

COMMITTEE ON DISTINGUISHED TEACHING

NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2016-2017 DISTINGUISHED TEACHING AWARD

The Committee on Distinguished Teaching is pleased to nominate two outstanding, award-winning educators as co-recipients of the 2016-17 Distinguished Teaching Award.

Professor Gregory Beran

Professor Gregory Beran joined the Chemistry Department in 2007 and has been instrumental in incorporating computational chemistry into teaching in the department. He is widely known for making some of the hardest chemistry classes accessible to students, and students consistently praise him for being “one of the best professors in one of the hardest classes” they have ever had.

Professor Beran recognizes that there is a wide diversity of learners, and that no single technique reaches every student. He has therefore developed a teaching approach that incorporates many different styles and pedagogical tools, including traditional lecturing, making use of the “flipped classroom”, extensive supplemental handouts, online videos, interactive Mathematica worksheets, and the integration of computational chemistry in his classes with a system that allows students to use research-grade computational chemistry tools through their web browsers.

Professor Beran teaches undergraduate service courses, upper-division, and graduate courses. His curriculum innovations include a complete overhaul of the quantum chemistry class, CHEM 113, and developing from scratch a popular graduate computational chemistry class, CHEM 206A, which many graduate students consider the most useful graduate course they took at UCR. Dr. Beran is also active in committees that seek to use technology to improve the pedagogy on campus, and he serves as graduate advisor in his department. He was named the 2010-2011 Professor of the Year from the UCR University Honors Program. He is active in numerous broader education and outreach activities, both locally, and nationally.

It is clear from the many student letters and his consistently high teaching evaluations that Dr. Beran’s “blended learning” approach to teaching has been widely successful, and that his passion for communicating his knowledge has “created the stimulating environment that [students] hoped college would be.” He is also “viewed as a leader in [the Chemistry] department among the faculty in terms of how to model excellence in teaching at all levels.” Dr. Beran is richly deserving of the Academic Senate Distinguished Teaching Award.