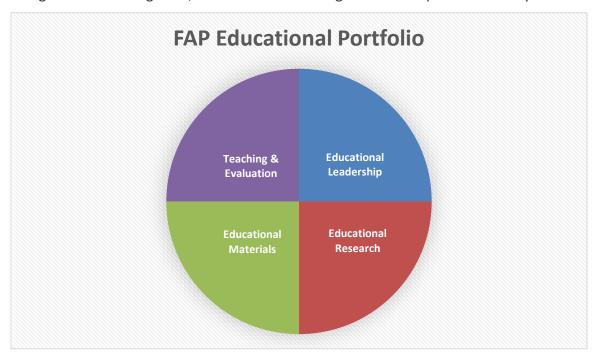# NORTON ROSE FULBRIGHT (NRF) FACULTY EXCELLENCE AWARDS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Q: Why are the Norton Rose Fulbright portfolios referred to as "mini portfolios?"

A: The Norton Rose Fulbright portfolios are divided into four categories: Teaching & Evaluation, Educational Leadership, Development of Educational Materials, and Educational Research.

Depending on a particular faculty member's promotion pathway, the BCM Faculty Appointments and Promotions (FAP) Committee may requests an Educational Portfolio to be submitted. This FAP Committee Educational Portfolio is composed of information from all 4 of the NRF "mini" portfolio categories. Taken together, the 4 NRF award categories make up a "full" faculty Educational Portfolio.

For more information on FAP Educational Portfolio requirements for promotion, please visit the following link: **https://intranet.bcm.edu/?tmp=/faculty_affairs/FacultyAppointmentPromotion**

Q: What effect will receiving an NRF Award have on my ability to be promoted ?

A: The goal of the NRF Awards is to recognize excellence in education. However, guidelines for defining quantity and quality of excellence in education used in promotions decisions, adopted by the College in 2007, do consider the NRF Award as an important and credible source of evidence. An NRF Award is not required for promotion nor does it guarantee promotion. Questions or concerns regarding your specific departmental requirements should be directed to your department chair or supervisor.

Q: How many faculty members receive the NRF Award each year?

A: There is no set number of recipients. The NRF Award is a criterion-based and not a competitive award. All faculty members whose mini-portfolios contain sufficient evidence of excellence as an educator (both in quantity and quality of educational activities will receive the award for which they applied.

Q: What are the eligibility requirements to submit a portfolio?

A: In the categories of **Teaching and Evaluation** and **Educational Leadership**, a minimum of 5 years of educational effort as a BCM faculty member must be reflected in the portfolio.

It is possible to have bodies of work in **Educational Research** and **Development of Educational Materials** that are sufficiently robust to qualify for an NRF Award in less than 5 years. Please keep in mind that in these categories, dissemination and impact of your work are important factors that are considered by the Selection Committee, both of which may take some time to demonstrate.

Q: I held or currently hold an appointment as an instructor. Am I eligible to apply for an NRF Award?

A: Possibly. An instructor appointment while in training (i.e., as a fellow, chief resident, etc.) does not count toward eligibility. A faculty member with an academic appointment of instructor while not a trainee may count that time as part of their 5 year total.

Examples of instructors who are eligible for the award include advanced practice providers, clinical geneticists, and clinical psychologists. If there is any uncertainty regarding your eligibility, please contact the Office of Faculty Development at faced@bcm.edu.

Q: May I include evidence of quality, quantity, and breadth from educational endeavors older than five years?

A: Yes. If this is your first award in the category, the Selection Committee will consider all educational activities listed, though the bulk of the portfolio should focus on your work over the last 5 years. If this is a subsequent award, activities since the last award will be counted.

Q: Are educational experiences limited to activities with BCM learners?

A: No. All forms of education that directly serve the educational mission of the College are appropriate to include in your portfolio; in fact, this contributes to the breadth of your educational work. You may include any of your teaching activities with BCM and non-BCM trainees, faculty, nurses, patients, community members, high school/college students, etc. Instruction of your research or clinical staff (not learners) is considered part of your research or clinical responsibilities and should not be included in the portfolio.

