

# YU + TFS President’s Award for Teaching Excellence: Adjudicator Handbook

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## Committee Membership

The TFS Adjudication Committee is comprised of up to six voting members and one non-voting chair.

The YU Adjudication Committee is comprised of up to 14 voting members and one non-voting chair.

## Purpose of Award

Founded in 2024, the Presidents' Awards for Teaching Excellence are the highest honours for teaching at Yorkville University and the Toronto Film School.

Recipients of the Award for Teaching Excellence inspire and facilitate learning in ways that have a positive and sustained influence on students. Award winners exemplify our core values. These faculty demonstrate exceptional abilities to encourage and motivate students, to create supportive and inclusive learning environments, to foster student success within and beyond the classroom, and to reflect upon and refine their teaching practice.

By recognizing the achievements of exceptional Toronto Film School educators, we celebrate and enhance a culture of excellence in teaching and learning.

## Chair (non-voting)

Senior Educational Developer, Teaching Excellence & Development – Matthew Dunleavy  
([mdunleavy@yorkvilleu.ca](mailto:mdunleavy@yorkvilleu.ca))

## Members (voting)

### **YU:**

Faculty Member (x6)

Student or Alumni<sup>1</sup> (x4)

Staff (x4)

### **TFS:**

Faculty Member (x2)

Student or Alumni<sup>2</sup> (x2)

Staff (x2)

## *Expected Member Commitments*

- 4.5 hours – adjudication committee meetings
- 5-10 hours – application review
- 6 hours – applicant interviews

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<sup>1</sup> Student or Alumni members must have taken a YU course in the past 12 months.

<sup>2</sup> Student or Alumni members must have taken a TFS course in the past 12 months.

## ADJUDICATION PROCESS

### Step 1: Committee and Program Director Preliminary Meeting

Before applications are distributed, all Committee members and Program Directors/Chairs/Deans involved in the adjudication process will attend a preliminary meeting to discuss the following:

- Adjudication criteria
- Variety of “excellence” in teaching and learning
- Bias

### Step 2: Initial Review – Administrative Review and Shortlisting

Chair will receive all nominations. Program Directors/Chairs/Deans will then be sent all nominations for faculty in their programs. Of that pool, they will identify their allotted number of faculty per program (listed below) to advance to the next round.

#### *Yorkville*

- Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology
- Doctor of Counselling and Psychotherapy
- Masters of Education
- Bachelor of Business Administration
- Bachelor of Interior Design
- Bachelor of Creative Arts
- Bachelor of Business Administration
- Associate of Arts

#### *TFS-O*

- Video Production
- Writing for Film and TV
- Graphic Design & Interactive Media

#### *TFS*

- Film Production
- Writing for Film and TV
- Acting for Film, TV and the Theatre
- Graphic Design & Interactive Media
- Video Game Design & Animation
- Video Game Design & Development

Campus Vice-Presidents review the shortlist, sign off on the finalized list, and send to the Committee Chair.

### Step 3: Distribution of Applications

Each member of the adjudication Committee will receive all shortlisted applications for review. The applications will be circulated electronically to the members via a secure Teams site.

### Step 4: Identifying Conflicts of Interest

Upon receiving the assigned applications, members are asked to do a preliminary check of their assigned applications and immediately inform the Chairs of any conflicts of interest, so that these applications can be reassigned to another committee member. There may be a real, perceived or potential conflict of interest when the adjudication committee member:

- Is a relative or close friend, or have a personal relationship with any of the applicant(s);
- Has regular professional interactions with the applicant(s) during their duties;
- Is currently or has been a direct supervisor or instructor of the applicant(s);
- Is currently or has been a direct student of the applicant(s);
- Feels for any other reason that they are unable to provide an impartial review of the application.

### Step 5: Detailed Review and Assessment

Committee members will use an evaluation template to score the submissions. These evaluations will serve as the basis for discussing applications during the adjudication meeting(s).

To complete your reviews:

- Open your assigned rubric on the adjudication Teams channel.
- Confirm you are using the correct adjudication rubric using the identification section at the top of the form.
- Use the link provided to access the statement(s) and CV/Resume for each candidate.
- Score each candidate based on the criteria provided
- Overall scores will automatically be generated.

The Chair will compile all scores to share with the Adjudication Committee during a full adjudication committee meeting. If unexpected circumstances impact your ability to complete the reviews according to the assigned timeline, please contact the Chair as soon as possible.

#### *Discrepancies in Scores:*

In cases where there are significant discrepancies among the scores assigned by members to an application, this will be discussed in the Adjudication Committee meeting. If a Committee member's rationale for assigning a score to a particular application differs significantly from that of other readers,

they should be prepared to briefly explain their reasons when reporting on the application at the Committee meeting. Members may opt to adjust their scores as a result of discussions.

#### *Selecting Interview Shortlist:*

Based on preliminary scoring, the top applicants will be moved to an interview shortlist. At YU, up to 12 applicants will be invited for an interview. At TFS, up to six applicants will be invited for an interview.

#### *Step 6: Adjudication Committee Interviews*

Selected faculty will meet with the adjudication committee for 30-minute long structured conversations. The chair will facilitate the interview of six pre-determined questions. Invited applicants will be provided the finalized list of questions at least one week prior to the conversations, to review at their discretion.

Committee members will use an evaluation template to score the interviews and provide feedback to the applicants. It is important to provide detailed feedback that references specific elements of the interview, noting strengths and weaknesses. These notes will serve as the basis for discussing applications during the adjudication meeting(s) and anonymized summaries of this feedback will be shared with applicants.

