

2027 Arthur F. Thurnau Professorships

Nomination Guidelines

Purpose and History of the Award

Each year, Thurnau Professorships recognize and reward a highly select group of five tenured faculty for their outstanding contributions to **undergraduate** education. Those appointed to Thurnau Professorships hold this title along with their other university titles and receive a \$20,000 grant to support activities associated with further enhancing their teaching (e.g., travel, books, equipment, and graduate student support). The Professorships are named after Arthur F. Thurnau, a student at the University of Michigan from 1902 to 1904, and are supported by the Thurnau Charitable Trust that was established through his will.

Eligibility and Selection Criteria

Eligible for nomination are those tenured faculty members who have a sustained record of excellence in **undergraduate** education and who meet the following selection criteria:

- A strong commitment to students and to teaching and learning
For example: Undertaking activities to advance the quality and practice of teaching and learning at a variety of levels: e.g., classroom, studio, and/or laboratory; within the department; across the curriculum or discipline; and/or across the school/college or institution.
- Excellence in teaching
For example: Other teaching awards, using effective teaching strategies and notable methods to assess student learning.
- Innovations in teaching and learning
For example: Using innovative pedagogical approaches (such as instructional technology, problem-based learning, experiential learning); being significantly involved with interdisciplinary and boundary-crossing teaching projects; being engaged with undergraduate research or community service learning; pursuing the scholarship of teaching and learning; or mentoring colleagues on pedagogy.
- A demonstrated ability to work effectively with a student body that is diverse across a variety of different measures including students who attended under-resourced high schools
For example: Using effective pedagogical and administrative approaches to address issues related to “hidden curricula;” contributions to course and curriculum development

designed to include diverse perspectives; incorporating teaching strategies to remove barriers to student success; support and mentoring of student organizations on campus.

- A demonstrable impact on students' intellectual and/or artistic development and on their lives
For example: Helping students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and/or global and multicultural understanding, and being committed to advising and mentoring students.
- Contributions to undergraduate education beyond the classroom, studio, or lab
For example: Participation in or leadership of curricular reform efforts, mentorship of colleagues or GSIs around teaching, taking on a leadership role in the department or university around issues related to teaching and learning.

Nomination Requirements and Process – Please read carefully.

Any dean, associate dean, department chair, or academic program director may submit a nomination. A dean who oversees or shares oversight for a unit in which the nominee holds his or her tenured position must endorse every nomination.

Each nomination packet should include **only** the following items, preferably in the following order to assist the reviewers:

1. A **completed nomination cover sheet** must be submitted and include the signature of a dean giving his or her endorsement. Note to deans: If you are nominating more than one faculty member from your School or College, please do not provide a rank order of the nominees.
2. A **letter from the nominator** (3-4 pages maximum) that describes how the nominee has achieved a sustained record of excellence in undergraduate education. Nomination letters should address the selection criteria outlined in the nomination guidelines. Please include any information about the nominee's teaching responsibilities outside of the normal venue in which he or she teaches (e.g., mentoring and advising, GSI training, supervising honors theses, work on curricular reform, etc.).
3. A **list of undergraduate courses from the last eight terms the nominee has taught**. For each course, please provide the course number, title, and approximate number of students enrolled. Note: Instructor Reports will be provided to the Provost's Office by the Registrar's Office and therefore need not be included with the nomination packet.
4. **Three letters of support** (1-2 pages each; additional letters will be removed) from current or past undergraduate students. It is helpful to have letters from students who are not the nominees' current or former PhD students.
5. **Two letters of support from colleagues** (1-2 pages each; additional letters will be removed) in addition to the letter from the nominator. Please convey to colleagues writing letters of support that the focus of the Thurnau competition is on contributions to **undergraduate** education.
6. A **current curriculum vitae**.

Important

- As you consider your nominations, please note that we are very interested in having a wide pool of nominees with respect to such factors as pedagogical approaches, discipline, and school/college representation.
- The Selection Advisory Committee is made up of faculty from across campus. Therefore, the **nominator's letter is particularly important**, and should provide context and make a strong case for the nominee (with particular attention to the selection criteria outlined above).
- Successful nominees have always had a track record of **outstanding undergraduate classroom teaching**.

Additional Information

Reviewers include previously selected Thurnau Professors and faculty administrators in the Office of the Provost. Thurnau Professors will be recommended to the Regents at their February meeting and formally recognized at the Honors Convocation in mid-March.

Submission

Please send materials to ThurnauSubmissions@umich.edu.

All nominations must be submitted no later than Tuesday, December 1, 2026

* Note to LSA administrators: LSA's internal due date is October 9, 2026.

** Note to COE administrators: COE's internal due date is November 13, 2026.

Please contact the Dean's Office for additional information.

Questions? Contact Ryan Hudson at rhudson@umich.edu or 763-0159.