Four Professors Honored for Excellence in Teaching and Mentoring

University Communications
March 2018

Four UA professors were recognized for excellence in teaching and mentoring at the annual Awards of Distinction ceremony on Monday.

The awards are presented by the Office of the Provost, the Honors College, the Graduate College and the GIFT Center at the University of Arizona Foundation.

The honorees are:

**The Margaret M. Briehl and Dennis T. Ray Five Star Faculty Award**

**Edgard Ore-Giron**
Instructor, Department of Spanish and Portuguese

Ore-Giron's ability to connect with students and encourage growth helped earn him the award. He teaches Arts and Politics of Latin America and has a strong interest in comparative Andean and Mexican literature. His passion for the languages and cultural experiences of people in Latin America is evident in his teaching, as is his passion for helping students grow and learn, according to student nominations, which also stated that he encourages his students to overcome their fears and face mistakes.

The award comes with a $1,000 prize.

**Graduate and Professional Education Teaching and Mentoring Awards**

**Aleksander Ellis**
Professor, Department of Management and Organizations, and Stephen P. Robbins Chair in Organizational Behavior

**Ronald Breiger**
Regents' Professor, School of Sociology

The Graduate and Professional Education Teaching and Mentoring Awards honor faculty who excel in their teaching and mentoring of graduate students.
Ellis, who has worked at the UA since 2003, is also research director at the Center for Leadership Ethics. He managed the doctoral program in management at the Eller College of Management from 2006-2011, and also served as the program’s director of graduate studies, making major improvements in the program. In just the past three years, Ellis has taught five different graduate courses, usually three or four per year, in a variety of formats, including seminars, condensed one-week seminars and online.

Breiger joined the UA faculty in 2000. He holds affiliate appointments in the School of Government and Public Policy and in the Graduate Interdisciplinary Program in Statistics.

Breiger was selected for the award, in part, for the amount of research funding he has provided to graduate students. He also has co-authored 14 publications with students, and his mentoring helped produce 29 publications that were authored solely by students. Breiger's colleagues estimate he has mentored and supported more than 40 percent of all graduate students in the sociology program.

The award includes a $2,500 prize.

**The University of Arizona Foundation Leicester and Kathryn Sherrill Creative Teaching Award**

**Michael Kothke**  
Associate professor of practice, School of Architecture

This award recognizes excellence in the art of teaching at all levels but especially the undergraduate level.

Kothke began at the UA in 2006. As coordinator of the introductory foundation studio, he transformed the milestone that students must pass to enter the school's professional program, which helped lower student attrition rates. He also helped spearhead an effort to address concerns of graduates entering the workforce.

Kothke runs the award-winning practice HK Associates Inc. and is the UA’s liaison to the Architectural Experience Program, the national internship program required for professional licensure, and has coordinated the College of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture's internal internship program. He has helped influence collegewide educational practices and helped the school's two degree programs earn near-perfect rankings by the National Architectural Accrediting Board.

The award includes a $2,500 prize.

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