I am honored to be selected by the College of Education as a nominee for the Presidential Excellence Award for teaching. Teaching is a central part of my professional identity, and Texas State’s emphasis on teaching is one of the main factors that drew me to Texas State. My narrative is organized around the three key award criteria; in each area I highlight my accomplishments in teaching, advising, mentoring, and curriculum development

**Sustained Commitment & Activity.** I have been teaching undergraduate and graduate students at 6 universities over the past 10 years, and I am happy to say that I have found a professional home that celebrates and values teaching. In 2011 I joined Texas State’s CLAS Department as Assistant Professor and Program Coordinator for the Student Affairs in Higher Education (SAHE) master’s program. I came into the position as the sole full-time faculty member for the program and have enthusiastically served the program and students through advising all students in the program, overseeing all curriculum additions and changes, coordinating the internship program, and of course teaching multiple courses. In fact, due to my unique role of being a Assistant Professor serving as a program coordinator for a one faculty- member program, I taught a course load equivalent to my assistant professor colleagues who did not have additional program coordination responsibilities- in other words, for my first two years my teaching load did not reflect any course releases that my fellow program coordinator colleagues had. Although it was a challenge, I am deeply committed to the success of the program and the students and graciously took on this additional teaching responsibility.

 Teaching is a strong focus of my work, and I proactively seek out opportunities to continue to grow as an educator. At professional conferences I seek out sessions focused on teaching specific to my field. For example, in 2012 and 2013 I attended sessions at the American College Personnel Association entitled *Strategies and Techniques to Reinforce Learning, Best Practices in Teaching Student Development Theory Roundtable,* and *Creating Possibilities for Engaged Learning in Student Affairs Graduate Curriculum*; I took away a number of ideas I have implemented in courses and resources that I shared with the adjunct faculty for the program.

My commitment to continuous improvement in teaching is also demonstrated in the ongoing development of course curriculum and assignments. My teaching evaluations are consistently very strong, and rather than assume that I “have it”, each semester I thoroughly assess student learning through assignments and seek feedback from students throughout the course to identify ways to continuously improve the curriculum and my teaching to enhance student learning. In addition to my focus on enhancing curriculum in the courses I teach, I have made consistent and continuous improvements to the overall SAHE curriculum. Within my first two months in the position I revised learning outcomes for the program, mapping each outcome and method to specific courses in the program, which hadn’t previously been done for the program. Each year I have successfully initiated curriculum changes to enhance the program. One of the substantial changes was introducing and teaching the first elective for the SAHE Program; historically the program has not offered electives and instead pulled from other programs. I will teach the elective *Gender and Sexuality in Higher Education* for the second time this summer, and I am planning the next elective offering to be a study abroad course for next summer, aligning with the Texas State’s priority of internationalization. I have also made considerable improvements to the Internship Program through the placement of interns at institutions in the region (previously nearly 100% of the internships were only at Texas State) and through incorporating more intentional curriculum and site visits. A final example of curriculum development is my efforts in reviewing our program curriculum and student learning alongside the *Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Practitioners*, a recent key document influencing the field*.* I am mapping all courses alongside these competency areas to evaluate the program for strengths and gaps. Additionally, I have had each cohort of students assess themselves each semester alongside these competencies; this May I will begin analyzing the data for the first two complete cohorts of students with the intention of evaluating and further developing the program and student learning.

My sustained commitment to teaching is also demonstrated in my research agenda and professional involvement. I have led 12 presentations (6 while at Texas State) at professional association meetings related to effective teaching and facilitation. College teaching and learning is one of my research streams, so some of these sessions focused on bridging this research with practical implications for educators, while other sessions were related to teaching strategies or curriculum development. These presentations are highlighted on my vitae. Additionally, I was sought out to be part of the planning team for the Leadership Education Academy, a 3-day institute focused on preparing student affairs administrators and faculty to teach leadership at the college level. I am leading the curriculum delivery portion of the Academy.