Q: May I include the <u>same activities</u> in two different portfolios?

A: No. The same activity may not be included in previous or concurrent portfolios. Review your submissions to ensure that you have not inadvertently included the same teaching activity in another portfolio or a prior submission. If overlap is found, your portfolio will not be reviewed by the Committee.

There are situations in which an educational endeavor may have multiple components that are appropriate for consideration in separate portfolios. For example, if an applicant submits a portfolio in the category of Educational Leadership and lists their role as the course director; it is then acceptable to include the lectures taught by the faculty member in the same course in a Teaching & Evaluation portfolio.

Q: Are there strict page limits for the portfolio?

A: Yes. The instructions are listed on the Faculty Development website under each award heading. If the portfolio fails to follow the page limits, your portfolio will not be considered for review by the Selection Committee.

Q: How can I get feedback on my portfolio?

A: The Office of Faculty Development offers live NRF Portfolio workshops to help provide an overview of the portfolio process. These sessions are offered College-wide and do not serve as individual consultation sessions. Prior portfolio workshops recorded on Zoom may be accessed on the Office of Faculty Development website.

Consultations prior to submission are not offered by the Office of Faculty Development. There are detailed instructions, examples, and frequently asked questions to guide you in your portfolio preparation and submission.

A faculty member whose mini-portfolio does not meet the selection criteria after review will receive constructive feedback. This feedback is designed to provide guidance and suggestions as to changes you should consider prior to resubmission. If your award submission is unsuccessful, you may schedule a consultation through the Office of Faculty Development prior to reapplication (faced@bcm.edu).

Q: How is my portfolio evaluated?

A: The review panel utilizes a scoring rubric that can be found on the Faculty Development website under each award heading. Please review this rubric for detailed information about the standards for each NRF Award category and the weight given to the different components of your mini-portfolio.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Q: What should I focus on when writing my goals?

A: Your goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. They should be learner focused, not educator focused. Goals will be unique for each individual and should be tailored to your specific area of instruction.

Q: What is considered personal preparation?

A: Personal preparation is what you have done to become a more effective educator. Personal preparation will vary depending on the category in which you are applying. Some examples may include attending BCM or departmental education workshops or retreats, national education meetings, on-line education courses, leadership courses, etc.

Q: For personal preparation as an educator, may I cite "reviewing the medical literature" or "staying current in my field?"

A: No. Staying current with the literature in your area is an expectation of all BCM faculty members as part of their professional responsibility for research activities or clinical care and maintenance of licensure/board certification.

Q: Where should I document peer review of my teaching? Is that part of my personal preparation, or is it considered personal reflection and process for improvement?

A: In general, the Committee considers peer review of your teaching to be part of your personal reflection and process for improvement. You should note how your feedback from peer review helped you improve as an educator.

Q: How may I receive peer review of my teaching?

A: The Office of Faculty Development offers peer coaching sessions. Please visit https://www.bcm.edu/education/academic-faculty-affairs/faculty-resources/faculty-development/development/peer-coaching-for-educators/peer-coaching-session-set-up for more information.

There are many faculty members who wish to take advantage of peer coaching through the Faculty Development office, so plan ahead. It is recommended that you contact the program at least one month in advance of the desired date for the coaching session.

STRUCTURED SUMMARY-QUANTITY AND QUALITY

Q: What is more important, quantity or quality?

A: Quantity and quality are both considered extremely important in the evaluation of your portfolio; however, the quality of your educational efforts in support of your application for an NRF Award is weighted slightly higher than that of the quantity of your education. If you have questions as to how your mini-portfolio will be evaluated, please visit (Norton Rose Fulbright Faculty Excellence Award (bcm.edu)) to review the scoring rubric that will be utilized by the Selection Committee.

Q: In the column for evidence of quality in the structured summary, is it acceptable to simply write, "see CV"?

