



ASSOCIATION OF ATLANTIC UNIVERSITIES
ASSOCIATION DES UNIVERSITÉS DE L'ATLANTIQUE

Award for Excellence in Teaching
2018
Distinguished Teaching Award

DR. GEOFF RIDEOUT

For Dr. Geoff Rideout's mechanical engineering students and colleagues in the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science at Memorial University, it's obvious that Geoff loves to teach. While wearing in-line skates, he throws a bag of cement to demonstrate how conservation of motion will propel him backwards. Using a foam pool noodle and a cordless drill, he demonstrates shaft whirl. He asks students to predict how far ice will be thrown from the blades of a wind turbine and to verify the police report concerning the speed of a vehicle in a traffic accident in which he was involved. Using techniques such as these, Geoff makes mechanical engineering concepts clear and relatable, and motivates student to solve real and challenging engineering problems.

Because the workaday world of an engineer is not black and white, as many early engineering courses would suggest, Geoff assigns research and design projects that are open ended and without a single right answer. Students are challenged to apply concepts from the current and earlier courses and they must use the modern computational tools used in industry, consider public welfare, work collaboratively, and clearly communicate the operation and utility of their mechanism as would an engineer in the actual workplace. In a letter of support, a former student confirms "his teaching prepared me for the real world and my current career at McKinsey and Company, where I must rely on my knowledge and that of my peers, to create reasonable assumptions and develop solutions to complex problems."

Not only does Geoff love to teach, he is committed to becoming the best teacher he can become and to providing students with the best possible learning experience to help them reach their potential. Since his days as a graduate student, Geoff has participated in teaching development events and he uses educational theory and research to maximize student engagement and learning. Believing that students need him most when they practice applying their new knowledge and skills, Geoff has used the "flipped lecture" approach with great success. He has significantly revised several Mechanics courses and has worked with colleagues who teach first-year courses to reach agreement on learning outcomes and share teaching and learning resources. As the Director of First-Year Engineering, faculty advisor for Memorial's Baja team, organizer of a student peer mentoring program, developer of a new method for teaching multi-body dynamics, and presenter at academic conferences on engineering education, Geoff influences teaching and learning in engineering far beyond the wall of his own classroom. Geoff Rideout is an extraordinary educator and a most deserving recipient of the Association of Atlantic Universities' Distinguished Teaching Award.