



## University Relations

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## Regents Honor Outstanding UW System Teachers

### *Educators in Eau Claire, Baraboo, and Green Bay recognized with Regents' top teaching award*

The UW System Board of Regents will honor the 26<sup>th</sup> annual winners of its Teaching Excellence Awards on June 8 in Milwaukee at the next Regents meeting. These awards recognize outstanding achievements in teaching. They are the UW System's highest recognition for members of its faculty and academic staff. The monetary value of the award is \$5,000 for each recipient.

"These outstanding educators inspire students and fellow teachers alike with their innovative approaches to teaching and learning," said Regent Janice Mueller, chair of the selection committee. "We are pleased to recognize their dedication to student success, demonstrating how learning can change lives."

Award recipients are selected for their strong commitment to teaching and learning; use of effective teaching strategies to enhance student learning; and significant impact on students' intellectual development.

The 2018 recipients are:

- **Martina Lindseth, Professor of German, Department of Languages, UW-Eau Claire.** During her 19-year career at UW-Eau Claire, Dr. Lindseth has become a recognized expert in her field, demonstrating a deep commitment to student learning and the use of innovative pedagogical practices. Her quick-paced lectures use a variety of research-based learning strategies that promote student learning through frequent conversation and collaboration. Her significant efforts in curriculum design and excellence in language instruction played a key role in UW-Eau Claire's German program being designated a German Center of Excellence by the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) in 2015. Lindseth was selected by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) to become an ACTFL Trainer in 2011. In that capacity, she has trained and mentored educators in language proficiency assessment and curriculum development, including at many Big 10 universities and private institutions, such as Stanford University, Duke University, and the University of Chicago. She regularly provides curriculum design and teaching strategies to language instructors in K-12 school districts across the state, region, and nation. At UW-Eau Claire, she has mentored students in 16 collaborative research projects, including two students who became Fulbright Scholars. In 2017, she earned the Distinguished German Educator Award by the AATG Wisconsin chapter.
- **Kirthi Premadasa, Associate Professor, Mathematics Department, UW-Baraboo/Sauk County, UW Colleges.** Dr. Premadasa has spent more than 10 years teaching at the UW System, nine as a faculty member at UW Colleges. As a mathematician and scientist, he implements his teaching philosophy in class through a wide range of research-guided interventions. For example, to address student difficulty understanding integration applications, his review of existing research revealed the underlying cause to be students' inability to visualize an integral as an accumulation. He and his colleagues developed a special lesson to help students, which Premadasa published in a peer-reviewed international journal. He engages students with deep learning and robust peer discussion; creates relevance with realistic word problems; organizes effective professional development for teachers; and facilitates optimal curricular change. He worked with the department chair to design a new pathway for students taking developmental mathematics to

increase the odds they would go on to pass college algebra. The program is now in its third year with positive results. Premadasa also designed and taught a project-based business algebra course using UW-Extension's competency-based model. He has mentored four undergraduate research projects, two of which have gone on to be published. In December 2017, he was named a U.S. Fulbright Specialist in Mathematics Education for a three-year term.

- **History Department, UW-Green Bay.** UW-Green Bay's History Department, chaired by Dr. Heidi Sherman, is a high-impact, student-centered program incorporating hands-on applied learning and community engagement. The department's enrollment has been increasing in recent years – counter to national trends – and currently has 123 students majoring in the program and 29 students declaring history as a minor. Faculty have been working to redress gender inequities among the student body. Female student enrollment is now at 47.2%, higher than the national average. A growing number of history majors are pursuing internships, from 24% in 2011-12 to 43% in 2016-17. The department credits its successes to core curricular revisions and concerted focus on innovative instruction to attract and retain a variety of students. Faculty view students as active knowledge producers, and help them to build skills of interpretation, argument, and writing in collaboration with fellow students. Upper-level courses employ collaborative digital learning projects. One class partnered with the Brown County Historical Association and the Green Bay Fire Department to research the 1880 Great Green Bay Fire and mount a live reenactment broadcast via Twitter, which was covered by local media. History faculty have a high level of participation in the university's first-year success program, Gateways to Phoenix Success.

Others on the selection committee were Regent Tony Evers, Regent Mike Jones, and Regent Jason Plante.

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