Dr. Barbara Bush, Associate Professor in the College of Education and coordinator of the Higher Education Program [2], is the 2020 recipient of the UNT Foundation [3] Faculty Leadership Award.

This award recognizes a faculty member who significantly impacts the academic enterprise of the university through leadership and service. The award acknowledges individual and organizational excellence in leadership as demonstrated by the impact of their work at the university, state, national and/or international level. The annual award carries a one-time $5,000 payment and an engraved commemorative gift.

Bush is described as the right leader at the right time for the University of North Texas. Her expertise in higher education has informed her work as a leader in the north Texas community and in the field of higher education.

She had been intricately involved in leadership at UNT for many years, including having served as chair of UNT’s Faculty Senate. She continues to lead and serve the faculty by ensuring that they are represented in the workings of the university on and off campus, including in the decision-making process. Her philosophy is that when faculty feel ownership in campus decisions, they are the most productive and effective. It has been her goal as a leader of numerous campus and off-campus committees and groups to help encourage, not just those elected and appointed, but all faculty to become involved in the shared governance process.

Outside of UNT, others have recognized her leadership skills as she was elected vice chair of the Council for the Advancement of Higher Education Programs. Her accomplishments from that service role include revision of the bylaws, coordination of an award program for outstanding higher education faculty and development of a grant program to support conference activity.

Supporters of her nomination noted that “she facilitates change by empowering others. While she is an exceptional and visible leader, she can also support and lead from behind the scenes. She always seeks to work for the good of the organization rather than seeking personal accolades.”