2020-2021 OCUFA Teaching and Academic Librarianship Awards

Citation for Dr. Micah Stickel

OCUFA

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

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At the core of Dr. Micah Stickel's teaching philosophy is the idea that listening and careful consideration of all students is necessary to create an effective learning experience. Pairing that with his belief that to excel as an educator one must be introspective about one's teaching and inquisitive about the process of learning and you have a professor who has made and continues to make a huge impact well beyond the classroom, across the university campus and into the community.

It is clear that Micah's commitment to student learning and inclusivity starts well before the first day of classes. As one of Micah's former students noted, "His excitement and warmth for the engineering community made me feel included and welcome as a first-year student. His annual "welcome poem" for students during Orientation Week Matriculation was also memorable." Micah's dedication to first year students is clearly evident in the programs that he has initiated. One great example is the Guided Engineering Academic Review Sessions (GEARS) program, in which upper-year students mentor first-year students in effective study techniques and technical material through student-led tutorials and study sessions. In addition to supporting first year students, this program also allows upper year students to develop their own leadership skills and strengthens student networks well beyond graduation. Micah also developed the APS100 Orientation to Engineering course to help first-year engineering students transition into university, better understand the impact of their learning on their future as engineers, and provide a safe space for reflection on their mental well-being . As one former student noted, "I can say that through the course, Professor Stickel had a significant impact on my transition into university (especially considering I am an international student) and even more than three years later, what I learned in the course still helps me be a better engineer."

Micah's work also extends well beyond the classroom. Through his advocacy work and in partnership with informal grassroots group of students, staff, and faculty, significant changes have taken place within the Faculty regarding equity and inclusion. Two key examples, of which they are many more, include Micah's involvement in creating an EDI Office within the Faculty of Engineering, and his co-founding of the Engineering Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Group (EEDIAG), of which he is now co-chair. And through his outreach efforts, he regularly engages with northern and remote Indigenous communities, and he runs free community-based programming for elementary students in priority neighbourhoods.

Micah's commitment to students is inspiring. By providing students with the opportunities for active learning, he strives to keep them engaged. And by creating an inclusive learning environment, he gives them a sense of belonging. As one former student expressed, "If any

person was born to be a teacher in the full sense of that word, it is Micah Stickel. In every interaction with him it has been clear that the students, and their education, come first and – if needed – that he will turn the entire world on its head just to ensure that the students maximally benefit."

Congratulations to Dr. Micah Stickel, recipient of the 2020/2021 OCUFA Teaching Award.