



ASSOCIATION OF ATLANTIC UNIVERSITIES
ASSOCIATION DES UNIVERSITÉS DE L'ATLANTIQUE

Award for Excellence in Teaching
2021
Distinguished Teaching Award

DR. KAILIN WRIGHT

Inspiring, engaging, genuine, aware, confidence-building, trusting—words Dr. Kailin Wright's students use to describe her and her teaching.

Using a varied approach to teaching, Dr. Wright, a professor in the English Department at St. Francis Xavier University since 2012, has been inspiring her students through unsettling inherited stories; listening to diverse voices; extending learning outside the classroom; close-reading the world around us; and enacting positive real-world change. The former Chair of her Department shared: "Kailin has been a voice for Canadian and Indigenous literature on campus ... Students leave her classes informed about and engaged with broader issues of our nation's history and culture, and of the conflicts and issues produced by that history."

Dr. Wright's five-pronged approach to teaching is supported by an overarching objective to have her students understand and question the events, acts, and narratives that reinforce a dominant power structure and normative identity. As one of her former students wrote "Dr. Wright consistently helps students develop critical, in-depth analyses of texts. Her classes do not consist of lectures but explorations of the works we study, and she encourages students to lead that exploration."

Demonstrating the importance of students learning from a wide range of voices, Dr. Wright arranges for classroom visits from poets, novelists, playwrights, and scholars to share their feminist, racial, Indigenous, and queer experiences. Further, Dr. Wright intentionally includes local artists in her syllabi to further enhance the experiences and provide opportunities for her students to develop their literary and research skills.

Dr. Wright, a Canadian literature and performance scholar, extends her teaching beyond the classroom and into the community. Students are actively engaged in this teaching and learning process as they are involved "in all aspects of the performance (acting, stage management, dramaturgy/playwrighting)" as noted by one of Dr. Wright's colleagues in her letter of support when describing *This is For You, Anna*, a Canadian play that Dr. Wright directed and she and her students updated (with the playwright's permission) in light of the #MeToo movement for Theatre Antigonish. This play, the panel discussion, and other events hosted by Dr. Wright brought together students, faculty, and staff from across the university as well as members of the community to discuss the ongoing problem of sexual assault on campus.

Given her pervasive efforts at engaging students beyond the written word, connecting to the world around them and the many deep issues of inequity that prevail, and her ability to lead students to embrace the discomfort and to use what they learn to unite with others to make a difference, the Association of Atlantic Universities recognizes Dr. Kailin Wright with the 2021 Distinguished Teaching Award.