

## The Hancher-Finkbine Medallion Award Criteria

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The criteria for nomination and selection are inscribed on the Medallion itself –**Learning-Leadership-Loyalty**. The suggestions below are intended to make more concrete some of the ways in which these general criteria might exhibit themselves in a nominee.

**LEARNING** *A nominee who exemplifies the characteristic of Learning should:*

... be possessed of a keen mind which they consciously cultivate and hone through reading, listening, and reflection;

...be intellectually curious, not only in their own field of specialization, but also in the other areas important to an educated person;

...give evidence of independence in study and thought. In professional/academic work conversations the nominee should demonstrate that they accept a conclusion or a point of view only when persuaded that its validity is buttressed by adequate evidence;

...demonstrate in written work and spoken dialog that they are imbued with the spirit of scholarship in their field of academic interest;

...provide outward evidence of intellectual capacity which show beyond question that peers and colleagues have respect for their ability.

**For instance:**

- *Describe how the nominee is passionate about their academic field.*
- *Give an example of how the nominee has been intellectually alert and curious in their area of specialization or in another area important to an educated person.*
- *Give an example of how the nominee has thought critically about an issue or area of interest.*
- *Provide evidence of how the nominee has challenged themselves intellectually.*

The Committee deliberately chose not to set a minimum grade point average (gpa) which the nominees must meet, on the grounds that grades alone are not sufficiently valid measures of learning.

**LEADERSHIP** *A nominee who exemplifies the characteristic of Leadership should:*

...give evidence of willingness to assume responsibility in professional/academic work by participating in discussion, raising relevant questions, and generally demonstrating active involvement in their work;

...assume, if called on, positions of responsibility in organizations and groups of which they are a member and perform their duties with diligence;

...make their influence felt on the side of reason and good will, on public issues or issue affecting the life of the University;

...carry their professional/academic work, from time to time, beyond the minimum level established by instructors-by reading additional works, performing additional experiments-that is, by “walking the extra mile”;

...volunteer, on occasion, to take on additional tasks, not from motives of self-aggrandizement but because they feel it will advance the objectives or social welfare of the group.

**For instance:**

- *Describe how the nominee demonstrates active involvement in professional/academic work and/or performs above and beyond minimum expectations (leadership in professional/academic work).*
- *Describe how the nominee has assumed positions of responsibility in an organization and/or been diligent in performing their duties in an organization (leadership outside of professional/academic work).*
- *Provide evidence of how the nominee has volunteered to take on an additional task to advance the objectives of a group.*
- *Public issues often have a direct effect on the University. How has the nominee made their voice heard on public issues that affect the University?*

The Committee believes that leadership can be both overt and subtle and that it should not be measured solely in terms of the amount of public exposure gained through holding office on University committees, in organizations, or social groups.

**LOYALTY** *A nominee who exemplifies the characteristic of Loyalty should:*

...give evidence in everyday behavior that they adhere to the standards expected of the liberally educated individual;

...measure utterances and actions, not solely from the standpoint of personal conviction and self-interest, but in the context of the best interests of the University as a whole;

...stand firm for personal convictions, if they will pass the tests of reason and good will, even though it may be at the cost of losing group approval;

...exhibit reasoned devotion to the basic values and ideals of American constitutional government as they understand them;

...operate within the framework of a “loyal opposition” on those issues where personal convictions bring them into conflict with prevailing opinion.

**For instance:**

*Provide evidence of how the nominee has stood firm on personal convictions at the cost of losing group approval or bringing themselves into conflict with the prevailing opinion.*

- *How has the nominee been an active participant in the civic life of the University?*

*“More than anything else, being an educated person means being able to see connections so as to be able to make sense of the world and act within it in creative ways. All the other qualities I’ve described here--listening, reading, writing, talking, puzzle-solving, seeing through other people’s eyes, empowering others, leading--every last one of them is finally about connecting. A liberal education is about gaining the power and insight and the generosity and finally the freedom and the wisdom to connect. If one could pick just one phrase that would answer the question of what it means to be a liberally educated person, surely this would be it: ‘Only connect.’” -Cronon (1998) “Only Connect...”The Goals of a Liberal Education*

- *How does the nominee meet this description of connecting?*

In awarding the Hancher-Finkbine Medallion, the Committee is earnestly searching for nominees who already exhibit or give promise of developing these characteristics. The Committee feels strongly that the award should not be based on popularity, nor should it be a reward for unthinking conformity. On the contrary, the creative individuals, the “off-beat” personality, and the maverick, provided the nominee measures up to the criteria suggested, should not be discriminated against in making nominations. The search is for nominees of established ability and promising potential. (Established 1964. Updated 2020)