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Young Teacher Award Citation for Thomas Ryckman

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Young Teacher Award

Thomas C. Ryckman, Assistant Professor of Philosophy

"Thomas Ryckman, a citation for a philosopher of language must be written with care, especially for one who is the author of a paper entitled 'On Saying What We Say Because We Believe What We Say.' What we say is that in the brief time since you joined the Lawrence faculty, you have skillfully led your students to a new sense of words and their meanings and to new appreciations of the rigors and rewards of systematic reasoning. In keeping with the best traditions of your discipline, you have also demonstrated the ways in which the methods and questions of philosophy can be brought to bear fruitfully on other areas of inquiry and achievement, on the natural sciences, mathematics, and the arts. And you have introduced to us the curious notion of 'possible worlds,' though with characteristic scholarly caution you have not presumed to describe the best of them all. It seems clear, however, that the world in which you find the greatest possibilities is that of philosophical discourse. Through clear exposition and through the give and take of disciplined argumentation, you have taught your students that the route to refined understanding lies in questions well posed, answers carefully heard, and responses thoughtfully measured. In so doing, you have given your students genuine delight in their participation in the life of the mind.

Tom, we are delighted to honor you with this award as an outstanding your teacher of the Lawrence faculty."

Citation read by President Richard Warch at Commencement, 1986