**Criteria for the Sigma Awards of Distinction**

The purpose of the awards is to recognize outstanding nurses whose contributions to nursing fulfill the goals of Sigma Theta Tau.

**General Criteria for ALL awards:**

Both nominator and nominee must be members of Sigma Theta Tau (dues paid)

**Award for Excellence in Research**

1. Contributes significantly to the development of nursing science and nursing practice through research
2. Collaborates with nursing colleagues and other health-related professionals to facilitate nursing research. (Examples of collaboration may include but are not limited to co-authorship of publications, joint funding, and consultation).
3. Communicates research findings through publication and presentation at scholarly meetings.
4. Actively promotes the utilization of research in practice and/or education.
5. Mentors and promotes the development of new and/or other investigators.
6. Receives funding for nursing research.

**Award for Excellence in Clinical Practice**

1. Demonstrates clinical expertise in the delivery of patient care.
2. Provides direct patient care at least 50% of the time.
3. Mentors and promotes the development of other health care professionals.
4. Utilizes current research and professional literature in practice.
5. Participates in community affairs, the legislative process, or organizations that affect nursing practice.
6. Promotes change in the health care environment for the improvement of health care.
7. Collaborates with nursing colleagues and other health-related professionals to facilitate quality care.
8. Promotes a professional image of nursing.

**Award for Excellence in Education**

1. Makes outstanding contributions to the education of nurses and/or nursing students.
2. Creates an environment conducive to learning.
3. Collaborates with nurses and/or other health-related professionals to develop comprehensive educational programs.
4. Mentors and promotes the development of educational abilities in others.
5. Demonstrates innovative teaching strategies.
6. Encourages critical thinking within educational activities.
7. Utilizes research findings in educational activities.

**Award for Excellence in Leadership**

1. Contributes significantly to the nursing profession as a leader in administration, education, practice and/or research.
2. Receives local, national, and/or international recognition as a nursing leader.
3. Influences nursing through visionary and innovative approaches.
4. Creates an environment that enhances the image of nurses and nursing.
5. Mentors and promotes the development of leadership abilities in others.
6. Provides leadership in professional organizations by holding office and/or serving on committees.

**Award for Ethical Behavior and Professional Commitment**

This award was established in honor of Cheryl McGaffic, Robin Rogers, and Barbara Monroe. These three nurses were members of Sigma Theta Tau International, Beta Mu Chapter. They exhibited exceptional ethical behavior and professional commitment in their roles as faculty members, protecting the safety of community members by upholding standards of safe practice among their students. They remain inspirations for exceptional ethical behavior and professional commitment in all dimensions of our lives.

Nominees for this award will be nurses who exemplify ethical behavior and/or professional commitment consistent with the following principles of the American Nurse's Association Code of Ethics:

1. The nurse, in all professional relationships, practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and uniqueness of every individual, unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status, personal attributes, or the nature of the health problem.
2. The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, or community.
3. The nurse promotes, advocates for, and strives to protect the health, safety, and rights of the patient.

**Award for Excellence in Graduate Studies**

Nominees must be enrolled for a minimum of 3 units of credit at the time of nomination (except doctoral candidates who must be enrolled in at least 1 unit at the time of nomination). They must have completed a minimum of 9 units at the time of nomination and must have attained a GPA of at least 3.5 in nursing graduate coursework.

1. Demonstrates leadership within student or professional groups.
2. Contributes to an environment that encourages scholarship and creativity.
3. Mentors and promotes leadership and scholarship abilities with others.
4. Is committed to the development of nursing science and nursing practice through research.
5. Consistently demonstrates graduate work of high academic quality.
6. Promotes a positive image of nursing among peers, members of the profession, and in the community.