

The Western Awards of Excellence Nomination Form



NOMINEE INFORMATION:

I/we wish to nominate the following **INDIVIDUAL:**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Department/Campus Address</u>	<u>Phone/Email</u>
Julie Whitehead Instructional Designer	Faculty of Health Sciences Elborn College Rm 1005	81580 jwhiteh@uwo.ca

I/we wish to nominate the following **TEAM:** **Team Name:**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Department/Campus Address</u>	<u>Phone/Email</u>

NOMINATORS:

(Up to 3 nominators accepted)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Department/Campus Address</u>	<u>Phone/Email</u>
Dr. Sherrilene Classen Director School of Occupational Therapy	School of Occupational Therapy Elborn College	86291 sclassen@uwo.ca
Dr. Andrew Johnson Chair, Health & Rehab Sciences	Health & Rehab Sciences Elborn College	80310 ajohnson@uwo.ca
Prof. Kathy Obright Admissions Chair, School of Physical Therapy (Primary Nominator)	School of Physical Therapy Elborn College Rm 1437	88969 kdobright@uwo.ca

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DESCRIPTION OF NOMINEE:

Using the criteria below as a guideline, provide examples that demonstrate the nominee's involvement at Western. (Note: The Selection Committee's decisions are based **solely** on the examples you provide.)

Contributes directly or indirectly to providing an outstanding Western Experience for students, faculty, staff and/or alumni

Comments from Prof. Obright: When the University first moved to the new OWL system at Western, many faculty members, including myself, were totally overwhelmed by the technology and the learning required to make this transition. It truly is hard to "teach old dogs new tricks", but Julie was instrumental in helping faculty in the School of Physical Therapy set up, develop and be able to fully utilize our OWL course websites. She developed "tips and how to's" on using the new technology to help us learn. She ran "hands on" workshops and was always available to trouble shoot and advise. She taught our teaching assistants how to use the gradebook and upload videos to a course website. Her positive "can do" attitude helped alleviate our fears and made the learning fun and enjoyable. Because of her efforts, faculty were better able to use the technology offered by the new system, which ultimately benefitted the students. Today's students have grown up with technology and there is an expectation that those at the university should be using cutting edge technology to teach. There is an immense potential for learning through technology for the class room and for on-line learning and Julie has helped both staff and faculty in FHS to bridge the gap between having the desire to use new technologies and being able to implement and utilize these new technologies.

In the spring of 2014 I became interested in moving to "flipped" classes as a new and interactive teaching method for the fall term. "Flipped classes require that the students review a pre-recorded lecture ("profcast") on their own time in preparation for the class. The class discussion is then based on that preparation. I was hesitant to take on such a huge project given that I'm a "technological dinosaur". I spoke to Julie about this change and through her encouragement, I started that spring getting more comfortable with the new technology by doing "profcasts" which are audio recordings from the class that accompany Power Point slides. Julie was there each step of the way to ensure that I was comfortable with the process and with the technology. She came to my initial lectures to provide technical support should there be any technological "glitches". Her background is in education so it was readily apparent to me how much she understood that a teacher's worst fear with using advanced technology, is that technology failing. She made sure that didn't happen so my confidence grew. In the fall of 2014 I made roughly half of my lectures "flipped" classes, and through her direction, was able to develop a variety of quizzes and reflective pieces that accompanied these "flipped" classes. She knew that I wanted to evaluate the student satisfaction with these changes in my teaching methods so she helped me to develop a Qualtrics survey to do so. Julie's input and knowledge was invaluable. The students absolutely loved the "flipped" classes and the level of learning I observed in these classes was truly remarkable. When I asked Julie to come to the beginning of one of my classes so that I could introduce her and explain her role in the development of the "flipped classes" the class spontaneously gave her a rousing round of applause. When I circulated a "thank you" card in class to thank Julie for her help with those classes, the students instead of just signing the card, wrote paragraphs of thanks to the point that I had to add an extra sheet of paper to the card so that more students could add their comments. Julie, in her humble way, said it was "just part of the job". We all knew that she had gone well above and beyond her job to make things work and we were all very grateful.

Comments from Dr. Classen: Julie has been tremendous in orienting our faculty and students before, during and after the launch of our new master of Clinical Science in Driving Rehabilitation Therapy Program (MCISc DRT Program). As well, she has worked, committedly and conscientiously to help build the on-line site, and to provide immediate assistance to the faculty teaching in this program. During our orientation weekend, Julie was present to guide, teach, coach and mentor our students to become proficient in the use of technology. The success of building, developing and launching the program would not have been possible without Julie's contributions.

