

The Meritorious Teaching Award in Herpetology

Presented by the Herpetology Education Committee

Sponsored by: American Society of Ichthyologists & Herpetologists, The Herpetologists' League, and the Society for the Study of Amphibians & Reptiles

The Herpetology Education Committee announces the inaugural Meritorious Teaching Award in Herpetology, which will be awarded at each year's Joint Meetings of Ichthyologists & Herpetologists (JMIH). This award is to recognize superior teaching effectiveness and mentoring of students in the area of herpetology, and provides student members of the North American herpetological societies the opportunity to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to herpetological education, in either the classroom or mentoring student research endeavors. Winners of the award will be encouraged to become active members of the HEC, which will facilitate continuity of the HEC and maintenance of the standards by which future awards are bestowed.

The award recipient will receive 1) a cash prize of US\$500⁰⁰, 2) recognition in the form of an official letter from HEC (a copy of the letter will also be forwarded to the chief academic administrator at recipient's host institution), and 3) a plaque identifying the award, year, and recipient's name.

(Nominations will be solicited in December of each award year and will be announced through email, published in *Herpetological Review*, and posted on the societies' websites and Facebook pages.)

Nominations will proceed as follows:

1. Persons wishing to nominate an individual for the award should submit a letter of nomination that:
 - a. Describes specific evidence to support the nomination (*e.g.*, teaching modules, lab or field exercises).
 - b. Includes names and contact information of at least two peers who are each qualified to review the merits of the nominee.
 - c. Includes names and contact information of two current or former students or program participants. If students are under 18 years old, the student/participant references should be accompanied by, or attached to, a letter from the appropriate teacher or program coordinator.
2. The HEC will solicit appropriate supporting materials, including those indicated in nominating letters (*e.g.*, documentation of other teaching awards, peer and student evaluations, evidence of innovative curriculum development, educational products, *etc.*).
3. Letters of nomination should be submitted to the HEC Chair by 31 March of each year. This time frame will give the HEC adequate opportunity to receive further materials in support of the nominee (as described above). Although e-mail copies of nomination letters are acceptable by the deadline, hard copies of letters of nomination with signatures are required before final considerations are rendered by the HEC.
4. An individual may receive the award up to two times during his/her career providing that:
 - a. The recipient has received the Award on only one prior occasion.

- b. At least 6 years has elapsed since the recipient first received the Award.
- c. Supporting materials for an individual's re-nomination include:
 - i. A description of specific activities, mentoring opportunities, or teaching methods that the individual has adopted since first receiving the Award.
 - ii. Two letters of recommendation from students who did not contribute any supporting materials when the individual first received the Award.
5. If a nominee does not receive an award, his/her submission material will be held and reconsidered for up to three successive years. After that, the nominee must wait six years before being eligible again for nomination.
6. No award will be given in a year when there are no suitable nominees.

Selection of the award recipient will be made by a committee composed of members of Herpetology Education Committee and three graduate students (one student from each of the sponsoring societies). Selection will be based on the following criteria:

1. Nominees must be current members of at least one of the following societies: the American Society of Ichthyologists & Herpetologists, the Herpetologists' League, or the Society for the Study of Amphibians & Reptiles.
2. Current Officers and Committee Chairs of ASIH, HL or SSAR, or members of HEC are not eligible for nomination.
3. Nominees should have a reputation among their peers and students for excellence in educating people about herpetology, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Demonstrated highly effective and innovative teaching in the classroom or in an informal education setting (*e.g.*, zoological parks, aquaria, museums, field stations, environmental centers, *etc.*).
 - b. Demonstrated superior mentoring of students in herpetology, in either research or educational settings.
 - c. Sustained commitment (*e.g.*, over multiple cohorts of students) to excellence in teaching herpetology.