Congratulations to our 2020 Teaching Awards in Psychology recipients

July 10, 2020
by Queen's Psychology

Congratulations to the 2019-2020 Teaching in Psychology award recipients! Dr. Valerie Kuhlmeier received the Graduate Teaching Award in Psychology, Dr. David Hauser received the Undergraduate Teaching Award in Psychology, and PhD student Simone Cunningham was awarded the Teaching Assistant Prize in Psychology.

Dr. Valerie Kuhlmeier

Dr. Valerie Kuhlmeier taught PSYC 853 Infancy as an experiential learning project. Valerie and her students researched and wrote an open access textbook entitled Infancy that can serve undergraduates and health care professionals, as well as provide a foundation for other, primary source readings for graduate courses. Each student surveyed existing Psychology curricula across Canada, and then wrote a chapter and peer reviewed other chapters. The team applied for Queen’s funding for Open Educational Resources, and with the funds will complete the final editing and illustrations for the book in the summer of 2020.

“The course was great fun to teach! The eight students and I had a project to work on together as a team,” Dr. Kuhlmeier explains. “Along the way, we had to delve into current and historical theory and research on infant development — and hone our writing and teaching skills — in order to create an effective textbook”.

Students commented that Dr. Kuhlmeier promoted relevant literature discussions but also contributed to their professional development with the idea of writing an undergrad textbook. Many expressed that Dr. Kuhlmeier's course took a novel approach to teaching at the graduate level, providing them with hands-on learning through an opportunity to research, write, and edit at the academic level, and bolstering their CVs in the process.

**Dr. David Hauser**

Dr. David Hauser’s goal when teaching is to connect everything to real life as much as he can. He considers himself very fortunate in that the courses he teaches (Social Psychology and Judgment and Decision-Making) lend themselves very well to real life application.

Dr. Hauser feels that the more that he can get students to see these concepts happen out “in the wild”, the more learning opportunities and interest he can create.

“What I enjoy about teaching is just getting the opportunity to blow minds twice a week. It’s fun to see a concept really resonate with someone for the first time. I’m very happy about the award”, Dr. Hauser muses. “I celebrated by taking my dog on a long hike”.

Students commented that Dr. Hauser was an engaging lecturer who truly loves what he teaches, and that he is very genuine, makes lectures interesting, is always available to chat and shows that he really wants his students to be successful!

Part of Dr. Hauser’s appeal is that he is engaging and cares about his students. He is always genuinely excited to be in class everyday. “Dr. Hauser made the material so interesting. He was always available to help and wanted us all to succeed. Overall, he was the best prof I’ve ever had.”

“Dr. Hauser deliberately taught about stereotype threat before the exam to help reduce its effect on minority students. The way he taught about racism and sexism was so aware and considerate”, wrote one student. “He was kind and understanding whenever students talked to him one on one. He was willing to help students in a variety of ways, including writing letters of recommendation when he had no obligation to. All in all, he made that class something to look forward to, and I know the entire class felt the same way”.

**Simone Cunningham**

Simone Cunningham is a PhD 3 student in the Clinical Psychology program. She was the head Teaching Assistant for PSYC 302, and a marking TA for PSYC241. Simone’s academic research focuses on whether different forms of childhood maltreatment and adversity lead to changes in stress sensitivity and reward responsivity, and how these effects might be related to depressive symptoms and anhedonia.

"I am very excited to receive the Psychology Teaching Assistant Award this year”, Simone says. “I try to take a student-centred approach to teaching that encourages independent thinking and
problem-solving, and I love having the opportunity to watch students grow and learn throughout the semester."

Simone’s students were impressed with how she helped them both in-class and outside of classroom hours, commenting that Simone was always willing to go above and beyond to help out her students. “Simone met with me whenever I needed, answered all my emails and just provided constant help”, one student explained. “She went above and beyond with helping me and she truly made an impact on me. I wouldn’t have excelled in research methods without her help, kindness and guidance. She is an amazing person and I think she deserves this award!”