Comments from Dr. Johnson: I would characterize Julie as being proactive, innovative, and generous with her time. She has built a vast supply of “how to’s” that allow instructors across the Faculty to complete common tasks within their courses, and in this way, she has solved the problem of how to deliver service to all individuals within the faculty. In addition to providing support on these common tasks, she has frequented the School meetings within the Faculty, speaking about methods by which instructors can improve their pedagogy, at both the undergraduate and the graduate level.

I have submitted two teaching innovation grants on which Julie was a co-investigator – both to the Ontario Online Initiative. Within the first grant, we received funding to mount an entirely online graduate educational module on test construction. Julie was again very generous with her time – frequently working into the evenings to meet deadlines – spending hours with the student developer that I hired to complete some of the technical work, as well as with me, working out the teaching requirements and processes. The project would not have been possible without her insights into the way in which we might solve the various teaching hurdles that we encountered along the way (e.g., adding subtitles for the hearing impaired, integrating interstitial questions into video presentations, etc.). Although the follow-up grant application was not successful, we will be presenting the results of this teaching intervention at the annual convention of the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, later in June. Again, this presentation will involve extra work, above and beyond her normal day-to-day responsibilities – and this is another concrete example of Julie’s willingness to go “above and beyond” her job requirements, for the benefit of the Western community, as well as the wider university teaching community.

Promotes leadership and personal growth

Comments from Prof. Obright: Julie was my “coach” in the development of “flipped classes”. She supported me as I stumbled through the learning process in creating these classes. It would have been much easier for her to just do things for me, but instead she gave me the resources that I needed and inspired me to keep trying until I was comfortable with the technology. I am reminded that “the mediocre teacher tells ... the good teacher explains ... the superior teacher demonstrates ... but the great teacher inspires.” Julie inspired me to try new things and to not be afraid of making mistakes. She was my “safety net” in helping me recognize and correct my mistakes. Julie inspires everyone around her to try new things and to not be afraid to take chances. Through Julie’s mentoring, I was not only able to learn and use the new technology, but I was also able to help other faculty who were having similar challenges. Imagine how excited I was when a colleague called me at home on a Sunday afternoon because he didn’t know how to convert his OWL “project site” to a “published site” that he needed the students to have access to for the next day’s class. Not only was I able to help him do this, but I thanks to Julie, I was also able to teach him how to do this, so that the learning was “passed forward”.

A second “opportunity” happened this week when our administrative assistant needed a “project site” for our incoming student cohort and Julie was booked. Our admin assistant called me for help and together we created both a functional and visually appealing OWL site for our incoming students. Once again, I was able to “pay forward” Julie’s investment of her time and energy in helping me. Julie’s mentoring contributed not only to my personal and professional growth and development in using new technologies, but allowed me to help my colleagues as well. Not bad for me being a “technological dinosaur”! Now I’m not afraid to try to incorporate new technology into the classroom and that confidence has only come through Julie’s patience, diligence and encouragement. I would not be able to use the technology that I do in the classroom if it were not for Julie and her efforts to bring “dinosaurs” into the 21st century! I won’t say that I don’t still get overwhelmed by technology, but the difference now is that I ask myself “what would Julie do” and amazingly enough, I’ve actually been able to problem solve many challenges without having to contact her for advice. Now I look forward to using new technologies and taking further courses on e-learning as I believe this is the wave of the future.

Comments from Dr. Classen: Julie has demonstrated excellent leadership skills during team meetings in which we conceptualized the initial planning, as well as the Orientation weekend, of our MCISc DRT Program. She has excellent skills and experience in the area of on-line “instruction and design” and our team benefitted greatly from her organizing, initiating, and developing characteristics.

Comments from Dr. Johnson: For my part, I offered my undergraduate statistics class as a “flipped classroom” – something that I would never have considered doing if Julie had not generously spent significant amounts of time reviewing teaching practices, and (eventually) helping me set up the asynchronous learning activities that would be required by students outside of class. Her command of this innovative teaching technique meant that I was able to offer the content within my course with a significantly greater amount of interactivity, and the preliminary feedback that I have received from students has been extremely positive.

