



Office of the Dean
Research & Graduate Studies

January 27, 2009

Dear Faculty,

The Office of Research and Graduate Studies is pleased to announce the 2008-2009 **Patricia O. McConkey Award/Graduation with Distinction**. This award recognizes distinguished scholarly achievement at the master's level. Nominations are accepted from all disciplines. The scholarly "product" eligible for this competition is a formal written thesis or a project. If a nominating department offers both thesis and a project options, only the thesis will be accepted for consideration of this award. Students are eligible who have earned a master's degree within the period of July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009.

Procedures for Nomination

1. Only one student from each program/option may be selected for the McConkey/Graduation with Distinction award. If a program/option wants to nominate more than one student, the nominations will be sent to the graduate coordinator who will select one student and then will forward the nomination to Research & Graduate Studies. The graduate coordinator will not forward the nomination if he/she considers it not to be of outstanding quality.
2. Each nomination requires a letter from the major professor. The graduate coordinator will select one outstanding thesis or project and then will write a letter in support of the nomination. The letters should include information regarding the significance of the thesis or project, the contribution of thesis/project to the program, and the impact of the thesis/project on the knowledge base of the discipline.
3. If selected for the nomination, the student will submit a non technical summary (1000-1500 words) describing the research and its significance for a general academic audience of non-specialists.
4. The table of contents for the nominated thesis.

Deadline: **February 27, 2009 by 5 p.m.** Submit the items listed above to Research & Graduate Studies, Siemens Hall 130. Please provide four copies of all materials.

Screening

Initial screening will be done by three members from the Graduate Council and will be based upon four criteria: originality, significance of the study, methodology, and overall quality. The student's contribution to the degree program may also be a consideration.

Graduation with Distinction

Students, whose nominations are forwarded to Research & Graduate Studies, will “graduate with distinction.” This title will appear on official HSU transcripts. The nominated students are allowed to purchase a gold stole for commencement that identifies them as graduating with distinction. Students nominated for the award will be invited to attend the Outstanding Students Award Ceremony and Reception (Recognizing Students Who Make a Difference), held in the spring at HSU. The winners of the outstanding thesis/outstanding project will receive a certificate of award and recognition at commencement.

WAGS/UMI Distinguished Master’s Thesis Award

The student that wins the Patricia O. McConkey Award for Outstanding Thesis will automatically be entered in the Western Association of Graduate Schools/University Microfilms International (WAGS/UMI) 2008-2009 Distinguished Master’s Thesis Award. The award consists of a certificate of award, \$1000 to the recipient, and travel expenses for the student and the student’s committee chair to receive the award at the annual meeting of the Association. If a finalist for the WAGS/UMI Distinguished Master’s Thesis Award, the department will be asked to provide three complete copies of the thesis.