**Internal & External Recognition of Activity.** In the past three years I have been affirmed both within Texas State and externally across the country- and even globally, that I am recognized as a noteworthy educator. As is demonstrated in Exhibits 3 & 4, SAHE students recognize this through my very strong teaching evaluations, a number of unsolicited letters from students, and numerous acknowledgements from the university’s *Graduating Student Recognition of Campus Support* program. Additionally, in 2012 and 2013 I was selected as an Alpha Chi Professor of the Year though nominations from students.

Beyond the recognition from my students, there are numerous examples of how my recognition transcends programmatic boundaries at Texas State. Each semester I am invited by administrators across the university to speak to undergraduate students, graduate students, and administrators on a range of topics. As an example, in 2013 I facilitated/ taught workshops for the Dean of Student’s Office on leadership theories, the PAWS Preview Co-Chairs on peer leadership, the Texas State Academic Advisors Consortium on serving students, and the Student Affairs Educational Staff Development program on pursuing a Ph.D. I also facilitated the LeaderShape Institute, a 6-day leadership program for 60 Texas State undergraduate students, and I continue to serve in a mentoring role to many of the students. These examples demonstrate the strong recognition I have on campus as an excellent, caring, and engaging educator.

My national recognition grows each year. In 2013 I was hired as a speaker for students and /or administrators on a range of topics to The University of Texas at Austin, Villanova University, Johns Hopkins University, Rollins College, Alpha Sigma Alpha Sorority District Conference, and Alpha Kappa Psi Business Fraternity Regional Conference. At Villanova University I was brought in to teach course instructors for the Leadership Learning Community about effective teaching and facilitation. My national recognition was furthered through serving as a featured speaker for two webinars in 2013 hosted by professional associations in my field.

Further, my role as an educator is recognized internationally. In 2011 I was sought out to help design curriculum for an international leadership course, and in Summer 2012 I taught the course as part of Semester at Sea, an academic program through the University of Virginia that took place on a ship that traveled to 5 countries within Central and South America; teaching positions on the voyages are very competitive and coveted. In 2010 I taught a 2-week study abroad course to Doha, Qatar, and it was through my work in that capacity that I was invited back to Doha in 2012 to facilitate the LeaderShape Institute for over 60 students reflecting 27 nationalities and from 6 universities. My international presence is further demonstrate through my invitation to be a keynote speaker and workshop facilitator for the Middle East Leadership Communications Conference, which takes place in April in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

**Significance/ Impact of Activity.** My philosophy of teaching reflects constructivist and humanistic approaches to adult education. I recognize the classroom as a system in which the students and instructor play vital roles in the learning process; each have valuable knowledge, experience, and perspectives that can contribute to the learning of everyone in the classroom. Exhibits 1 & 3 demonstrate how I intentionally design course curriculum, class activities, and assignments that reflect this philosophy. I greatly value critical thinking, integration, and application as outcomes of graduate education, and this is demonstrated in course assignments. Additionally, I incorporate a number of innovative learning opportunities in my courses that include hands-on learning, connection with professionals in the field, and technology.

Students are very receptive to my teaching and demonstrate a great deal of learning through course assignments and in class. My teaching evaluations are very strong both quantitatively and qualitatively, and colleagues who have observed my teaching identify a number of strengths in my teaching style and relationship with students. As is seen in Exhibit 2, the impact of my teaching and advising is also evident in the success of the SAHE students during the program and post-graduation through internship and job placements, awards, and professional involvement. Many internship and assistantship supervisors comment on the professionalism and strong competencies of the SAHE students, and they actively seek out hiring SAHE students.

**Conclusion**. Teaching is a core part of my professional identity, and I am confident you will see the passion, commitment, and focus on excellence and improvement I place on this in the exhibits provided. Additionally, my hope is that you will see the impact I have made and recognition I have received for my teaching here at Texas State, nationally, and globally.