Builds and fosters Western’s Core Values (Integrity, Respect and Commitment to Service)

Comments from Prof. Obright: In my opinion, Julie personifies Western’s Core Values. Her integrity and respect for others is beyond reproach. She is committed to helping others acquire the tools that they need to be successful in using technology. For example, as Chair of our School’s Admission Committee, I asked Julie to help us design a new system that ensured the privacy and confidentiality of applicants to our program, while allowing external reviewers to be able to access and evaluate the applicants files. Julie was cognizant of the needs of the committee and reviewers, while protecting and respecting the rights of the applicants. To get this system off the ground, Julie came in before work and made herself available on weekends and evenings to help with the technological challenges of the new system. I am confident in saying, that our new admissions process for the review of the applicants’ files would not have been possible without Julie’s leadership and direction.

Julie constantly goes above and beyond the duties outlined in her job description to help others. Julie’s background is with team sports and her commitment to her “team” carries over in her work. When the “team” is struggling, she’s the first to offer help. If she doesn’t know something, she goes away and figures it out and comes back the same day with the answer. Her work day often becomes whatever it takes to get the job done. I know that she has worked evenings and weekends to assist colleagues with new technology and responds 24/7 to e-mail and text questions. That level of commitment to the job and to helping others is uncommon in my experience and sets her apart from her peers.

Recently, our School was preparing an extensive document required for accreditation. Julie proved again and again to be instrumental in providing solutions for our technological challenges, responded quickly to our requests for help and saved the leadership team countless hours of work by showing us shortcuts, and efficiencies in the work we were preparing.

Julie is a respected and much valued, integral member of our faculty. My Director, Dr. Bert Chesworth, had these words to say about Julie: “Her contributions extend light years beyond her job description, from assistance with construction of relational data bases, to advanced formatting of complex files.” When it comes to technology, there is little that Julie can’t do and we are all the better because of her.

Our School’s Academic Clinical Co-ordinator shared these comments about Julie. “Julie Whitehead’s superior instructional design capabilities and knowledge were instrumental to the success of the *Preceptor Education Modules: Online Ontario Initiative* grant application to the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) and the successful development of the *Preceptor Education Program (PEP) for Health Professional and Students 2nd edition* between Feb 2015 – Jan 2016. During this time period Julie Whitehead contributed weeks of additional time to this project over and above her regular job requirements and work hours. More amazing than Julie’s stellar technical skills and tremendous work ethic, was her ability to maintain a constant helpful and cheerful disposition throughout this entire process! Something that not all members of the PEP committee were able to achieve! To see the results of

Julie's stellar technical skills click on the link www.preceptor.ca to see the finished product, 70% of which can be attributed to Julie's superior design and IT abilities."

Comments from Dr. Classen: From the inception of the idea develop and launch the MCISc DRT Program, Julie has showed a commitment to serve our staff, faculty and students. She has availed herself consistently and we always knew we could count on her assistance during the process. Julie's comfortable tutoring style makes her a great asset to any team, and despite the fact that the content may be technical, she presents information in a way to enhance learning and to optimize retention of tasks. Julie is easy to get along with, always cheerful in her approach, and show respect to all of those that she engage with.

Comments from Dr. Johnson: I think that it is important to note the technical innovations that Julie has brought with her role as an instructional designer. Even though "database programming" is not really part of her portfolio, Julie has worked tirelessly with the secretaries in the Health and Rehabilitation Sciences program, to create a database system that will allow us to keep track of student funding, teaching assignments, and other information pertinent to tracking their progress through the program. This database has been an unbelievable boon to our staff – which has been particularly important, given that we saw two of our full-time administrative positions reduced to part-time. Julie's innovative use of database queries and document merging has allowed us to continue to meet our targets within the program.

Summary Comments from Prof. Obright: In closing, Julie personifies excellence in all facets of her work. I have worked with many outstanding staff members during my 27 years here at Western and I can say unequivocally that Julie ranks in the top 3% of those individuals. I feel privileged to be able to continue to work with Julie and to learn and be inspired by her. I cannot think of an individual more deserving of this prestigious award. She has my full support and endorsement for this nomination.

Summary Comments from Dr. Classen: Julie is so deserving of this award—and I cannot think of another staff member who is more ideally positioned to receive this acknowledgement.

Summary Comments from Dr. Johnson: In sum, Julie exemplifies all of the qualities that we would want to see in a truly outstanding member of the Western community. She is highly competent within the role for which she was hired – and is generous with the considerable expertise that she possesses outside this portfolio. She is a leader within the faculty, when it comes to innovative practices that enhance pedagogy and efficiency within our teaching and leadership responsibilities. I give her my highest possible endorsement for this award.

When complete, email this form to staff.recognition@uwo.ca