

OU FYC Newsletter

TEACHING AWARDS 2020-21 ACADEMIC YEAR

Let's Celebrate Our Award-Winning
Teachers!



Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant, MA: Jacob Witt

Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant, PhD: Emily Lange

> Innovative Teaching Award: Dave Kelly & Cheyenne Riggs

First-Year Composition Faculty: Silke Feltz

Excellence in Teaching & Service:
Amanda Klinger



Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant, MA:

Jacob Witt

Jake Witt is a dedicated instructor who is always willing to participate in his own coursework and idea share with his students. A humble person, Jake has achieved a lot of growth in his university-level teaching over the past year (his first in the OU classroom) including high student evaluations for his ability to stimulate deep thought and critical thinking, effective communication, and his overall teaching effectiveness. Part of this success comes from his willingness to engage with the FYC office and his FYC mentors to gather resources, brainstorm new teaching approaches, and find innovative ways to help students with writing and research. Jake is also known for his extensive, helpful essay feedback and his knack for breaking down tough concepts. He is an exemplary instructor whose hospitable, compassionate demeanor allows students to engage deeply with each other and with their projects. One student commented that Jake was "always there for students through thick and thin, he was more [than] happy to connect with his students and have a real connection in our class." Congratulations to Jake on his incredible teaching success and on his FYC Teaching Award!

Blurb by Katy Krieger, PhD Candidate

Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant, PhD:



Emily Lange



In her personal statement for this award, Emily attributes her teaching successes to something that, at first glance, might be deemed a deficiency: her inexperience teaching. She posits that this lack of experience in fact made her more open and flexible, as she was willing to learn alongside students and make time to help those who missed class due to quarantine. When I had the pleasure of observing her, I noted that she offered options for how to participate during the Zoom session and how to respond in a given assignment. In her official course evaluations, Emily's students praised her for this flexibility as well as her helpful feedback and, perhaps most impressively, her facility teaching stasis theory, one of the most difficult concepts in our curriculum that even veteran instructors sometimes struggle with. One student said, "[t]his class was very crucial to my development in writing, speaking, and analyzing. I think Professor Lange's use of one-on-one meetings, relevant videos and readings, examples, and written feedback made me learn more about English than I ever have...I hope the same teaching style is applied to future students." As her former mentor, I'm proud to present the FYC Teaching Award in the PhD GTA category to a very deserving Emily Lange.

Blurb by Dr. Jennifer Chancellor

Innovative Teaching Award:





The Department of First-Year Composition honors Dr. Dave Kelly for his innovations in the classroom, especially during a tumultuous period of uncertainty, worry, and collective distress. His class activities and lectures emphasized a conscientious effort to create an online environment devoted to student success. Dr. Kelly's and his students' accomplishments over the past year are the direct result of his determination to evolve as an instructor. Moving beyond what was comfortable, Dr. Kelly established best practices for novel modes of instruction required not only to survive teaching and learning in a pandemic, but more importantly to thrive as well. His students noted that even online, class was engaging and promoted independent thinking; Dr. Kelly tempered his pedagogical rigor with enthusiasm and reassurance. As instructors, we often speak of encouraging students to take risks with their writing, and this past year we witnessed Dr. Kelly demand the same from himself for the benefit of his students. For these reasons and so many more, we acknowledge and commend Dr. Kelly's achievements in both the traditional and digital classrooms. He inspires not only his students, but his colleagues as well.

Blurb by Dr. Melissa Antonucci

Innovative Teaching Award:

Cheyenne Riggs







Professor Cheyenne Riggs has served the FYC department, the English department, and her students in so many ways that make this award well-deserved. Most importantly, Professor Riggs stepped up to the challenge during the pandemic by designing "workable, effective, and consistent" hybrid course shells for 1113 & 1213 that her students praised and FYC has used as a model for other instructors in the program. Her stellar teaching was already apparent from her student evaluations and their respect for her is evident in her student feedback. Professor Riggs is dedicated to her colleagues and the department in so many ways, which makes her an excellent recipient of this Innovative Teaching Award.

Blurb by Dr. Jason Lubinski

First-Year Composition Faculty Award:



Silke Feltz



Dr. Silke Feltz's warm and friendly nature is evident to her colleagues and also her students. In evaluations, her students expressed how much she cared about them and loved teaching. "She made us feel comfortable and encouraged." Students also evaluated her highly on the effectiveness of her teaching and the mastery of material commenting on her ability to quickly return essays and assignments with her feedback. Dr. Feltz has an amazing ability to balance the important concepts of the program while also investing personally in her students. They learn much from her and they feel supported while learning. For those reasons Dr. Feltz is an excellent recipient of this year's Outstanding Teaching Award for Faculty.

Blurb by Dr. Jason Lubinski

Excellence in Teaching & Service Award:





Dr. Amanda Klinger's service to her colleagues and the university is multifaceted. Among our FYC faculty and the OU staff and administration, she is a highly regarded teacher and colleague, and it is her role as Associate Director of FYC that is the specific reason for this award. Much of her time is devoted to balancing these many roles with an ease that amazes many of her colleagues. In evaluations, students express how dedicated she is to them and the material. In her duties as Associate Director of FYC, Dr. Klinger is instrumental in keeping the FYC staff and teaching faculty updated on all information and helps to support them in all they do. Dr. Klinger organized resources, help, and offered strategies for success to both her colleagues and to her students, directly and indirectly. She was instrumental in updating everyone on crucial information from the department and the university, and in countless cases supported colleagues individually when times were tough. This brief rundown does not scratch the surface of the many challenges that Dr. Klinger faces on behalf of the department, FYC, and the university. Congratulations to Dr. Klinger and we thank you for all you do.

Blurb by Dr. Jason Lubinski



JASON LUBINSKI (CHAIR)
MELISSA ANTONUCCI
JENNIFER CHANCELLOR
KAREN FEINER
KATY KRIEGER
AMANDA KLINGER