A: No. The structured summary should stand alone. Your CV is requested so that the Selection Committee members may compare the information in your structured summary to information documented in your CV. Information that is present in the CV, but not in the mini-portfolio, likely will not be considered in the scoring of the mini-portfolio. It is not the responsibility of the reviewer to pull relevant information from your CV.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Q: Do I need to include all evaluations in my appendices?

A. It is recommended that you prepare a table of the summary of your evaluations for individual years. You should include all the evaluations for all the years you are indicating in the specific activity. You should include the number (n) of evaluations that the scores are based on for each year. The number of evaluations should approximate the number of learners listed in the structured summary. You can choose to address any negative comments/evaluations as a part of your self reflection in your personal statement. If you are missing evaluations, please explain this in the personal statement as well.

Q: To whom should letter of support be addressed?

A: A goal of the NRF Award Program is to promote educational scholarship. Thus, we encourage solicited letters be addressed to the applicant and outline their strengths, successes, and areas of improvement. Solicited letters addressed to the Review Panel as "Letter of Recommendation" are given less weight. Confidential letters of support, i.e., letters that are sent to the Selection Committee which the applicant never read are **not** accepted. We strongly encourage applicants to solicit letters that are addressed to them to help them improve. A maximum of 4 solicited letters may be included in a mini-portfolio.

Q: Does the table of appendices count toward the 20-page limit for supplemental materials?

A: Yes.

Q: May I include *solicited* letters from current students and/or trainees?

A: No. Your portfolio will not be reviewed if it contains solicited letters from current students and/or trainees. No exceptions.

Q: May I include *unsolicited* comments from learners or peers in my portfolio (e.g., informal feedback sent via email or letters)?

A: Yes. These comments may be used as evidence of quality; however, it is important to use them in context (i.e., not change the tone or meaning by quoting selected statements).

If there is any sensitive information that may compromise the privacy of the author, it must be redacted. For example, if you include an email from a resident thanking you for helping them with remediation after they failed to meet expected standards, you should redact any identifying information. Identifying information includes, but is not limited to, the learner's name.

If the learner is simply sending an email thanking you for an exceptional lecture that helped clarify a concept and they have signed their name, it is not necessary to redact their name. If there is any question at all, err on the side of redaction to protect the privacy of our learners.

TEACHING AND EVALUATION

Q: What does it mean to list quantity of teaching activities?

A: In order to demonstrate the quantity of teaching activities sufficient to qualify for an NRF Award, you must clearly delineate the following: (1) number of hours you spend engaged in teaching activities including hours of preparation time spent in developing new teaching activities or revising current materials and (2) the number learners present/impacted for each educational activity. If the number of learners changes from year to year, it is acceptable to provide a range (e.g., 3-5 per year).

Be sure to provide only hours spent actively engaged in teaching activities and not all the time spent with a learner. For example, in a 4-hour half-day clinic, you may spend a total of 2 hours engaged in direct teaching with the additional 2 hours of that clinic spent in the completion of your normal clinic activities including documentation, review of results, and phone calls, etc. Providing feedback on trainee documentation is considered an educational activity.

When multiple types of learners are present for the same activity (e.g., bedside rounds or surgery), it should be treated as one educational experience. For example, if you have PA students, residents, and fellows simultaneously present during a 3-hour teaching component in an operating room, it should be recorded as a total of 3 hours, not 9 hours of teaching.

Q: What if I am a subspecialist and work with a small number of learners?

A: The Committee understands that not all faculty members have access to the same number of learners. It is important for the Committee to be provided information about smaller learner cohorts so that it may be taken into consideration in review of the mini-portfolio. However, it is important to note that learner contact serves as a crucial measure by which to assess the quality of teaching. Thus, it is important for faculty members to also have a breadth of teaching activities to reach a larger and more diverse audience, e.g., didactic lectures, grand rounds, CME courses, or educational sessions at professional organization meetings.

