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Teaching and
Academic Librarianship Awards

Citation for Dr. Melanie Adrian

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In her teaching philosophy, Dr. Melanie Adrian states that "an excellent education leads individuals to assimilate and transform knowledge in their lives." A critical component of such an education is an incredible teacher and consistently in her nomination package, her colleagues and students present a myriad of ways Dr. Adrian has empowered others with this transformational capacity.

According to Dr. Adrian's colleagues, she "has been a force of nature since the day she walked into the Department of Law and Legal Studies at Carleton University" where she has developed and taught 19 courses, supervised several award-winning graduate and undergraduate theses, undertaken multiple leadership positions, and cultivated an extensive and intertwined research and service agenda. As a researcher, she is an "outstanding scholar who extensively publishes in her discipline of human rights and legal studies" and most notably her scholarship on teaching and learning. As a role model to faculty and students alike, she has been distinguished for her service to the community with awards including the Order of Ontario, the Leading Women, Building Communities Recognition Award, and the Canada 150 Senate Medal. It is in her teaching where she assimilates her research and service in her transformational pedagogy that empowers her students to "make positive contributions to society."

As an educator, Dr. Adrian has garnered numerous distinctions including Carleton University's Teaching Achievement Award, New Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award, Faculty of Public Affairs Teaching Excellence Award, and Harvard University's Distinction in Teaching Award. What truly sets her apart as an educator is her novel approach to teaching which merited her the 2019 inaugural Carleton University Chair in Teaching Innovation. According to her students, her teaching is innovative as it "allows students to learn more about what they are passionate about" and that it drives them "to improve as a student and as a person." From inviting diverse voices of Justice Makers from all over the world into her classroom and engaging in active student participation and role-play through to producing learning segments and flexible classroom configurations, Dr. Adrian has developed strategies to foster a safe, inclusive, and open learner-centred classroom. An outstanding innovation in her approach to teaching is her democratization of the classroom. Whether allowing students to collectively determine their syllabus including what topics would be covered and how assessments would be implemented, or empowering students to create exam questions that proved to be, in the words of one student, "the most humane way to test class material", Dr. Adrian challenges conventional pedagogy in the interest of empowering her students.

Her teaching seamlessly blends into much of her outreach and service commitments. Whether organizing her students in the "University Uncensored: Ottawa Summit for Academic

Freedom" or coordinating with a public film festival to have her students present documentaries on social justice or human rights issues, Dr. Adrian creates opportunities for students to participate in their various communities. Her support for her colleagues is equally empowering. She helps other faculty develop new courses and teaching innovations, initiated and implemented the "Scholars at Risk" program dedicated to protecting threatened scholars and promoting academic freedom, and collaborates with the Educational Development Centre on supporting enhancing pedagogy.

According to one of her colleagues, Dr. Adrian "is a treasured member of our Department and an invaluable resource to our students." She has undoubtedly transformed and empowered her department and her students. On behalf of the OCUFA Awards Committee, please join me in congratulating Dr. Melanie Adrian, recipient of the 2020/2021 OCUFA Teaching Award.