



# OCUFA

Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations  
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## 2017-2018 OCUFA TEACHING AND ACADEMIC LIBRARIANSHIP AWARDS

CITATION FOR DR. FIONA RAWLE



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## **CITATION FOR DR. FIONA RAWLE**

*Prepared and read by Edmund Pries, Wilfrid Laurier University*

Imagine this: 500 students in a lecture hall lining up and, using elbows as bases and hands as phosphate molecules, creating one giant double-stranded DNA molecule. It must be quite a sight. If you ever hear students talk about such an experience you know that they were likely the fortunate students of Dr. Fiona Rawle at the University of Toronto in Mississauga (UTM). They were fortunate because Dr. Rawle is a passionate teacher whose enthusiasm for the field of biology inspires her students for the subject. They were likewise fortunate because Dr. Rawle is a teacher who believes in fostering critical thinking among her students and using active engagement in her teaching methodology to help students truly understand the subject matter. Dr. Rawle is a true pedagogue – for her the material has its greatest value when it is understood and adopted by the students as their own academic challenge. This is why she emphasises, as she says, the “process, rather than the product, of science.” Students who understand the process are more readily eager to participate in it.

Dr. Rawle also has an impressive publishing record. She is, for example, the lead author and editor of both the First and Second Canadian edition of CAMPBELL Biology. She has researched and published for the Society of Teaching and Learning, she has led many curriculum mapping initiatives – and regularly mentors colleagues and helps them to become better teachers. Her scholarship is extensive, but her enthusiasm and passion for pedagogy, and her generous sharing of pedagogical insights with others, is the reason we are here today.



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Dr. Rawle's students recognize this. Michael Dizingala, a former student, points out that Dr. Rawle's teaching methods are "always targeted at empowering students." For example, one of Dr. Rawle's creative teaching assignments was to have "each student edit their disease topic's Wikipedia page" – that is, the disease they were assigned to study for the course. Former students, however, never fail to mention Dr. Rawle's "contagious enthusiasm" and her "incredible passion" while, at the same time, lauding her creative and successful active learning techniques. Dr. Rawle's colleagues are equally effusive in their praise. After reading Dr. Rawle's file and listening to her students and colleagues, I am pleased and honoured to be able to add thereto.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Fiona Rawle as a 2017-2018 OCUFA Teaching Award recipient.