




MEMORANDUM

TO: Department Chairs

FROM: Donald H. DeHayes 
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

DATE: February 9, 2015

SUBJECT: University Academic Excellence Awards

The University Academic Excellence Awards recognition program for graduating seniors is intended to honor superior academic achievement in a particular field (see attached list) to be interpreted in terms of a high grade point average or other criteria (e.g., an honors project, a research or artistic presentation, or a student's professional promise). December 2014, May 2015 and August 2015 graduates are eligible for this award, which consists of a certificate of academic achievement suitable for framing and a URI pin.

The presentation of awards will take place on May 16 at 3:30 p.m. in Edwards Auditorium, the President's reception will be in University Club at 5 p.m. Recipients and their families will receive personal invitations to the events. Please ensure that a faculty member from your department, who knows the student fairly well, attends the event. Last year I was struck by just how proud our students are to introduce their faculty to their families. In turn, we want parents and students to know that the individual departments are proud of their graduates.

To assist us in making the award meaningful and provide a personal touch, please include a **brief one-paragraph bio** of the student suitable for her/his introduction. Please limit the bio to **65 words at most**. It is very important that you adhere to this limit. Time does not permit the reading of lengthy statements and it is not to the advantage of your department or student award recipient if we are left to determine which points are most salient. The introductory material can be academic and/or personal, with a touch of humor, if appropriate. It is imperative that you or a department faculty member writes the paragraph. **Do not ask the student to write his/her own introduction.** Your personal knowledge about the individual is an essential ingredient for the introduction. Sample bios are attached.

There is a limit of one student for each eligible program. I know this can make the selection process difficult but we cannot accommodate exceptions in what is already a very tight timetable during commencement weekend. Please pay particular attention to additional matters regarding eligibility on the attached form. As soon as the selection is made, the dean, department chair or program director responsible for the award selection should inform the student of his/her award as well as the date and time of the ceremony.

Once submitted, the name of the award recipient may not be changed. Complete the attached form and return it along with the student's brief one-paragraph bio to Randi Kempton **no later than March 27. Please e-mail the bio and the completed Information Form (attached) in .doc (Word Document) format to randi_kempton@uri.edu.**

Thank you for helping with this celebration of your students' achievements. I look forward to this as one of the highlights of our ceremonial duties.

attachments:

cc: David M. Dooley
Academic Deans

University Academic Excellence Awards

Sample Bios

Anthropology and Art History – Juan Williams

Juan is receiving two awards today, Anthropology and Art History. He completed his Anthropology degree in three years. Juan enrolled in an Art History course his first year at URI and was hooked. He majored in Art History and plans to begin graduate studies at Boston University next fall, on a full fellowship. He plans to pursue a career as a professor of Art History.

Philosophy – Elizabeth Marimon

A professional line cook in several of Rhode Island's favorite restaurants, Elizabeth was one of only 20 undergraduates nationwide selected for the prestigious Colorado Summer Seminar in Philosophy. The recipient of numerous URI research awards, Elli will graduate Phi Beta Kappa and complete her Senior Honors Thesis on Restaurant Ethics. She plans to take a year off before starting graduate studies in philosophy.