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## Laurier announces recipients of 2017 teaching excellence awards

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University has recognized six teachers for their significant commitment to elevating the educational experience of Laurier students. Five are recipients of Laurier’s Faculty Awards for Teaching Excellence, which celebrate early career excellence, sustained excellence, teaching innovation, and excellence in internationalization. Laurier also recognizes this year’s recipient of the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) Award for Excellence in Teaching, who was selected by students.

Recipients of Laurier’s 2017 Awards for Teaching Excellence include:

- Early Career Excellence:  
**Richelle Monaghan**, Department of Health Studies (Public Health) and Biology (full-time category).
- Sustained Excellence:  
**Tristan Long**, associate professor, Department of Biology (full-time category) and **Debra Nash-Chambers**, Faculty of Arts, Liberal Arts, and Human and Social Sciences (part-time category).
- Innovation in Teaching:  
**Shoshana Pollack**, professor, Lyle S. Hallman Faculty of Social Work (full-time category).
- Excellence in Internationalization, new category introduced in 2017:  
**Ali Zaidi**, associate professor, Department of Global Studies, (full-time category).

Laurier’s recipient of the 2017 OUSA Award for Excellence in Teaching:

- **Scott Gallimore**, assistant professor, Department of Archaeology and Classical Studies.

“The award adjudication team faced really difficult decisions with many great nominations,” said Kathryn Carter, associate vice president: Teaching and Learning. “We learned, in elaborate detail, about the amazing things that are happening in classrooms all over our institution. The award winners represent the best of who we are as teachers.”

### **Tristan Long, Biology**

Long, who has been at Laurier since 2010, is committed to innovative teaching approaches that make students participants in their own learning. He has cultivated an active learning environment, through highly productive research labs and inventive evaluation approaches, which aims to inspire students to pursue a career in the biological sciences and better understand the living world around them.

“One of the things that I love about Laurier is the strong commitment to effective teaching practices,” said Long. “I have benefited from our great community of educators who have provided invaluable support and inspiration for the development of my courses.”

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### **Debra Nash-Chambers, Faculty of Arts, Liberal Arts, and Human and Social Sciences**

Nash-Chambers has taught courses in history, political science, North American studies and criminology at Laurier for the past 12 years. Her teaching, which is highlighted by an enthusiastic commitment to community-engaged pedagogy and the development of [community service-learning](#) courses that promote high-impact teaching practices, has had a positive effect across all of the departments that she has worked with. Nash-Chambers encourages student achievement through mentoring and embraces experiential learning opportunities for her students.

"The award is tremendously gratifying because the nomination was initiated by my students," said Nash-Chambers. "It confirms that my students value our shared educational experiences as much as I value teaching and mentoring them."

### **Richelle Monaghan, Health Studies and Biology**

Monaghan, who has been at Laurier since 2012, is known for being an excellent instructor committed to high-impact practices and a willingness to go beyond expectations to develop engaging learning experiences for her students. She was a leader in establishing a science program at Laurier Brantford and setting up the William Nikolaus Martin Chemistry and Biology Labs. Monaghan was recently awarded the 2017 Gail Jenkins Teaching and Mentoring Award from the Human Anatomy and Physiology Society.

"I am grateful for this recognition especially among such talented and dedicated educators. I also consider myself privileged to teach and mentor the incredible students we have at Laurier," said Monaghan.

### **Shoshana Pollack, Lyle S. Hallman Faculty of Social Work**

Pollack, who has been at Laurier since 2000, has had an international impact through developing the Walls to Bridges program, which creates learning communities linking incarcerated and non-incarcerated students. Her teaching is characterized by a unique ability to foster reflexive engagement with course content and to facilitate a transformational process within students. Pollack has had an impact on students at Laurier as well as the Grand Valley Institution for Women through her innovative programming.

"Developing the Walls to Bridges program has been the highlight of my teaching career so far," said Pollack. "I am so grateful to the Walls to Bridges students whose commitment and enthusiasm has made this transformative educational opportunity extremely rich and rewarding."

### **Ali Zaidi, Global Studies**

Zaidi, who has been at Laurier since 2006, exemplifies internationalization in his teaching, his administrative roles, and as a colleague to faculty members and a mentor to students. He is also co-coordinator of Laurier's Muslim Studies Option. Zaidi organizes key public events on international issues involving scholars from across the world, and includes an evidence-based approach in his teaching. His goal is for students to be open to multiple perspectives without becoming lost in the diversity of views. Amidst this diversity he cultivates students' abilities to act with purpose in the world as leaders and decision-makers.

"I'm honoured to be the first recipient of Laurier's Award for Teaching Excellence in Internationalization, and I'm grateful to my colleagues and students for believing in and supporting my role as a teacher," said Zaidi. "The world we live in arouses fear, anxiety and pain, but also hope, beauty and joy; my teaching on internationalization strives to come to terms with both these aspects of the global human experience."

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### **Scott Gallimore, Archaeology and Classical Studies**

OUSA's Teaching Excellence Award recognizes educators who excel at unlocking the potential of Ontario's young people. Undergraduate students at Laurier nominated Gallimore based on the passion and energy he brings to the classroom. He encourages students to think critically, and provides opportunities for collaboration and hands-on learning by organizing annual experiential learning field trips to archaeological sites in Greece.

"I am honored and humbled to receive the OUSA Excellence in Teaching Award," said Gallimore. "I am continuously inspired by the students at Laurier and feel privileged to receive this type of recognition for my teaching in and out of the classroom."

The 2017 teaching award recipients will receive their awards at upcoming convocation ceremonies. They will be honoured at a reception May 26 at 11:45 a.m. in the Hawk's Nest. Staff, faculty and students are invited to attend, where they can enjoy a light luncheon, and hear from this year's recipients and stories about the lasting impact of teaching excellence on the student learning experience. An invitation will be sent to the Laurier community later in April. Those interested in attending are asked to [RSVP](#) by May 16.

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