# College of Criminal Justice Outstanding Dissertation Award

**Nomination Process and Selection Criteria**

The Outstanding Dissertation Award is to recognize students who have completed a doctoral degree in the College of Criminal Justice at Sam Houston State University whose doctoral dissertation reflects *superior* scholarship.

**1. Eligibility and the Number of Awards.** All dissertations successfully completed during a calendar year are eligible for nomination during the following Spring semester. Dissertations ***successfully defended*** during the Spring, Summer or Fall semester in any given calendar year are eligible for nomination (e.g., defended Spring/Summer/Fall 2013), with the award being presented during the Spring semester of the following calendar year (i.e., Spring 2014 for dissertations ***defended*** during CY 2013). Up to two awards may be presented each year (one in the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology and one in the Department of Forensic Science), or the Awards Committee may decide to present no such award in a given year.

**2. Nominations.** The Chair of a student's dissertation committee must nominate a dissertation for consideration for the Award. Each faculty member nominating a dissertation must provide the Awards and Beto Lecture Committee with a formal letter no longer than one page detailing the strengths of the dissertation and why it should be considered “outstanding.” The Chair of the dissertation committee shall also provide the Awards Committee with the letter, an electronic copy of the final draft (version filed with the Office of Graduate Studies and Newton Gresham Library), and a copy of the “doctoral dissertation rubric” that was submitted to the department after the student’s final defense. Nominations are due by the posted deadline in the Spring semester in which the award is to be presented.

**3. Selection Procedures and Criteria.** The Awards Committee may ask other members of the graduate faculty from within the COCJ and University to read the dissertation and make recommendations but the final responsibility for rank-ordering nominees will remain with the Awards Committee. In the event that a member of the Awards Committee has served as Chair or written a letter in support of a nominated dissertation, that person shall recuse themself from the meeting during any discussion or deliberations concerning that dissertation. Faculty members may nominate for consideration only ONE dissertation they have chaired during any given year. After receiving nominations, members of the Awards Committee shall independently read and evaluate each nominated dissertation using the attached Evaluation Rubric. Upon completion of the independent reviews, the Awards Committee shall convene, share comments and discuss the merits of each nominee's dissertation.

If the Selection Committee decides to give an Award, an attempt will be made to reach a consensus concerning the rank-ordering of the nominees. If a consensus on the rank-ordering cannot be reached, the final ranking shall be determined by a majority vote. Once the final rank-ordering is determined the Awards Committee shall forward the rank-ordered list of names and a copy of the dissertation identified as "Outstanding" (ranked #1) to the Dean. The Dean shall review the material submitted and if s/he concurs with the committee's recommendation, notify the author of the top ranked dissertation of the Award. The Dean may also invite the Awards Committee and/or any other member of the University's graduate faculty to assist in their deliberations to reconsider the rank-ordering of nominees and/or determine that no Outstanding Dissertation be awarded.

**4. The Award:** The recipient will receive a plaque commemorating this achievement during the annual Honors Luncheon held by the COCJ during the Spring semester. Reimbursement for travel to attend the Honors Luncheon will be provided.

Revised and Approved 09/27/2022

**College of Criminal Justice Outstanding Dissertation Award Evaluation Rubric**

Reviewer:

Student's Name:

Dissertation Title:

Evaluation: (Please circle the rating that best represents your assessment of the dissertation on each of the following criteria):

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Choice of Problem** | Insignificant | |  | | | Critically Significant | |
| 1 | 2 | | 3 | 4 | | 5 |
| **Theoretical Framework** | Non-Existent | |  | | | Well Grounded | |
| 1 | 2 | | 3 | 4 | | 5 |
| **Mode of Inquiry** | Inappropriate | |  | | | Highly Appropriate | |
| 1 | 2 | | 3 | 4 | | 5 |
| **Execution of Study** | Unsystematic | |  | | | Highly Disciplined | |
| 1 | 2 | | 3 | 4 | | 5 |
| **Interpretation of Results** | Not Grounded | |  | | | Well Grounded | |
| 1 | 2 | | 3 | 4 | | 5 |
| **Analysis** | Basic Methods | |  | | | Highly Sophisticated | |
| 1 | 2 | | 3 | 4 | | 5 |
| **Written Presentation** | Unclear | |  | | | Clear | |
| 1 | 2 | | 3 | 4 | | 5 |
| **Originality of Idea**  **and/or Approach** | Routine | |  | | | Highly Original | |
| 1 | 2 | | 3 | 4 | | 5 |
| **Contribution to the Field** | Negligible | |  | | | Highly Impactful | |
| 1 | 2 | | 3 | 4 | | 5 |

**Overall Score \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Summary Comments (on back if necessary):