

1-1-2000

Excellence in Teaching Award Citation for Bruce Pourciau

Lawrence University

Follow this and additional works at: <http://lux.lawrence.edu/facultyawards>

© Copyright is owned by the author of this document.

Recommended Citation

Lawrence University, "Excellence in Teaching Award Citation for Bruce Pourciau" (2000). *Faculty Award Citations*. Paper 111.
<http://lux.lawrence.edu/facultyawards/111>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the University Archives at Lux. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Award Citations by an authorized administrator of Lux. For more information, please contact colette.brautigam@lawrence.edu.

University Award for Excellence in Teaching

Bruce H. Pourciau, Professor of Mathematics

"Bruce Pourciau, since I know that your surgeon has taken you off Ibuprofen, I will try to keep this relatively painless. After an East Coast childhood and an undergraduate education at Brown, you went west to the University of California-San Diego for your Ph.D. An academic position in the Heartland was next on the geographic agenda, and you arrived at Lawrence in 1976 where you have since remained as a member of what is today the most hip--or at least the most hip-afflicted--department on campus.

You have taught generations of Lawrence freshman to marvel at that flagship of western science, Newton's calculus, and your marathon evening exams ensure all of them the opportunity to express their appreciation--in complete detail! Your lectures are models of clarity and organization, your classroom manner open and engaging. While your students often struggle to meet the high standard to which you hold them, they see in your teaching and your scholarly efforts that you hold yourself to a standard equally high. Even without the built-in advantage of prematurely white hair (something about which I know a thing or two), you would be leading the dignified scholarly life by example.

You have participated in the Freshman Studies program at every level, as a teacher, as its director, and as a resource person who, at a Freshman Studies lunch, assured all colleagues that teaching that the square root of two is irrational is almost as much fun as exploring why 'My mother is a fish.' Further, you not only teach your students about good writing, you exemplify it in your own work: twice your papers have won the American Mathematical Society's Lester R. Ford award for articles of expository excellence.

Your numerous scholarly publications have ranged from mathematical research into generalized derivatives and their applications to the history of science and Newton's celestial mechanics to the philosophy of mathematics and science found in your recent 'Intuitionism as a Kuhnian Revolution.' It is no coincidence that you developed your interest in Newton while assisting your colleague Bruce Brackenridge, or that you learned Kuhn while teaching Freshman Studies. You not only preach the mathematical axiom, 'Seek the answer and you shall find it,' you have lived it. Your career at Lawrence is ample evidence that you practice what you teach.

It is a pleasure to recognize you with the year 2000 Excellence in Teaching Award."

Citation read by President Richard Warch at Commencement, 2000