



ASSOCIATION OF ATLANTIC UNIVERSITIES  
ASSOCIATION DES UNIVERSITÉS DE L'ATLANTIQUE

*Award for Excellence in Teaching*  
*2013*  
*Distinguished Teaching Award*

**DR. BRADLEY CROSS**

Dr. Bradley Cross, an Associate Professor in the Department of History at St. Thomas University, believes that his most successful courses are ones in which he draws attention to what the class, including himself, doesn't know or might not be able to know. He explains that this approach provides "a common goal of asking good questions and sorting out possible pathways to learning the answers to these questions". As a result he and his students learn as a collective through many non-traditional techniques and environments. Given the unplanned directions such an approach can take, teaching can entail a lot of risk but Brad Cross defines good teaching as a dynamic process that requires "a combination of preparation and intuitive response to the unexpected".

To increase student motivation and their understanding of difficult-to-grasp abstract concepts, Brad provides many opportunities for students to study history outside the classroom, to partner with historical organizations, and to demonstrate their learning by preparing public exhibitions that benefit the entire community. Local museums, sites of historical significance, and even trips to New York City provide rich contextual and experiential learning opportunities that bring history alive. A student who nominated Dr. Cross for the award noted, "His outside-the-classroom trips to study history have been as well orchestrated as his classroom sessions and have proven to be some of the greatest learning experiences of my time in university."

Brad has also fostered collaborative learning communities with other history faculty and with faculty in Fine Arts and in Science and Technology Studies. These linkages enrich the students' understanding of the relevance of history to other disciplines. Despite introducing all these risks into what could be an otherwise stable, 'regular' learning environment, student feedback is enormously positive. Brad's courses are an excellent illustration of the benefit of employing non-traditional teaching techniques and of taking risks in a framework of organization, preparation, and ongoing self-reflection.

Brad is an engaged faculty member. He has developed and offered 17 new courses, supervised 24 honors students, mentored 14 students preparing conference presentations, and has contributed to the development of his colleagues with presentations on teaching and by mentoring new faculty. He received the St. Thomas University Instructional Leadership Award in 2008 and in 2012, the John McKendry Memorial Teaching Award.

His students and colleagues agree that Dr. Bradley Cross is indeed, a worthy recipient of the 2013 Association of Atlantic Universities' Distinguished Teaching Award.