

Academic Senate Recognizes Ten Awardees for Superlative Teaching Skills

UC San Diego's Academic Senate has awarded the 2012 Distinguished Teaching Awards to five senate members and one non-senate member, and Excellent Teaching Awards to four graduate students, in recognition of their exemplary teaching skills.

The presentation and a reception honoring the awardees were held Wednesday in the Ida and Cecil Green Faculty Club. The awards were presented by Suresh Subramani, Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs; Steven Schick, Chair of the Committee on Senate Awards; and T. Guy Masters, Vice Chair of the Academic Senate.

"Teaching is at the very heart of the university," said Subramani. "It is clearly our most important endeavor. The recipients of the Distinguished Teaching Awards have a unique gift of inspiring and connecting with their students; they are demanding, yet they incite in their students a thirst for learning and a desire to succeed. What makes their accomplishments even more remarkable is that instruction is only one of the many things they do, and do well. The exceptional teaching evidenced by these honorees is truly worthy of recognition. The Distinguished Teaching Awards affords us an opportunity to recognize their contributions to making UC San Diego a truly superb university."

Senate members receiving Distinguished Teaching Awards were Sara E. Johnson, Literature; Craig McIntosh, International Relations and Pacific Studies; Joseph M. O'Connor, Chemistry and Biochemistry; Henry C. Powell, Pathology; and Emily Roxworthy, Theatre and Dance.

Honored with the Barbara J. and Paul D. Saltman Distinguished Teaching Award for a non-senate member was Madeleine Picciotto, Warren College Writing Program.

Graduate students David Kadanoff, Sociology; Eunsong Angela Kim, Culture, Art, and Technology; Kit Myers, Ethic Studies; and Lisa Vernoy, Literature, earned the Barbara J. and Paul D. Saltman Excellent Teaching Awards for Graduate Students.

Why They Won: Text of the Awards



Sara E. Johnson

Sara E. Johnson's teaching record is nothing short of stellar. She has received outstanding reviews, and nearly 100 percent of students in every class she has taught recommend her as an instructor. This exceptionally high praise is even more impressive considering the breadth and difficulty of the subjects she teaches as a leading young scholar in the field of Caribbean and African diaspora studies. Students emphasize Professor Johnson's brilliance as a teacher, using adjectives such as "knowledgeable," "interesting," "approachable," "engaging," "supportive," and "awesome." Outside the classroom, Johnson continues her dedication to education by mentoring a large number of students, many from historically underrepresented communities. As one student summarized, "Professor Johnson epitomizes what I think a college professor should be:

encouraging, accepting, intellectual, and most of all, demanding—demanding in a way that keeps pushing us to be better."

Craig McIntosh's value as a teacher lies in his ability to present facts, to explain complicated mathematical concepts involving numerous Greek letters, and then to humanize all of it. His students jokingly describe him as a wizard: His lectures are a unique blend of ethics, debate, analysis, and understanding that they cannot imagine coming from anyone else. When students walk into Professor McIntosh's classroom, they know that the work will be hard, but his mantra for students who have no background in econometrics or statistical analysis is "Do not be afraid of the math." He is a brilliant researcher, a gifted teacher, and an important and trusted mentor. Students who pass through Professor McIntosh's classroom door leave believing he was one of the most important influences on their intellectual growth.



Craig McIntosh



Joseph M. O'Connor

Joseph M. O'Connor has taught organic chemistry at UC San Diego for more than twenty-five years. He has also taught numerous challenging courses in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry's main organic chemistry sequence, which many students take because of requirements for their major, not because of their personal interest. Being a successful instructor in these courses without compromising academic rigor is not a simple task. Students rate Professor O'Connor as an excellent and effective lecturer because of his concise style and clear explanations. Many students assess Professor O'Connor as a committed instructor whose proficient lectures reflect his deep knowledge of organic chemistry. His warm

disposition, sense of humor, and perspicuous delivery are acknowledged in the consistently high evaluations he has received over many years. The word most consistently used by students to characterize Professor O'Connor's teaching is "great."

For more than 35 years, **Henry C. Powell** has been actively involved in teaching all levels at UC San Diego: undergraduate and graduate students; medical and pharmacy students; and pathology, neurology, and neurosurgery residents. He has also mentored countless students. No other faculty member has demonstrated such breadth and depth of teaching over such a sustained period while also playing a major role in the administration of teaching. One former student, who is currently the chief medical examiner for the State of Rhode Island, described Professor Powell's profound influence: "He gave me the opportunity to learn about people management, something lacking in the education of most physicians. I am grateful there are teachers like Harry Powell who are willing to teach other physicians how to become leaders. For more than a quarter of a century, Harry Powell has been my teacher, and he continues to exert profound influence on my professional and personal life."



