

The logo for OCUFA, consisting of the letters 'OCUFA' in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The background of the entire page features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of teal and light green, creating a modern, layered effect.

OCUFA

Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations
Union des associations des professeurs des universités de l'Ontario

2023-2024 OCUFA Teaching Award

Citation for Mavis Morton

On behalf of the Teaching and Academic Librarianship Awards Committee, we are honoured to recognize Mavis Morton as a 2024 OCUFA Teaching Award recipient. Mavis is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Guelph, which acknowledges the location of its campus as being “within the Between the Lakes Purchase; the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. In doing so, Guelph acknowledges the gathering place where we work and learn is home to many past, present and future First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples.”

Mavis’s teaching philosophy describes the classroom as a place for critical consciousness, cultural humility, developing collaboration, finding connections, and offering care. According to her peers, community partners, and the students she teaches, this philosophy percolates through everything Mavis does. Her dossier is ripe with photos of her students engaged in active learning and community events. Mavis understands that university can be overwhelming and stressful, so she encourages her students to take a “First day of school photo” and send it home. This small act of kindness forges connections with families and has not gone unnoticed.

Relationship building is at the heart of everything Mavis does from student instruction to building community partnerships. In Mavis’s dossier, a former student and early-career instructor expressed that she would “not be the passionate community-engaged emerging scholar she is today” without Mavis’s guidance and role modelling. Mavis’s work with students at all levels of education has had long-lasting impacts on their continued education and life skills. A former student said: “Mavis pitches academia as an opportunity to support communities, as an avenue to facilitate real change.”

The sign that learning has taken place is when the learner starts to look at things differently. Multiple peers and students expressed this experience in reflecting on their work with Mavis. One student noted: “Mavis has an incredible way of providing feedback that makes you think

and see things from a different perspective, but her approach leaves room for you to decide how well it fits with your thinking and reasoning.”

Mavis’s colleagues see her as the ultimate role model for faculty, due in large measure to her support of reflective, evidence-based teaching practices that engage and excite students. She has been described as the go-to person for pedagogical advice—actively involved in program reviews, strategic planning, promotion of equity, diversity and inclusion at all educational levels, and the development of innovative interdisciplinary graduate programs. One colleague explains that “Mavis has inspired faculty to undertake new strategic priorities, integrating critical scholarship into their mission and practices in a way that honed their impact and enabled students to contribute to social change while also meeting their learning goals.” Mavis’s collaborative approach to education extends into course and curriculum design, where she engages students, faculty, staff, and community partners to deliver a learning experience that is truly inclusive.

Mavis has shown a commitment to continuous improvement of her teaching and learning practices through the pursuit of the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). Her educational scholarship has been influenced through her innovative teaching methods and the success of the community partnerships she has spearheaded. Mavis’s models of community-focused learning and community engaged teaching and learning exemplify her commitment to fostering engaged scholars, as well as community partners.

Through this award we are pleased to recognize Mavis’s impactful, innovative change to the Guelph community.

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Every year since 1973, the OCUFA Teaching and Academic Librarianship awards have honoured the exceptional achievements made by Ontario university teachers and academic librarians.

At OCUFA, we believe that the quality of education at our universities depends on the professors and academic librarians whose teaching and work touches the life of every student who embarks on a journey of higher learning.

Professors and academic librarians play a vital role in our universities, preparing students for the challenges of tomorrow, while pursuing the new ideas and knowledge that enrich all of our lives and chart a path to a brighter future.