

**ASSOCIATION OF ATLANTIC UNIVERSITIES
AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING
2001
DISTINGUISHED TEACHER AWARD**

BRENT MACLAINE

Brent MacLaine has established himself as one of the most respected and effective teachers at the University of Prince Edward Island. Recognized repeatedly by students and colleagues as a consistently excellent and dedicated teacher, Brent MacLaine has won both the UPEI Award for Excellence in Teaching and the UPEI Student Union Faculty of the Year Award.

Brent MacLaine's approach to teaching empowers and enthuses students. He is constantly searching for new ways to engage and stimulate students and to help them achieve their potential. Attentive to his own development as a teacher and to his students' needs, he makes learning an exciting, enjoyable and natural process for his students and shares his insights into effective teaching with his colleagues.

Using a Team Learning approach, a student-centred, instructor-guided method of teaching that ensures that students are both prepared to learn and actively participate in their education, Brent MacLaine challenges students to alter their habitual ways of thinking and rewards preparation and critical thinking rather than rote learning. According to one student, this combination of lecture and small group and classroom discussion is "essentially what a liberal arts education is all about, and few professors are able to foster these skills with the success that Dr. MacLaine manages."

Students consistently rate Brent MacLaine as one of the best teachers they have encountered and his student ratings clearly mark him as one of the most outstanding teachers at UPEI. They comment on his "extraordinary sensitivity for the concerns of students", a hallmark of his classrooms. "Anyone who knows Dr. MacLaine knows that he loves to teach. You can see it in his face, you can hear it in his voice. You can visit him in his office at any time; you can phone him at home. In sports you have a *players'* coach, Dr. MacLaine is a *students'* professor."

A leader within his Department, Brent MacLaine is one of the most active participants in events organized by the UPEI Senate Committee on the Enhancement of Teaching. He has also been the creator and driving force behind the development of the Professional Writing course, which was originally conceived as a course for Business Administration students. The course has evolved, under Brent MacLaine's capable stewardship, into a workplace and professional writing course that appeals to students across the campus, and is one of the success stories of the University's transformation into a writing-centred campus.

Using all the skill, imagination and resources available to him, Brent MacLaine creates a situation in which students can achieve their best. True to his own teaching philosophy, he balances his love of teaching and of the discipline with the need for learners to take responsibility for teaching themselves. He is a most worthy recipient of the 2001 Association of Atlantic Universities Distinguished Teacher Award.