Committee on Distinguished Teaching  
Annual Report to the Riverside Division  
May 22, 2003

To Be Adopted:

The Academic Senate Committee on Distinguished Teaching recommends Professor Roger Ransom (History) and Professor Leah Haimo (Biology) as the recipients of the Distinguished Teaching Award for 2002-2003. Both recipients richly deserve this recognition for their passionate and inspiring teaching of undergraduate and graduate students.

Professor Roger Ransom:

Professor Ransom, writes a former colleague, “is brilliant, brimming with energy, generous, and utterly committed to his students.” He is also a celebrated scholar of economic history who has just been elected as the president of the International Economic History Association. For over three decades, Professor Ransom has been a devoted and successful instructor offering courses at all levels of the curriculum. He has never been content with teaching the same classes or with offering courses in the same way. He enthusiastically volunteered to teach regular sections of World History in the largest lecture halls. Often, students comment that they approached this required course reluctantly only to be transformed by Professor Ransom’s enthusiasm, knowledge, and commitment.

Professor Ransom has experienced even more success in his upper division courses, especially in his specialty the American Civil War. These classes fill to capacity. Students report how passionate he is about the material and how dazzling his powerpoint presentations are especially his intricate analyses of the economy and his ability to make the maps come alive. A student noted that “his enthusiasm for history was infectious.”

Professor Ransom has been a dedicated mentor for graduate students as well. He served as the graduate advisor for many years and offers core seminars for the program in American History. Graduate students praise his wide range of interests and his support of them as they grapple with difficult and controversial issues. His doctoral students marvel at the ease with which he makes sense of complex data and the support they receive through the process of writing dissertations.

Professor Ransom is a gifted and enthusiastic teacher and is most deserving of the Distinguished Teaching Award.
Professor Leah Haimo:

Professor Haimo is a dedicated teacher who is committed to all levels of instruction and who has been a constant inspiration to her students and colleagues. She offers a large lecture course in biology for non majors as well as the required introductory course for majors. She regularly teaches an upper division class in cell biology and she created a laboratory based course in cell and molecular biology. In the words of one of her colleagues: “Professor Haimo is the very best and most inspiring teacher I have ever seen and she has served as a teaching mentor to many faculty in the Biology department. She has a wonderful and consistent record of dedication to students in the classroom and laboratory.”

Students in Professor Haimo’s courses loudly echo these sentiments. Undergraduates cite her energy and enthusiasm, and comment on her high standards. Many express how grateful they are that she pushed them to achieve their best. Students who work in her laboratory admire her patience and clarity. Graduate students praise her rigor in the laboratory and her commitment to her research and to them. Over the course of her career at UCR, Professor Haimo has taught huge numbers of students and their comments reveal that she has had an enormous impact on their lives.

Professor Haimo’s dedication to teaching and students takes her outside the UCR classroom by working in outreach. She also served as the undergraduate advisor in Biology and currently is the Vice-Chair of Biology and Director of the Graduate Research in Cell, Molecular, and Developmental Biology.

Professor Haimo is a dynamic and innovative teacher who richly deserves the Distinguished Teaching Award.

R. A. Cardullo
J. W. Childers
E. A. Nothnagel
S. Rose
S. V. Salinger, Chair