

2013-2014 OCUFA TEACHING AND ACADEMIC LIBRARIANSHIP AWARDS

CITATION FOR WINNER DR. EDMUND PRIES

The logo for OCUFA, consisting of the letters 'OCUFA' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The letters are slightly shadowed, giving them a three-dimensional appearance.

Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations
Union des Associations des Professeurs des Universités de l'Ontario



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CITATION FOR DR. EDMUND PRIES

Prepared and read by Judy Bornais, University of Windsor

“Passionate,” a “change agent,” a “role model for faculty members, part-time and full-time alike,” are just a few of the comments used to describe Dr. Edmund Pries by his colleagues, alumni, and students.

Dr. Edmund Pries is not a typical faculty member – he has had a rather “fascinating professional trajectory,” as described by a colleague. After graduating in the 1990s, Dr. Pries taught contractually, but full-time teaching opportunities were limited. He partnered with a few business associates and decided to design a small-scale liberal arts university. They developed a university business plan for the City of Brantford and designed a core curriculum and development plan. When a charter was not granted for the proposed university, Dr. Pries ventured out into the business world but his contributions to teaching and curriculum development would resurface years later. In 2007, Dr. Pries returned to the classroom as a sessional instructor, and in 2012, he moved into a limited term position. A colleague asked Dr. Pries why he “remained in the unenviable world of sessional teaching when he was already well established professionally and highly admired for his community work.” Dr. Pries responded that he “craved the intensity of interaction with students, and the possibility of making a positive difference to the world by working closely with individuals who are our future.” Quite simply, Dr. Pries has made a significant positive difference for so many students since venturing back into academia.

In the five years Dr. Pries was a part-time sessional instructor, and more recently in a limited term position, he has designed 16 unique courses and taught 27. He has developed innovative teaching methods to engage students and challenge them to bring theory to practice so they can



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make a positive difference. One student wrote that, “Dr. Pries...inspires his students to take what they have learned and make an impact locally and also globally.” An example is the “Lend Your Leg Campaign” where students applied their learning about landmine practices and politics while developing a campus-wide campaign, which, according to the Associate Dean of Arts, is now a “fixture on campus.” These opportunities provided Dr. Pries’ students with a chance to make a difference as well!

Another student wrote, “Dr. Pries’ most admirable characteristics as a professor are his unfaltering desire for his students to succeed and his efforts to support them...[He] encourages students to reach their greatest potential personally.” Colleagues also speak of his tireless efforts to offer students opportunities to learn and assist them outside of the classroom. His dedication to teaching and his students are reflected in his teaching scores to which his department chair noted that he has, “never seen a more impressive set of teaching evaluations.”

This passion for providing learning opportunities for his students and for being a change agent can also be seen most recently in the bi-national Peace and Justice Studies Association Conference (PJSA) which was held at Laurier last fall. Dr. Pries initiated and led this event which brought over 400 scholars, educators and practitioners to the university and also provided an undergraduate student conference to run parallel to the academic conference. This exposed students to innovative leaders in the “Global Justice” field and provided students with an opportunity to be involved and learn from session presenters. Keeping in line with Dr. Pries’ desire to link theory with practice, the conference also included a pedagogical strand – a first for this organization.

There is no doubt that Dr. Pries has made remarkable accomplishments in the last seven years. What is most remarkable is that he has accomplished all of this as a part-time sessional instructor, and for the last two years, in a limited term appointment. There is no doubt he has made a significant positive difference for students and the broader teaching and learning community.



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One of his colleagues wrote, “Edmund is a remarkable, dedicated and passionate teacher, and would be an eminently worthy recipient for an OCUFA teaching award.” The Teaching and Academic Librarianship Awards Committee concur with this assessment. Please join me in congratulating Dr. Edmund Pries as one of the 2013-14 OCUFA Teaching Award recipients.