Education is not the filling of a bucket but the lighting of a fire – WB Yeats

The ANU College of Law Excellence in Education Awards are dedicated to all College teachers.

The Awards recognise and celebrate the teachers who guide, inspire, motivate and facilitate learning who have been nominated by students and staff.
In 2015, staff and students from any program in Law were invited to nominate any teacher in the College for an Excellence in Education Award. All academic staff at the College, full-time, fractional, continuing, contract, on-campus, online, teachers, tutors and supervisors, were eligible for nomination.

Staff could be nominated by students or colleagues. Nominations opened on 2 October and closed on 22 October. Nominees then had the opportunity to write a response to the information provided by their nominator(s) before the selection committee met on 4 November. This was a very tight turnaround for all.

This year yielded 32 nominees eligible for consideration. A further 23 names were put forward. These were mostly not accompanied by text or the nominee withdrew. This was a bumper crop and indicates that many of our teachers are held in high esteem by students and colleagues alike.

The Selection Committee relied heavily on the information provided in the nomination forms. Nominators were encouraged to provide as many concrete details and stories as possible to illustrate how their nominee was outstanding in education. These made for very interesting reading, but too much for this publication! This booklet contains excerpts of nominator statements for the winners and a list of all who were nominated.
Dear Esteemed Colleagues,

Congratulations on being nominated for a 2015 College Education Award. Students and/or colleagues have written glowingly of your skill in teaching and inspiring them. You are obviously doing something (or many things) right!

Thank you for engaging, explaining, evoking, inspiring, calming, empathising, creating, working, being approachable and supportive, breaking down complexity, encouraging, developing, providing feedback, holding high standards, mentoring . . . and all of the other many things you do to deserve nomination.

In admiration,

Molly O’Brien
Director, Teacher Development
ANNE MACDUFF

Award for Teaching Excellence
Feminist and Critical Legal Theory; Animals and the Law; Comparative Law and Theory (Alabama Exchange Program)

I have found that my courses with Anne have challenged my own thinking, and explored concepts with considerable nuance and complexity.

Anne has fostered critical thinking and academic rigour in her students.

Anne has creative ways to motivate and inspire students to learn and build up their self-confidence. She encourages students to creatively respond to theoretical material, including (the use of) poetry, plays and artworks.

Anne was a great support in helping me and my classmates understand the theory and practice of comparative analysis. Anne was approachable and consistently gave helpful feedback, such that I am now a much more confident researcher.

Anne creates a safe environment for students to share ideas and make mistakes so that they can improve.

She seeks not to supply students with answers, but ask questions that will spark insights that are increasingly sophisticated and nuanced.

Anne has an unparalleled commitment to not just teaching course materials, but also teaching skills that have empowered me (and my peers) to come to my own conclusions and articulate my own ideas.

“Respect for diversity is at the heart of Anne’s teaching, encouraging students to celebrate their individuality while fostering their learning.”
PRUE BINDON

Award for Excellence in Tutoring
Lawyers, Justice and Ethics; Foundations of Australian Law; Torts

- Prue provides students with pertinent context for the raw material to be covered in tutorial, revealing its broader relevance which in turn has a motivating effect.
- She uses personal stories very effectively as a means of contextualisation. These include humour and reveal shortcomings. She demonstrates that failures need not be feared and will contribute to development.
- Recognises that students do not all learn in the same way – explaining something verbally, providing something visual and (if possible) pointing to the concept in the reading.
- The feedback given on the first take home exam allowed me to feel more confident and do much better on my following torts assignment.
- She explained everything in detail and made clear what the key points to take away were.
- Validating individual perspectives is an important part of boosting their confidence and resilience. She is respectful when she disagrees.

“The only bad thing is she never once ended class on time: but that’s because she never rushes through if we (students) don’t understand.”
DOMINQUE DALLA-POZZA

Award for Excellence in Supervision
Honours Supervision

Dom impresses upon her students that what we are doing in an honours thesis is writing an early version of an article that we might hope to submit for publication in an academic journal.

Dom conveys her passion for research to the next generation of scholars through her supervision which encouraged me to consider undertaking further research.

Dom was excellent at assessing the coherence of the arguments I put forward, rather than for me parroting her own views.

Constructive and positive feedback.

Level of contact helps students to feel supported as they go about the complex, and in many ways unfamiliar, task of being creative in working through the research question.

Dom’s speed of turnaround of draft checking meant that I could remain focussed and enthused about my thesis.

Her level of interest was unparalleled. This kept me inspired.

“Surpassed all expectations that I had in terms of feedback, availability and positivity.”
MEG WOOTTEN

Award for Program or Service that Enhances Learning
Law PAL (Peer Assisted Learning)

> I have been deeply impressed with Meg’s commitment to the program and her ability to facilitate deep self-directed student learning.

