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After 10 years of teaching, political science professor will retire at the end of the semester



Gardner-Webb had a farewell reception in honor of Kuchinsky's 10 years of service on Monday, Nov. 2. Photo by Isaiah Johnson.

By: Ellen Laws

Associate Professor of Political Science, Michael Kuchinsky, will be retiring and returning to his family in Maryland at the end of this semester.

"For six and a half years, I have been battling stage four cancer. This was one of my primary decisions to retire. Plus, I get to go home to my family," said Kuchinsky. "I live in Washington D.C., and my family lives in Maryland. The commute has been a challenge, but it's been worth it in order to teach at this school."

Kuchinsky has spent the last ten years at Gardner-Webb teaching political science from a global perspective. He is also the founder and advisor for Gardner-Webb's Model NATO and Model Arab League programs.

When Kuchinsky accepted his job at Gardner-Webb, he knew that this would change his family's life. However, Kuchinsky has been in constant contact with his family throughout the years, and his family has been supportive while Kuchinsky has taught at Gardner-Webb.

Junior Marissa Richardson took Kuchinsky's honor's section of Global Understanding, one of the available options for fulfilling Gardner-Webb's general education undergraduate requirements. Though Richardson majors in American Sign Language, Kuchinsky's class had an impact on her.

"After taking his class, I started being more involved with the news and following news websites like CNN. I learned so much from his class," Richardson said. "His class allowed me to be a more responsible, well informed citizen. The university will miss Dr. Kuchinsky because he is a hard-working man, and he is devoted to teaching students."

In addition to his role as associate professor of political science at Gardner-Webb, Kuchinsky is also an ordained minister. He attended seminary and earned a Masters of Divinity at Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, Ill.

"I have the possibility to do supply preaching during my retirement. This means that I would come in on a Sunday and fill in for the original pastor whether he's sick or on vacation," Kuchinsky said.

Once retired, Kuchinsky also wants to devote time to other hobbies such as photography and painting, his preferred avenues for personal expression.

"I started painting roughly around the time my battle with cancer began. Before the cancer, painting was a newly acquired skill," Kuchinsky said. "Now that I'm retiring, I get to start painting again and finishing up projects."

Kuchinsky said that during his time at Gardner-Webb, he has acquired many treasures—"the respect of colleagues, the delight in others' formation and cherished friendships."