The electoral procedure for the Best Teaching Staff Award

The elections for the Best Teaching Staff Award are regulated on the university level by the Statute of the Best Teaching Staff Award. The electoral procedure for the Best Teaching Staff Award that is approved by the Student Parliament will specify the procedure for the elections and describe the different parties' assignments. The student body's Board has the right to exceptionally change the code of practice approved by the Student Parliament if the university's regulations warrant a need to amend it.¹

Nominating people for the Best Teaching Staff Award

- All students can submit applications for the Best Teaching Staff Award competition as an individual or as a group.
- The applications are submitted via Microsoft Forms, and the nominator authenticates themselves and proves their student status via the ut.ee email address. If the person has a student's status but doesn't have a university email address (or they don't have access to it), the student body Board has the right to accept (digitally) signed applications as well.
- The application form is in two languages and contains the nominated teaching staff member's full name, a reference to the good practices of teaching, the justification for nominating the teaching staff member (with a limit of 500 words), the nominators' contact information and a field to explain their connection to the nominated teaching staff member (stemming from the Statute). The form is open all year round, and the student body's Vice-Chairperson of Educational Policy is responsible for it.
- The Faculty Student Council has the right to request access to the form's answers; when sharing information about the nominations to the Institute Student Councils or the committee members, the nominators' personal information is classified.

Selecting the persons to be recognised from the nominees of the Best Teaching Staff Award

Selecting the university-wide laureates takes place in two stages: first, according to the Statute of the Best Teaching Staff Award, the Faculty Student Council selects five members of the teaching

¹ The dates set in the electoral procedure depend on the Statute. Changes to the Statute might bring changes to the electoral procedure. To avoid constantly extraordinarily convening the Student Parliament, the Board is given the right to amend the electoral procedure.
staff from their faculty, who are the best among the proposed nominees and then the Committee of the Best Teaching Staff Award assesses the submitted applications.

The Faculty Student Council

- With the university-wide elections of the Best Teaching Staff Award, the Faculty Student Council's task is to make a pre-selection from the nominees that will be forwarded to the Electoral Committee afterwards.

- The Faculty Student Council is autonomous in setting the principles of their selection; they can but are not obligated to consider the number of nominators. The principles of the decision-making process have to be set in writing. It is recommended to use quantifiable metrics, like the number of points in the ranking.

- In case of a conflict of interests (e.g. the candidate is a personal acquaintance, the Faculty Student Council member has nominated the person themselves), the Faculty Student Council will vote if the member should resign from decision-making.

- In 2021 the Faculty Student Council will make the pre-selection of the university-wide competition by the 10th of January at the latest and will forward the names of the five best candidates to the Vice-Chairperson of Educational Policy.

- In addition, the Faculty Student Council has the right to organise intra-faculty and institute-based recognitions of the teaching staff based on the information collected via the university-wide form that is open all year round. The faculty laureates can be announced in the manner and time chosen by the Faculty Student Council.

The Electoral Committee of the Best Teaching Staff Award

- To assess the nominees of the Best Teaching Staff Award, the student body's Vice-Chairperson of Educational Policy and the Legal Advisor compose an Evaluation Committee during December 2021. The committee has at least eight members, and students from all study levels and all faculties have to be represented. The faculties have to be represented equally (in the case of eight members, two from each faculty).

- The committee members base their work on the principle that they abstain from evaluating their own faculty's candidates. This allows them to avoid a conflict of interest - firstly, it is possible that the committee member has submitted the nomination
themselves (and therefore should resign from evaluating them anyway). Secondly, it is possible that with the teaching staff of their faculty they might have information not related to the nomination about the staff from their own institute, which would give them a bias and affect the decision's objectivity. The faculty students' "mandate" is guaranteed by the fact that the nomination came from the student body as a whole and that with more than five candidates, the pre-selection is made by the Faculty Student Council. If a committee member has a conflict of interest with evaluating a candidate, who isn't from their faculty, the committee will vote if the member should resign from decision-making.

- The committee is autonomous in setting the principles of their selection; they can but are not obligated to consider the number of nominators. The principles of the decision-making process have to be set in writing. It is recommended to use quantifiable metrics, like the number of points in the ranking. The committee bases their evaluation on the applications submitted; it is not forbidden to use the feedback given to the teaching staff member's subjects as background information.

- The applications' legal correctness and compliance with the procedure established by the Student Parliament have been checked by the student body's Vice-Chairperson of Educational Policy and the Legal Advisor before the committee's work, so it is not the committee's task to work with the legal aspects. The nominators' names and email addresses will not be shared with the committee on the principle of personal data protection.

- According to the Statute of the Best Teaching Staff Award, the committee will present the names of the Best Teaching Staff Award's recipients to the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs at the latest a month before the date of the award ceremony. Since in 2021, the award is given out at the celebration of the republic's anniversary, the committee finishes their work by the 17th of January at the latest. The results of the committee's work will be covered in a protocol composed under the guidance of the student body's Vice-Chairperson of Educational Policy. The protocol will cover the evaluation principles the committee based their decisions on and the laureates' names. The committee members sign the composed protocol. As the committee's representative, a member of the student body Board will forward the names selected for the Best Teaching Staff Award to the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs.