



ASSOCIATION OF ATLANTIC UNIVERSITIES  
ASSOCIATION DES UNIVERSITÉS DE L'ATLANTIQUE

*Association of Atlantic Universities*  
*2012*

*Anne Marie Mackinnon*  
*Educational Leadership Award*

**DR. HEATHER SPARLING**

Dr. Heather Sparling is a tireless academic leader who is innovative, energetic, and committed to excellence. Since her arrival at Cape Breton University (CBU) in 2005, she has been a true advocate for educational development. The Dean of the School of Arts and Social Sciences at Cape Breton University, a strong supporter of Dr. Sparling's award nomination, notes that Heather has influenced the school and the entire institution in "diverse and significant ways."

Heather's work in program and course development is awe inspiring. In her first few years at CBU she led the way in establishing a concentration in Celtic culture, and a minor and a certificate in Ethnomusicology within the Bachelor of Arts degree. Furthermore, Heather worked collaboratively with colleagues to develop a total of 17 new courses to service these innovative programs. Most recently, Heather spearheaded a proposal for a four-year music major in the Bachelor of Arts Community Studies degree.

In addition to her impressive work in course and program development, Heather serves as both mentor and model to her colleagues throughout the university. She facilitates workshops through the Centre for Teaching and Learning and co-facilitated the University Teaching Program in 2011, a program that provides an opportunity for intensive faculty development. Heather is also responsible for initiating the popular *Teaching Squares* program at CBU and for introducing her colleagues to the *Ideas, Connections, and Extensions* (ICE) approach to assessment of student learning. Serving as a consultant for the Teaching, Learning, and Evaluation Committee of Senate, Heather played a key role in the development of a new standard student course evaluation for CBU. She was also instrumental in drafting the proposal for CBU's successful bid to host STLHE 2013 and is one of the co-chairs for the conference.

Heather's authentic leadership style draws strength from her continuous reflection on her own teaching practice and efforts to be more effective in the classroom. She participates in educational development sessions offered through the Centre for Teaching and Learning at CBU and has presented her Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at regional and national conferences.

The CBU community recognized Heather Sparling's extraordinary contributions by awarding her the 2011 Cape Breton University Instructional Leadership Award. In recognition of her outstanding achievements, the Association of Atlantic Universities has named Heather Sparling as recipient of the 2012 Anne Marie Mackinnon Educational Leadership Award—a fitting tribute to her ongoing leadership in educational development.