

**ASSOCIATION OF ATLANTIC UNIVERSITIES
AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING
2009
DISTINGUISHED TEACHING AWARD
DR. ETIENNE CÔTÉ**

Dr. Etienne Côté teaches Veterinary Cardiology at the University of Prince Edward Island's Atlantic Veterinary College. For Dr. Côté, teaching veterinary medicine has as much to do with training good communicators and compassionate practitioners as it does with the science of animal physiology. He says he is always conscious that truly good health care providers must be aware of the "unspoken curriculum of compassion and communication with colleagues, staff, and an animal's human family."

One of Canada's foremost experts in Veterinary Cardiac Medicine, Etienne is deeply concerned to connect his classroom to the world. He operates by analogy, modeling in his attentive and respectful attitude to his students the kind of behavior he hopes these future veterinarians will learn. Three hundred and fifty-eight new veterinarians – and their patients – are the better for it.

Most impressive is the stable of innovative strategies he has adapted or invented to engage his students and help them understand the material. No matter their learning styles, his students benefit from his quest to find engaging instructional strategies. From the post-it note version of the Stop/Start/Continue midterm check-in to "Cardiology Jeopardy," "Cardiology Karaoke," and a board game for Board Exam preparations, he is always searching for ways to help his students master the very difficult and important material he is responsible for teaching.

So when he was bothered by the 'disconnect' for third-year students between their classroom learning and real veterinary practice, he adapted a format from one of his own professors to offer biweekly "Cardiac Grand Rounds." Now crowds of faculty as well as enthusiastic students attend, and the sessions bring these future veterinarians into the smell of hay and horses for a real experience of disease recognition and diagnosis. His award-winning textbook, *Clinical Veterinary Advisor: Dogs and Cats*, a record-setting best seller at a recent North American Veterinary Conference, ensures that his influence extends beyond the UPEI campus.

Dr. Côté is the recipient of the Pfizer-Carl J. Norden Distinguished Teaching Award, the Merial Award for Excellence in Clinical Teaching, and the Janet Pottie Murray Award for Educational Leadership. UPEI is very proud that his dedication and scholarly approach to the classroom have been recognized with the AAU Distinguished Teaching Award.