To complete your reviews:

- Download the rubric/template and feedback form. You will need to complete one form per application that you review.
- Complete the identification section at the top of the form, including your name and the applicant being interviewed.
- For each section of the rubric, assign the application a score. Provide written feedback for each section justifying your score with specific reference to elements within the application.
- Tally up your scores and record an overall score on the form.
- Save each file with the following naming convention "ApplicantSurname\_Interview\_Your Surname\_Year".
- Ensure all rubrics are housed in the secure Teams channel.

#### *Discrepancies in Scores:*

In cases where there are significant discrepancies among the scores assigned by members to an application, this will be discussed in the Adjudication Committee meeting. If a Committee member's rationale for assigning a score to a particular application differs significantly from that of other readers, they should be prepared to briefly explain their reasons when reporting on the application at the Committee meeting. Members may opt to adjust their scores as a result of discussions.

#### *Selecting Recipients and Honorees:*

Committee members discuss applications based on their application and interview scores. Members briefly summarize the application, identify strengths and weaknesses, and make an initial recommendation. After the committee has discussed the applications, it reviews and finalizes recipients and honorees. For YU, **four recipients** and up to **eight honorees** are identified. For TFS, **one recipient** and up to **two honorees** are identified. The committee chair will share the Committee's recommendations with the YU President or TFS President for final approval.

## ADJUDICATION CRITERIA

Criteria	Expectation for Exceptional Ranking
<b>Learning Environments</b>	<p>Applicants cultivate dynamic and interactive learning environments. They show evidence that these environments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• motivate students to explore their curiosities;</li> <li>• deepen their skills; and,</li> <li>• apply their learning in new and impactful ways.</li> </ul>
<b>Feedback</b>	<p>Formative and summative feedback is fundamental to student learning. Applicants show how they offer learners constructive, timely, and specific feedback that inspires them to reflect on their work, encouraging growth, resilience, and a commitment to continuous improvement.</p>
<b>Inclusivity</b>	<p>Applicants show how they create inclusive learning environments that anticipate, celebrate, and respond to the diversity of learner needs and experiences.</p>
<b>Authentic Learning Opportunities</b>	<p>Evidence is provided that applicants engage students in authentic learning opportunities that enable them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate our Signature Learning Outcomes;</li> <li>• enhance their employability;</li> <li>• expand their professional networks; and,</li> <li>• connect them to communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Living Our Core Values</b>	<p>Compelling evidence is shown that our core values are embedded in applicants' teaching and learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fuel Learning Potential</li> <li>• Own Our Impact</li> <li>• Build Inclusive Communities</li> <li>• Embrace Purposeful Curiosity</li> </ul>
<b>Unique or Special</b>	<p>The strengths of some applicants, owing to their unique teaching philosophies or strategies, may not adequately be captured by the adjudication rubric. You may note particularly unique or beneficial aspects of the innovation not addressed in the previous criteria within this section.</p>

## ADJUDICATION PRINCIPLES AND CORE VALUES

The work of this committee is based on the ideals of cooperation and mutual respect for diverse viewpoints across all areas of Toronto Film School. Our work is guided by and aligned with our core values:

## Fuel Learning Potential

We ensure that the student experience is at the centre of what we do. As research shows that diversity improves critical thinking, deliberations, and problem solving, we draw on each committee member's unique perspective and experience to represent the differing ways applicants can foster environments that build confidence, enhances strengths and talents, and inspires achievement.

## Own Our Impact

We commit to integrity, honesty, and ethical conduct. In this committee, this means that adjudications should be based on the contents of the award application and rationale for scoring should be justified with specific reference to application elements. To support a fair process, members agree to limit their considerations to the content of the applications and to not draw on or share insights or experiences with the applicant(s) that are not referenced within the application.

## Build Inclusive Communities

We ensure that all individuals are valued, respected, and included. To ensure we celebrate all types of success, we are aware that biases present systemic barriers to members of equity-deserving groups. The potential for bias in review processes will be openly and clearly acknowledged by this adjudication panel. As members, we commit to enhancing awareness of our own biases, recognizing their effects on our decisions, and developing a clear and transparent process to reduce the impact of these biases on decision-making. We also commit to welcoming feedback from our colleagues that may present alternative perspectives or highlight potential biases in application reviews or on the adjudication process itself.

## Embrace Purposeful Curiosity

We ask questions, explore different perspectives, and seize opportunities to drive creativity, innovation, and growth. We commit to a collegial process grounded in mutual trust and respect, open discussion, constructive dissent and support for decisions after they have been made. Each member commits to engaging in a thoughtful and thorough review of all assigned applications.

## Confidentiality

Members agree to respect confidentiality of the adjudication process and may not disclose any application details or adjudication proceedings both during the period that the Committee is active and thereafter. Members should maintain the confidentiality of the deliberations of the Committee and all information relating to these deliberations. They should also maintain the confidentiality of all documents relating to the adjudication process and the work of the Committee and ensure that this information is securely stored.

## Management of conflicting interests

Members agree to promptly declare interests when carrying out review activities, so that any conflicts can be identified and managed.

## Transparency

Following the first iteration of the award, criteria for assessing applications will be made public, as well as details of the review process, defining how the assessment process will operate and be managed.

## REFERENCES

Elements of this handbook have been informed or inspired by the following resources:

*Niagara College President's Award for Innovation in Student Learning and Success: Adjudicator Handbook*. Accessed from <https://www.niagaracollege.ca/innovationaward/wp-content/uploads/sites/106/2024/04/Adjudication-Process-Handbook-2024.pdf> on May 2, 2024.