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AWARDS

Gardner-Webb Excellence in Teaching Award Chosen by Deans, Faculty, Students and Staff

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON OCTOBER 13, 2021



Dr. Abby Garlock Praised for Connecting with Students and Innovative Approaches to Difficult Concepts

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—A Gardner-Webb University assistant professor known for her inventive teaching, encouraging manner, and clear expectations has been honored with the 2021 Excellence in Teaching Award. Dr. Abby Garlock in the Hunt School of Nursing was presented the award recently along with a \$1,000 cash prize. Established at GWU years ago to recognize, foster, and stimulate teaching excellence, this award identifies faculty members who are making a lasting impact on their students through their dedication, creativity, innovation, service, and their ability to transform lives.

Candidates are nominated by deans, faculty colleagues, students or members of the staff. Nominees are screened by a committee of faculty peers and selected on the basis of their energy, keen interest in students, and extraordinary strengths in the craft of teaching.

As he presented the award, Provost and Executive Vice President Dr. Ben Leslie noted that Garlock's nominators recognized her remarkable ability to connect with students at all levels of education, from the undergraduate to the doctoral level. "As stated by one of her students, she 'somehow has a way of making difficult concepts easier for us to understand,'" Leslie shared. "Students consistently describe her as fair, prompt, and clear in her expectations."



Garlock has been teaching full time at Gardner-Webb since 2012. An assistant professor of nursing and doctoral programs chair, she received her Master of Science in Nursing and Doctor of Nursing Practice at Gardner-Webb, her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Winston-Salem State University, and Associate Degree in Nursing from the Foothills Nursing Consortium.

“I am honored and humbled to have received this award,” Garlock stated. “Thank you to all my amazing students and colleagues for nominating me. I teach because I love helping my students learn to meet the challenging demands of the current healthcare environment. I enjoy helping our undergraduate nursing students learn to critically think about complex situations with compassion and insight, and I enjoy helping our graduate nursing students become scholars and servant-leaders who are making a difference in our communities.”

Garlock has clinical practice experience in medical-surgical, newborn, pediatrics, obstetrics, and labor and delivery. She is a Lamaze Certified Childbirth Educator (LCCE) and a member of the Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses; North Carolina Perinatal Association; Lamaze International; and Sigma Theta Tau International Honors Society in Nursing. She and her husband, Brandon, a graduate student in the M. Christopher White School of Divinity, live in Shelby, N.C., with their two children, Phineas and Penelope.

Leslie added that Garlock’s nominators further praised her innovative approaches to teaching. “Over the years, she has developed and implemented many activities such as the EKG relay race, mind mapping with GI concepts, the Caring for Endocrine patients group activity, and my personal favorite, Hematological Bingo,” he described. “These activities not only enhance students’ learning experiences, but allow them to apply their knowledge in a safe environment. She has a unique way of building the confidence of her students, while developing them as competent and capable nurses.”

He read these additional comments from students:

- “The professor did a great job at providing feedback in a timely manner. The feedback was thorough and detailed, which showed she truly took the time to review the work and send it back promptly. She was easy to communicate with and provided opportunities to meet when needed. I have really enjoyed learning with this professor.”

- “The instructor is an amazing example and always provides excellent feedback. I trust her consistency, wisdom, and guidance.”
- “The professor was an amazing teacher for this class. She is very knowledgeable, sweet, fair, and caring to all of her students. I met with her in the beginning of the semester when I hadn’t been happy with my grade and she was extremely helpful and encouraging and made me feel like she had confidence in me, which is all that any student could ask from a professor. She’s wonderful!”
- “She is amazing. This class is very, very difficult but she makes it possible to pass.”

Previous Excellence in Teaching Winners

- 2015—Dr. Joseph Webb, Communications
- 2016—Dr. Benjamin Coates, World Languages
- 2017—Mr. Robert Moore, American Sign Language
- 2018—Mr. Jay Zimmer, Biology, Math/Science
- 2019—Dr. Bruce Moser, Music

Gardner-Webb University is North Carolina’s recognized leader in private, Christian higher education. A Carnegie-Classified Doctoral/Professional University, GWU is home to six professional schools, 14 academic departments, more than 80 undergraduate and graduate majors, and a world-class faculty. Located on a beautiful 225-acre campus in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb prepares graduates to impact their chosen professions, equips them with the skills to advance the frontiers of knowledge, and inspires them to make a positive and lasting difference in the lives of others. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.