Henry C. Powell



Emily Roxworthy

Emily Roxworthy demonstrates energy and commitment to excellence in teaching. Her focus is on the student, not on herself, which results in innovative engagement that couples humanities with new technologies. This method is most clearly represented in her project *Drama in the Delta*, which received funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The role-playing video game encourages all ages to explore issues of identity through the experiences of different racially and culturally diverse avatars in two Japanese American internment camps in 1940s Arkansas. This important work will have a teaching impact beyond UC San Diego and expands the University of California's profile as a leader in new modes of learning. Professor Roxworthy takes both her teaching and research seriously and integrates them in creative ways that inspire the intellect and the imagination. She brings this sense of adventure not only to her teaching in the Department of Theatre and Dance but also to her continual commitment to Sixth College.

Madeleine Picciotto is an incredibly talented and versatile instructor, and she has had a tremendous impact on the students who enter her classroom. Her expertise as a scholar of contemporary academic writing has been an essential ingredient in the development of the Warren College Writing Program's pedagogy and syllabus. One of her former students, now a second-year medical student, wrote that "Dr. Picciotto never told us how—or what—to think, but rather helped us realize that we each had the ability and freedom to come to unique conclusions of our own, which is a very empowering feeling. She helped students with not only their writing but also their transition to college life. Under her guidance, students were transformed from five-paragraph essay writers to real thinkers

and communicators.” Dr. Picciotto is a model instructor for UC San Diego and a passionate and committed mentor who has deeply influenced our students and educational mission.



Madeleine Picciotto



David Kadanoff

David Kadanoff has been described as the best of the outstanding graduate teaching assistants in the Department of Sociology. He has consistently demonstrated an unusual level of commitment to undergraduate instruction and has excelled in his efforts. He has begun teaching his own courses and has been chosen to teach classes like Introduction to Sociology and the required

methods course that are usually reserved for ladder-rank faculty and the best instructors because of the challenges involved and their importance in encouraging new majors. Testimonials from students in Mr. Kadanoff’s classes indicate that he is a caring instructor. As one student wrote, “David

Eunsong Angela Kim is committed to student learning and understanding, has a friendly demeanor, and displays a willingness to truly go above and beyond in creative teaching methods, time investment, and moral support. Her evaluations rate her as outstanding. Students in her Sixth College Culture, Art, and Technology Program classes have praised her as an “amazing” instructor who runs a lively class and makes learning fun, but they also spoke about her high standards and desire to push students to achieve. Many students describe Ms. Kim as the best teaching assistant they have had at UC San Diego. Ms. Kim is devoted to her students and has a sincere desire for them to succeed at the highest level.



Eunsong Angela Kim



Kit Myers’s extraordinary pedagogy, consistently superior teaching, commitment to diversity, and dedication to the achievement of historically underrepresented students make him an outstanding example of excellent graduate-student teaching. Through his deep commitment to social justice, Mr. Myers has made significant contributions to promoting diversity through his teaching and mentoring. His teaching incorporates academic material at the leading edge of the field of ethnic studies, sophisticated pedagogy, innovative practices to engage students fully in the academic content and larger meaning of the course, and a concern for student learning that can be life changing. He guides students

Kit Myers

to think, write, and read critically. Mr. Myers embodies all the elements—dedication, integrity, academic excellence, and leadership—of the best graduate teaching assistants.

Lisa Vernoy is a teacher of excellence, demonstrating superior skills in preparation, pedagogy, and assessment. She approaches her literature students with compassion and creativity and demonstrates an eagerness to put in every effort to help students learn and grow with enjoyment, attention, and authority. Ms. Vernoy's students rave about her supportiveness and her skill at instruction, and her teaching reviews are exemplary. In her consistently superior evaluations, students comment that she is "professional," "extremely helpful," and "encouraging" and that she "really knows her stuff." Faculty and students alike agree that Ms. Vernoy is an unusually gifted instructor. Her dedication and effectiveness point toward a stellar teaching career in the future.



Lisa Vernoy

Distinguished Teaching Awards for senate members are \$1,500 each, the Saltman Awards for non-senate members are \$1,000 each, and the Saltman Excellent Teaching Awards for graduate students are \$500 each.

The Saltman Awards were established in the 1999-2000 academic year in honor of the former biology professor and chair of the Distinguished Teaching Committee. Funds for the awards and the reception are provided by the Chancellor, the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and donors to the Barbara and Paul Saltman Endowment Fund.

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