> Meg has organised, planned and undertaken her PAL duties diligently, and in a manner which is always consistent with the programs goals. In other words, in a manner which has consistently empowered students to engage in self directed and quality learning.

> She has given the Law PAL program an integrity and rigor that is testimony to her unique skills and abilities.

> She has positively enhanced and influenced legal education at the ANU College of Law through her insight into ‘self directed learning and teaching’.

> A highly accomplished ability to bring the best out of students, academic staff and professional staff.

> Meg enhances the development of students as confident legal learners; enhances well-being and a sense of community and belonging, and develops students efficacy and confidence in their approaches to study.

> She also deserves recognition for her teaching in her own right, through her successful, conscientious and reflective training and coaching of the PAL mentor group.

“I always had a weird relationship with law and the law school, and PAL with Meg was a bright ray of sunshine in re-adjusting and putting things into perspective.” (student)
TOM FORAN

Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning
Convenor, Australian Migration Law

“For teaching the essential skills such as researching and applying the law to become a migration agent. He provides a valuable insight into what it looks like to be a migration agent.”

> I am sure I will not only become a competent migration agent, but also a patient and respectful agent.

> Tom displays an excitement with teaching and is clearly keen to ensure that all of his students have the tools and knowledge to be able to pass the course.

> Tom is a very supportive, patient and helpful teacher. Tom is student-focused when teaching, and always ready to answer our questions with great patience.

> He shows patience and willingness to help students out, making sure that we understand the topics being taught.
MOIRA MURRAY

Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning
Convenor, Civil Litigation Practice in the GDLP Professional Practice Core

“For her tireless efforts to engage with her students and Subject Mentors. She has instilled a culture of continuous learning, which provides all involved with a strong platform to strive to fulfill their goals and objectives.”

> Moira guides and instructs students through regular updates, empowering them to move outside the normal assessment mind frame.
> She motivates students to get excited about the study and practice of Civil Litigation Law.
> Moira exposes students to how a real civil claim might run and helps us to work out how to bring all the knowledge and skills we have as undergrads to bear on a clients’ legal matter.
> She tailors the learning to the needs of each team of students we work with.
SIMON RICE

Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning
Lawyers Justice and Ethics; Law Reform

“For giving students the scholarship skills they will need in their studies, such as critical thinking, research skills, reflective practice, respectful discussion and the ability to formulate and express defensible opinions. Simon makes students’ learning a challenging, shared journey of professional discovery and personal growth. He keeps alive the spark of justice the students had when they arrived at law school.”

> Simon makes sure that as a member of his teaching staff I am always turning my mind to new angles.
> His commitment to the ideals of educating for social justice is inspirational.
> He creates opportunities in the students’ learning for both challenge and change.
> Simon has taken a well-calculated risk in designing a course that forces students to think outside the square and to be intensely reflective—of the law, of the legal profession and of being law students. This is not a comfortable place for many students but it is in that lack of comfort that lasting influence, motivation and inspiration is truly found.
NOMINEES FOR 2015

Pauline Bomball
Michelle Boutin
Alex Bruce
James Davis
Natalie Dawson
Helen Duncan
Anneka Ferguson
Christie Gardiner
Ryan Goss
Dorota Gozdecka
Judith Harrison*
Khahn Hoang
Anthony Hopkins
Judith Jones
Elizabeth Keogh
Jessica Kinsella
Molly O'Brien
Lisa O'Hara
Erdinc Ozyurek
Mateja Rautner
Pauline Ridge
Heather Roberts
Helen Rodriguez
Cam Roles
Kerry Sommerville-Brown
Peta Spender
Mary Spiers Williams
James Stellios
Pamela Taylor-Barnett*
Dilan Thampapillai
Shalini Vellapandian
Barry Yau

*denotes joint nomination

The following were nominated but either withdrew or no supporting text supplied.

Selena Bateman
Laura Cameron
Megan Caristo
Radhika Chaudhri
Moeen Cheema
Louise Clegg
Nigel D Robbie
Alan Freckelton
Christina Gille
Sarah Heathcote
Amy Kilpatrick
Wendy Kukulies-Smith
Kala Mulqueen
Hitoshi Nasu
Joshua Neoh
Molly O'Brien
Jane Powell
Heather Roberts
Donald Rothwell
Wayne Sharwood
Michael Tarlowski
Brett Walker
Sarah Wardell
Thank you to all those involved in the ANU College of Law Excellence in Education Awards process. It is wonderful to highlight and celebrate the talent of our teachers.

Special thanks to the Selection Committee—Molly O’Brien (Chair), Heather Roberts, Tony Foley, Wayne Morgan, Yvonne Wisbey (CEIST representative), Michael Martin (ANU Promoting Excellence, external representative).

Thanks to Deborah Crossing, College Executive Officer for secretariat services to the Selection Committee.

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