

NEWS RELEASE



1911-2011 | Wilfrid Laurier University

For Immediate Release
April 2, 2012 | 057-12

CONTACT

Mercedes Rowinsky-Geurts, Professor
Wilfrid Laurier University
519-884-1970 ext. 2835 or mrowinsky@wlu.ca

Kevin Crowley, Director, Communications & Public Affairs
Wilfrid Laurier University
519-884-0710 ext. 3070 or kcrowley@wlu.ca

Laurier professor awarded the 2012 OUSA teaching award

WATERLOO – Mercedes Rowinsky-Geurts, a professor and associate dean of students in Wilfrid Laurier University's Department of Languages and Literatures, is the recipient of a 2012 Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) Award for Teaching Excellence.

This award recognizes educators who go above and beyond the textbook to inspire their students to learn. It is awarded annually to professors from each of OUSA's member campuses as selected by students as examples of teaching excellence.

"This award is well-deserved recognition of Mercedes' extraordinary dedication to her students and her passion for teaching," said Pat Rogers, Laurier's associate vice-president, Teaching and Learning. "It is especially significant that winners of this award are nominated and chosen by students and that Laurier faculty have been among the winners of this award for each of the past 4 years."

Rowinsky-Geurts, who specializes in contemporary Spanish and Spanish-American literature, has won numerous awards for her teaching, including the prestigious 3M National Teaching Fellowship, the Wilfrid Laurier University Outstanding Teaching Award, and a Faculty Mentoring Award.

In her 18 years as a professor at Laurier, Rowinsky-Geurts has influenced the lives of hundreds of students who have enrolled in her Spanish language and literature classes, and Mediterranean culture courses. She is also well known for her memorable workshops and presentations, and her research is recognized worldwide.

"This award was a complete surprise," said Rowinsky-Geurts. "It is very special to me because it comes from the students, who are the main partners in the learning process. I can be as efficient as I try to be in the classroom, but if I don't have a connection with the students, it would be pointless to be there."

Rowinsky-Geurts uses digital storytelling to help teach language to her students, who relate a personal story in Spanish.

"When you watch these stories of the experiences our young students have already had in their lives, it's transformative. And they are doing it in a new language," said Rowinsky-Geurts. "I find Laurier is ahead of the game in so many ways regarding the quality of education, and I feel honoured to be part of that."

The OUSA teaching awards will be presented April 4 in Toronto.