

**2012-2013 OCUFA TEACHING AND
ACADEMIC LIBRARIANSHIP AWARDS
CITATION FOR WINNER DR. LORRAINE JANZEN KOOISTRA**

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Prepared and read by Patti Ryan, York University

It is with great pleasure that the OCUFA Teaching and Academic Librarianship Awards Committee presents a 2012-2013 Teaching Award to Dr. Lorraine Janzen Kooistra, Professor of English at Ryerson University.

Dr. Janzen Kooistra has the unique distinction of having taught at every level of the Ontario educational system, from elementary school to master's courses at Ryerson. Combining this vast classroom experience with an accomplished record of scholarship in Victorian literature and culture, she has emerged as a leader in the area of Digital Humanities pedagogy. Although her scholarly gaze is firmly rooted in the 19th century, her pedagogical accomplishments have blazed a trail for 21st century scholars and students working in Digital Humanities, and, as one supporter notes, "she has been instrumental in establishing Ryerson's English Department as one of the more ground-breaking and dynamic sites of innovative humanities instruction in the country."

Dr. Janzen Kooistra's teaching practices are grounded in her belief that students are producers, not merely consumers, of scholarly knowledge. All of her courses and assignments are designed to provide students with unique opportunities to gain confidence as writers and creators, and reflect her sustained commitment to the philosophy of "thinking through making." In her popular 2nd year course, "Fairy Tales and Fantasies," students curate their own course-related digital exhibits of rare children's books which are preserved in Ryerson's Children's Literature Archive. Students in her 3rd year Victorian Literature course build digital exhibits on their individually developed topics, many of which are published on venerable scholarly platforms such as NINES (the Networked Infrastructure for Nineteenth-century Electronic Scholarship). Through these assignments, students gain first-hand experience with the



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process of peer review and publication, and begin to understand, as one student writes, “how their work has meaning and purpose beyond the classroom.”

Dr. Janzen Kooistra’s accomplishments in curriculum development are equally impressive. Her nominator draws particular attention to her pivotal role in establishing Ryerson’s BA in English in 2011, and notes that the program was launched “in large part to Dr. Janzen Kooistra’s years of leadership in the English Department on curriculum development, renewal and reimagining.” In addition to leading the development of the two foundational courses for this degree, Dr. Janzen Kooistra was a member of the team that developed Ryerson’s unique M.A program in the Literatures of Modernity, a distinctive graduate degree that combine traditional research with a dynamic practicum placement.

Members of the Ryerson community have benefitted enormously from Dr. Janzen Kooistra’s unwavering dedication to sharing her accumulated knowledge and expertise. As Co-Director of Ryerson’s Centre for Digital Humanities, she offers introductory workshops for faculty, and has partnered with the Ryerson Library to develop a series of workshops on using digital exhibition software. The letters of support from faculty colleagues testify to her extraordinary contributions in helping Ryerson to develop leadership in the area of digital pedagogy and innovative teaching, and she is regarded as “a powerful model and mentor.” A colleague summarizes her contributions to the campus by noting that she is “the epitome of the Ryerson spirit.” She extends her expertise beyond campus to the broader community of Digital Humanities scholars through her formal publications related to university teaching, and through her numerous paper presentations, keynote addresses, and workshops.

Dr. Janzen Kooistra is, in the words of a faculty colleague, “precisely the kind of education leader the OCUFA Teaching Award is meant to celebrate.” The Committee concurs wholeheartedly with this assessment, and offers its most sincere congratulations on this honour.