

# OFFICE OF THE PROVOST



Dear Academic Affairs colleagues,

As we prepare for commencement, we are sharing an update to the student recognition process previously known as the President's Outstanding Student Award (POSA).

This year, the award has been re-envisioned as the **Outstanding Student in a Major or Program** distinction. This update reflects a shift toward a more flexible, faculty-driven approach that better aligns with the values and standards of individual disciplines.

We recognize that POSA has been a longstanding tradition, and changes to established processes can raise questions. These updates are intended to simplify the process, reduce administrative burden, and provide departments with greater autonomy in recognizing student excellence.

## What is changing

- The award is now named *Outstanding Student in a Major or Program*
- Departments will select one student per program or major
- Selection criteria are determined by departments, grounded in disciplinary values
- Faculty nomination narratives are no longer required
- GPA is no longer a required threshold
- Physical certificates will not be issued

## What remains important

- This distinction continues to recognize outstanding graduating students
- Departments play the central role in identifying and honoring their students

- Selected students will still receive recognition at commencement through a commemorative cord distributed by Alumni

### **Eligibility guidance**

Departments are encouraged to consider graduating seniors, or students who graduated in summer or fall terms, and to select students who demonstrate excellence in ways meaningful to the discipline. This may include academic achievement, leadership, service, or professional development.

### **Next steps**

Please submit your selected student using the [Outstanding Student in Major or Program Qualtrics form](#) by **Monday, April 20, at 5:00 p.m.**

If you have questions about eligibility or degree candidacy, we encourage you to consult your department's advising team.

We appreciate your partnership in supporting this transition and in recognizing the achievements of our students in ways that reflect the strengths of your programs.

*This message was sent by the Office of the Provost on behalf of the Registrar's Office to all Academic Affairs faculty and staff.*

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