Q. How should I document the quality of my teaching activities?

A. Objective evidence of quality is preferred and given greater weight during the review process. Most applicants provide this in the form of evaluations. It is recommended that applicants summarize learner evaluations in a table with mean scores by year rather than including a copy of evaluations printed from E-Value or equivalent education management system. Within the table, applicants should indicate number(n) of learners completing evaluations for that particular activity. If evaluations scores are initially low but increase over time, the Committee views this as evidence of growth and improvement as an educator; do not shy away from including this information. Applicants are encouraged to acknowledge this improvement and provide an explanation in their personal statement about what led to improvement as an educator. Please account for missing or incomplete data. Applicants may want to highlight learner achievement/improvement following the educational experience.

Subjective evidence of quality may also be included and may consist of solicited letters of support, unsolicited feedback, etc. Solicited letters of support should directly comment on the quality of teaching and performance as an educator. (see FAQ Supporting Material below)

Q. What are examples of teaching and evaluation activities for basic scientist faculty?

A. These include didactic teaching; small group teaching, e.g., overseeing workshops, journal clubs, educational seminars, lab meetings; facilitating student seminars (SMART, any students, postdoctoral); facilitating NIH-required ethics workshops; facilitating IPS groups; mentoring, e.g., mentoring trainees, one on one meetings with trainees, mentoring other faculty,. For basic scientist, the major activity typically is mentoring; instructions for how to document quantity and quality are provided in general instructions.

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Q: Is there a minimum amount of time I must serve as an educational leader before I can apply?

A: Leadership positions should be sustained over a 5-year period with demonstration of increasing amounts of leadership responsibility over those 5 years. Your primary leadership role should be sustained for a minimum of 3 years.

Q: How do I demonstrate quality of my educational leadership?

A: In an educational leadership mini-portfolio, it is important to demonstrate the quality of your

leadership rather than that of your teaching. For example, if you have developed and implemented a new curriculum you would want to include outcomes data as to the impact on the learners. If you also taught within the new curriculum, evaluations regarding your teaching would be appropriate for a portfolio in Teaching and Evaluation.

Similarly, letters of support should focus on your role as an educational leader rather than your teaching role.

Q: I hold clinical leadership positions. May I include them in my educational leadership portfolio?

A: No. Clinical leadership positions are appropriate for the Patient Care Awards. The NRF Awards are designed to recognize excellence in educational contributions.

Q. What are some educational leadership activities applicable to a basic scientist or PhD faculty member?

A. Some of these activities may include serving as a director of graduate student program; director/co-director of training grant; chair of PhD qualifying exam committee, graduate school foundation course director or co- director, graduate program course director, graduate school committee chair (promotions, admissions, recruitment, etc.; leadership in the development and implementation of new courses; Activities on a national level may include holding an office in an educational committee of national professional organization.

DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

Q: How many materials do I need to receive the Award?

A: There is no minimum number of materials required to receive the Award. It is recommended that the mini-portfolio reflect development of multiple types of materials. The rubric includes expectation for quality, quantity, and breadth. A successful submission will almost always show excellence in each of these three areas.

Q: What is considered an educational material?

A: There are many different types of educational materials. Some of these include textbook chapters, review articles, systematic reviews, online chapters (e.g. UpToDate), Podcasts, Blogs, Video, materials used in learner evaluations etc. the Committee recognizes that novel distribution of educational

materials will occur with advances in technology and platforms.

Q. What is NOT considered an educational material?

A: Examples include a syllabus used for a course within BCM, case reports <u>not accompanied</u> by a review of the literature, publications designed to communicate the results of research in the clinical or basic sciences, multiple versions of similar content, order sets used in the electronic medical record., Please note, this is not an exhaustive list.

Q: Do materials have to be used outside of BCM and affiliate hospitals/institutions?

A: Yes. Educational materials should be used by educators other than the author(s) and/or by learner groups other than the one(s) taught by the author and requires dissemination outside of BCM and affiliate hospitals/institutions for most of the materials.