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## Excellence in Teaching Award Citation for Massimiliano Verita

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## 2021 AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

### *Massimiliano Verità*

Holding undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Bologna, you joined the Lawrence University faculty in 2005 as a Freshman Studies instructor. Having written on the novels of Naguib Mahfouz for your master's thesis—a thesis which won you highest honors at Bologna—you began teaching tutorials in Modern Standard Arabic one year later. Student interest grew rapidly, so much so that, by 2008, you were offering instruction in Arabic as a 6-unit, three course sequence, which you have offered every year since. Along the way, you earned a second master's at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in African Languages and Literatures with a specialization in contemporary Arabic literature and Arabic and African cinema. For more than a dozen years, you have single-handedly managed our curriculum in Arabic language instruction, supplementing regular coursework with tutorials, directed studies, and independent studies in second, third, and fourth year Arabic, Media Arabic, and Arabic Linguistics—all in response to student interest. As if this weren't enough, you added Italian to your teaching portfolio in 2015, earning heartfelt gratitude and appreciation from scores of students along the way.

Student course evaluations testify to your patience, kindness, enthusiasm—and sense of fun. “Every moment in class was wonderful,” observes one student. “This teacher made learning fun and engaging.” “His love of language comes through in every aspect of the class,” writes another, “so he is able to make even the most challenging grammatical concepts engaging and fun.” “I love this teacher!” notes a third. “He made the language soooooo much fun.” But your pedagogical gifts extend beyond the ability to make learning a new language fun. Students appreciate your friendly availability in office hours, your eagerness to help them learn, and your “compassion.” As one of your students puts it, you are “one of the most accommodating and humble instructors I’ve met.” The student continues, “Max is amazing at what he does ... I have learned so much without always realizing that learning was happening.”

Max, it gives me great pleasure to acknowledge and affirm your students' warm gratitude and affection by presenting you with the 2021 Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching.

June 2021