cultivated her sincere, supportive teaching style. Professor Kelsch is a true educator with a passion for clear science communication—especially to and among non-science majors.

Professor Kelsch is, what we call in the SRSU Library, a “regular customer.” She invites librarians into her classes to demonstrate relevant resources and to provide additional assistance and guidance related to performing research in Geology. She makes her course readings accessible. She actively encourages her students to ask questions. I have had the pleasure of interacting with some of Professor Kelsch’s undergraduate and graduate students, many of whom strengthen their interactions with the library following our time together. It is my belief that such cooperation is a cornerstone of effective education.

That our region is so perfectly poised to teach physical science is quite possibly an unfair advantage for the Sul Ross BGPS Department as a whole, but it is not lost on anyone that Professor Kelsch goes above and beyond to get students out of the classroom and applying their classroom learning in the field on a regular basis. Professor Kelsch teaches many non-majors hoping to fulfill a core course requirement. This must have struck a chord with her professionally, as the focus of her PhD research is classroom educational investigations intended to maximize outcomes in critical thinking and in student engagement from in-class exercises in core classes for non-majors. She is committed to improving her impact.

I hope you will review Professor Jessica Kelsch’s CV and discuss with her more deeply her philosophy related to classroom teaching. Even more, find an opportunity to venture into the field with her one day, as I have been lucky enough to do while boating on the Rio Grande.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this nomination. As a current member of the Faculty Assembly Executive Council, I am happy to recuse myself from the deliberations of the nominations in order to make this nomination.



Betsy Evans

Director of Library and Research Technologies, Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library



SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

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Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences
Political Science

Box C-157
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October 28, 2021

Dr. Kathy Stein, President
Faculty Assembly
SRSU-Alpine

Dear Dr. Stein:

With this correspondence, I am nominating Dr. Jessica Velasco for the Outstanding Teacher Award for 2021-2022. It has been my pleasure to have Dr. Velasco as a colleague since I returned to the Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences full-time as a faculty member.

Dr. Velasco's service has been extraordinary. Before I returned to the department to teach full-time, Dr. Velasco rescued our political science program from a certain paralysis. You may remember that our two full-time political science faculty members, Dr. David Watson and Dr. Tiffany Vincent, both resigned from the university during the same year. Although I was teaching one graduate course per semester, my responsibilities were primarily those of the Provost. President Kibler authorized hiring Dr. Velasco as a Lecturer in Political Science. She stepped in and provided program guidance for the B. A. in Political Science, the M. A. in Political Science, and the Master of Public Administration degrees.

From the beginning, Dr. Velasco's instructional and administrative skills were evident. She is very well liked and respected among our undergraduate and graduate students. She gives them the individual mentoring they require in her courses. Outside of class, she engages Sul Ross students in her roles as advisor of the Pre-Law Association, Pi Sigma Alpha (the national political science honor society), and the college Republican and Democratic clubs. She also serves our students through her role as the faculty representative to the Athletic Council.

And during this time, Dr. Velasco has completed her doctorate (Doctor of Public Administration), served on University committees and councils, engaged in research, and served as Coordinator of the Political Science program, a responsibility that involves hours of program assessment and evaluation responsibilities.

It is an honor for me to nominate Dr. Jessica Velasco for the Outstanding Teacher Award. Best wishes in the selection process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Jim Case'.

Jim Case, Ph.D.

Distinguished Professor of Political Science and
Public Administration