



Jerry G. Gaff Award: Why we honor his legacy

The award is named for Jerry Gaff, Senior Scholar at the American Association of Colleges and Universities and a respected advocate for general and liberal education for over thirty years. Gaff, who received a Ph.D. in psychology from Syracuse University, previously served on the faculties of five institutions and was dean of the College of Liberal Arts and acting president of Hamline University. He also served as Vice President of AAC&U and directed their Preparing Future Faculty Program. He has authored numerous books including *Toward Faculty Renewal*, *General Education Today*, and *New Life for the College Curriculum* and co-edited *The Handbook of the Undergraduate Curriculum*.



Jerry G. Gaff is Senior Fellow at the Association of American Colleges and Universities, an educational association whose mission is to foster high-quality liberal education for all students. He is a vigorous and articulate spokesman for strong, distinctive institutions and has helped academic leaders develop vital academic programs through such activities as demonstration projects, conferences, publications, and consultations. He has directed national projects to strengthen undergraduate general education programs, to establish programs that support the professional development of faculty, and-most recently-- to develop new models for the graduate preparation of future faculty members. He also is the founding director of AAC&U's Network for Academic Renewal that assists faculty members and administrators to improve their academic programs in such ways as internationalizing the curriculum, using diversity and technology to aid learning, and developing more quality and coherence in general education curricula.

During the 1970s Dr. Gaff helped to define the new terms of faculty development to include growth as a teacher and as a member of the academic community with his *Toward Faculty Renewal* (1975). Through directing the Project on Institutional Renewal Through the Improvement of Teaching, writing, speaking, and consulting, he helped to establish centers for faculty development or teaching excellence at dozens of institutions. During the 1980s he worked on curriculum issues and assisted scores of institutions to strengthen their core curricula. He published *General Education Today* (1983), *New Life for the College Curriculum* (1991), and *Strong Foundations: Twelve Principles of Effective General Education Programs* (1994). Beginning in 1993, he has directed the Preparing Future Faculty program, which has awarded grants to research universities and disciplinary societies to develop model programs that prepare graduate students for research, teaching, and service roles in a diversity of colleges and universities. He is co-author of *Building the Faculty We Need: Colleges and Universities Working Together* (2000), *Preparing Future Faculty in the Sciences and Mathematics: A Guide for Change* (2002), and *Preparing Future Faculty in the Humanities and Social Sciences: A Guide for Change* (2003) that describe these new faculty preparation programs.

Beginning in 2002, AGLS recognized those who have demonstrated leadership on their campuses in the area of general and liberal education, who have shown evidence of outstanding teaching in general and liberal education courses, and who have a record of achievement in curriculum development, innovation, or implementation in general and liberal education. Originally called The Jerry G. Gaff Faculty Award for Faculty Excellence in General and Liberal Education, in 2017 the AGLS Council voted to offer multiple Gaff awards to celebrate the distinctive roles essential for strong programs and encourage the next generation of leaders in general and liberal studies.

There are two categories that may be awarded each year:

1. Emerging Campus Leader is a full-time, instructional faculty who has demonstrated significant campus-wide leadership in the areas of general education and liberal studies curriculum reform, revision, implementation, assessment, or administration.
2. Outstanding Teacher is a full-time, instructional faculty who has a significant record of outstanding teaching and/or course development in general education programs, core curricula, or liberal studies.