

## Awards of Excellence Selection Process

**Award Description:** The **DSS Awards of Excellence** honor exceptional individuals within the Division of Student Success who have made significant contributions to student outcomes, engagement, and holistic support. These awards celebrate staff members who have demonstrated excellence in fostering a culture of student success through innovation, collaboration, and a commitment to enhancing the overall student experience. Nominees must provide measurable evidence of their impact, such as improvements in student retention, graduation rates, or engagement with essential campus services. Successful candidates exemplify the values of teamwork and student-centered service, making a meaningful impact on the academic, personal, and professional development of Texas State University students.

Category	1 – Limited	2 – Developing	3 – Solid	4 – Strong	5 – Exceptional
<b>1. Achievement of Student Success Goals</b>	Minimal or unclear evidence of progress toward divisional goals; limited connection to retention, engagement, or graduation outcomes.	Some contribution toward student success goals but limited measurable results or alignment with divisional priorities.	Demonstrates consistent efforts that contribute to student success outcomes; moderate evidence of improvement.	Shows clear, measurable success advancing divisional or institutional goals; positive impact on retention, engagement, or persistence.	Demonstrates significant, sustained, and measurable success leading to notable improvements in retention, engagement, or graduation outcomes.
<b>2. Exceptional Service</b>	Performs expected duties with limited evidence of student-centered service or impact on the campus community.	Provides reliable service with occasional examples of responsiveness or care.	Consistently delivers quality service that supports students, colleagues, and divisional operations.	Goes above and beyond to provide outstanding, student-centered service that enhances the departmental or divisional experience.	Sets a model for service excellence—recognized by peers and students for exceptional responsiveness, professionalism, and care.
<b>3. Innovation and Initiative</b>	Demonstrates limited creativity or initiative; relies on established processes.	Occasionally offers new ideas or improvements but lacks consistency in implementation.	Regularly identifies and applies creative approaches to improve services or programs.	Frequently develops or implements innovative ideas that improve efficiency, engagement, or outcomes.	Exemplifies creativity and forward-thinking; introduces transformative innovations that significantly enhance student success or

					divisional operations.
<b>4. Collaboration and Teamwork</b>	Participates in teamwork with minimal engagement or measurable impact.	Contributes to team projects but with limited collaboration across units or scope.	Works effectively within teams; demonstrates collegiality and communication.	Actively collaborates across departments or functions, strengthening community and shared outcomes.	Serves as a connector or leader in collaborative initiatives that yield measurable improvements in divisional or institutional success.
<b>5. Impact on Student Success</b>	Limited evidence of effect on student outcomes, engagement, or well-being.	Contributes indirectly to student success; results not clearly demonstrated.	Demonstrates measurable or observable improvement in at least one area of student success or experience.	Produces clear, positive outcomes in multiple dimensions of student engagement, belonging, or well-being.	Demonstrates exceptional, sustained, and measurable impact on student success, access, and holistic development.

**Scoring Overview:**

- Each category scored on a 1–5 scale
- 5 = Exceptional, 1 = Limited
- Total possible: 30 points (25 across five categories + 5 for Letter of Support)

Rating	Descriptor	Definition
5	Exceptional	Far exceeds expectations; provides strong, specific evidence of impact.
4	Strong	Frequently exceeds expectations with clear examples of initiative and contribution.
3	Solid	Consistently meets expectations and demonstrates meaningful contribution.
2	Developing	Partial or limited evidence of performance or impact.
1	Limited	Minimal or unclear evidence of achievement.

Category	Definition	Indicators of Excellence	Score (1–5)
<b>1. Achievement of Student Success Goals</b>	Demonstrates measurable success in advancing the goals and objectives of the Division of Student Success — such as improving retention, engagement, or graduation outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides clear evidence of improved student experiences, services, or outcomes.</li> <li>• Aligns contributions with divisional and institutional priorities.</li> <li>• Demonstrates accountability and sustained progress.</li> </ul>	
<b>2. Exceptional Service</b>	Provides outstanding, student-centered service that strengthens the department, the Division, and the university community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognized for responsiveness, care, and professionalism.</li> <li>• Anticipates needs and provides solutions that enhance service quality.</li> <li>• Builds trust and fosters a welcoming environment for students and colleagues.</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Innovation and Initiative</b>	Exhibits creativity and proactive problem-solving that enhances student success or operational efficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops or implements new programs, tools, or resources.</li> <li>• Improves processes that expand access, efficiency, or engagement.</li> <li>• Demonstrates adaptability and a forward-thinking approach.</li> </ul>	
<b>4. Collaboration and Teamwork</b>	Actively participates in collaborative efforts that strengthen community and advance shared goals across departments or the broader campus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributes to cross-unit initiatives, committees, or partnerships.</li> <li>• Promotes open communication and teamwork.</li> <li>• Builds bridges that connect staff, students, and community partners.</li> </ul>	
<b>5. Impact on Student Success</b>	Makes a meaningful, measurable contribution to student engagement, access, health, or well-being.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows clear results from programs or services that promote student belonging and success.</li> <li>• Enhances access to resources or removes barriers to participation.</li> <li>• Positively influences academic, personal, or professional development.</li> </ul>	
<b>6. Letter of Support</b>	Authenticates and reinforces the nominee’s contributions with firsthand examples of their excellence and impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written by someone familiar with the nominee’s work.</li> <li>• Offers specific, evidence-based examples of success.</li> </ul>	

		• Highlights how the nominee fosters belonging, access, or student success.	
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**Total Score Calculation:**

Range	Interpretation	Description
25–30	Exceptional	Award-worthy nominee demonstrating substantial, measurable contributions to the Division’s mission. Consistently exceeds expectations in multiple categories, with clear evidence of innovation, service, and impact.
19–24	Proficient	Strong nominee with consistent, high-quality performance and meaningful contributions. Demonstrates excellence in several areas and alignment with student success goals.
13–18	Solid Performer	Nominee meets expectations and contributes positively but may show limited evidence in one or more categories. Solid candidate deserving recognition, though not yet award-level impact.
7–12	Developing	Nominee shows emerging strengths but limited measurable outcomes or depth of impact. May require more experience or evidence of sustained performance.
1–6	Limited Evidence	Nomination lacks clear examples or measurable results. Minimal demonstration of divisional goals or student impact.

**Committee Evaluation Guidance:**

- Average Scores: If multiple reviewers score each nominee, take the average of all total scores for ranking.
- Ties: Use qualitative discussion of *Impact on Student Success* and *Letter of Support* as tiebreakers.
- Threshold for Recognition:
  - Nominees averaging 25+ points should be automatically considered for final award deliberation.
  - Nominees averaging 19–24 points may receive finalist recognition if multiple strong candidates exist.