



*CEU Celebrates its 20th Anniversary: 1991-2011*

August 22, 2011

**Re: Call for nominations for the European Award for Excellence in Teaching  
in the Social Sciences and Humanities**

In recent years, strong emphasis has been placed at the European level on research in higher education. Research-related activities and achievements have attracted particular attention and recognition, illustrated by the creation of European funding programs and awards for research.

The focus on research has become stronger and stronger as universities in Europe have been increasingly perceived as major players in the economy, and their primary mission has been redefined to serve directly and immediately the imperatives of the knowledge economy, particularly through the creation of new knowledge that supports growth, innovation, competitiveness, and economic and social development. This trend is evident in policies introduced in Europe within the frameworks of the Lisbon Agenda (now extended as the Europe 2020 Strategy) and the Bologna Process.

As a result of the overwhelming focus on research – understood as a direct exercise in knowledge production – attention to teaching and to the more general educational function of higher education institutions has decreased markedly. This is reflected in, among other consequences, severe cuts in the budgets of teaching universities in some countries, in contrast to fewer cuts in national research budgets. This situation is particularly severe in the social sciences and humanities. It is also reflected in the absence of major, systematic initiatives at the European level to recognize the value of teaching.

Recently, however, there have been some encouraging indications that policy makers in Europe are starting to realize that teaching could, should and does play an important role in higher education. This recognizes that, in conjunction with research, knowledge transmission and dissemination, general education and professional training at higher education level have an important role to play in a “knowledge society.”

Although a number of universities offer their own teaching awards and various professional and other associations offer prizes within subject areas, there seem to be no significant pan-European rewards for teaching excellence in higher education. The *European Award for Excellence in*

*Teaching in the Social Sciences and Humanities* is intended to promote better teaching and the recognition of its importance throughout Europe.

### **Purpose of the European Award for Excellence in Teaching in the Social Sciences and Humanities**

Central European University is a postgraduate institution in Budapest that specializes in the social sciences and humanities. With both teaching and research at the core of its mission, it is committed to promoting research-based teaching in all its programs.

In order to offer a constructive approach to complementing the somewhat singular focus on research in higher education in Europe, and on the occasion of its 20th anniversary, Central European University would like to contribute to promoting teaching excellence by launching a European Award for Excellence in Teaching in the Social Sciences and Humanities.

This award initiative also underlines Central European University's own commitment to provide excellent teaching and to promote the advancement of social sciences and humanities.

It is envisioned that the award would bring much-needed attention to—and recognition of—best teaching practices in this time of great developments in the European Higher Education Area.

### **Selection Criteria for the European Award for Excellence in Teaching**

All candidates must have an outstanding overall teaching record and be able to demonstrate inspiring and life-changing effects on students. In addition, each candidate must show exemplary experience in one or more of these practices:

- applying innovative teaching methods
- combining theory and practice, relevance and scholarly excellence
- using research elements to achieve excellence in teaching
- applying problem-based/problem-oriented teaching
- achievements in encouragement of critical thinking
- sustained commitment to teaching excellence, rather than one-off achievements

Nominations of candidates working with students from less affluent or disadvantaged social backgrounds are particularly welcome.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible, a candidate must be:

- an academic instructor of any rank in the Social Sciences and/or Humanities
- currently teaching at a higher education institution in a member country of the European Higher Education Area (<http://www.ehea.info/members.aspx>).

Current and former faculty members of Central European University are not eligible for nomination.

## **Nomination and Selection Process**

Candidates may be nominated by:

- individual members of higher education institutions in member countries of the European Higher Education Area
- administrators in such educational institutions
- external stakeholders such as representatives of employers or other organizations
- current or former students

All evidence in support of the nomination will be submitted to Central European University and collected in two stages.

## **How to Nominate a Candidate for the Award**

1) In the first stage, a person wishing to nominate a candidate for the award must submit the following documents by **no later than October 15, 2011**. Incomplete submissions will not be considered.

- a detailed statement in support of the nomination (approximately 1,000 words)
- the candidate's curriculum vitae (or resume) and contact information
- contact information for the higher education institution

2) In the second stage of the nomination process, Central European University will contact both the nominee and the higher education institution where he/she teaches to obtain additional information in support of the nomination. Should the person making the initial nomination have access to any of the additional information listed below, those materials should be submitted during the first stage of the nomination process.

Additional supporting evidence may include:

- a narrative from the nominee explaining how his/her teaching made a difference, accompanied by any relevant documents
- testimonials from former and/or current students, colleagues, university administrators, or others who have firsthand knowledge of the candidate's teaching achievements
- formal teaching performance documents such as internal evaluation reports
- a written and/or audiovisual portfolio demonstrating "excellence in teaching" and corresponding impact on students

The selection process will be coordinated by Central European University, which will serve as the Secretariat. Candidates will be evaluated by a four- or five-member selection committee drawn from higher education institutions worldwide.

## **Timeframe**

1. Nominations for the European Award for Excellence in Teaching in the Social Sciences and Humanities will be accepted until **October 15, 2011**. Nominations should be sent electronically to: [TeachingAward@ceu.hu](mailto:TeachingAward@ceu.hu)

Or by post to:  
Central European University  
Rectorate  
Attn.: European Award for Excellence in Teaching  
Nador u. 9,  
1051 Budapest  
Hungary

Selection process will be completed by Spring 2012. The award competition is intended to be conducted annually.

2. Central European University will send an email to acknowledge receipt of the nomination within two weeks of the submission.
3. Central European University will contact the nominee and relevant higher education institution for additional information.
4. The award winner will be notified by letter shortly after the selection committee's final meeting.
5. Once the winner has accepted her/his award, the competition results will be shared with all the nominees via email.
6. Because the name of the winner will be publicized widely, he/she must consent during the nomination process to all award-related publicity and recognition.
7. Awards will be presented at a ceremony coordinated with the winner.

### **European Award for Excellence in Teaching in the Social Sciences and Humanities**

The award winner will receive a prize of 5,000 EUR, paid by an external sponsor and coordinated by Central European University. He/she will also be invited to give a lecture at Central European University, subject to availability.