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**Honours**

# USC recognizes four with highest teaching honour

BY JASON WINDERS

**FOR MANY STUDENTS**, these four people stand at the head of the class.

Computer Science PhD candidate Jenna Butler, Political Science professor Peter Ferguson, Biology lecturer Tom Haffie and Engineering professor Quazi Rahman were recently awarded the 2014 University Students' Council Award of Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching.

Sponsored by Alumni Western, the award demonstrates the value Western students place on quality teaching and outstanding professors. The winners have dedicated a significant amount of time to enhance classroom learning, and have inspired their students through their passion and care.

This year, students nominated more than 200 instructors representing every faculty and affiliated college.

All nominees were evaluated by the Teaching Awards Committee, comprised of 25 student volunteers, who spent numerous hours evaluating some of Western's finest instructors. In total, 99 classes were individually evaluated, and more than 220 hours were spent on determining the award recipients this year.

**JENNA BUTLER**  
Computer Science PhD candidate

Jenna Butler exemplifies what it really means to care for students. Currently a PhD student in the Department of Computer Science, she is in the process of completing a thesis on simulating cancer growth to explore new treatment options. She has spent the past nine years living, working and going to school at Western and is honored to have received this award from the students to whom she has devoted so much of her graduate career.

"Not only has she helped me develop a genuine interest in Computer Science," wrote one nominator, "but she is able to use lecture hours to not only instruct, but engage students in learning as well."

"She always makes sure that every student gets the help they need even if it's outside of office hours," a second nominator wrote. "She also is so enthusiastic about Computer Science and always tries to make lectures and assignments fun."

**PETER FERGUSON**  
Political Science professor

In the classroom, Peter Ferguson constantly attempts to engage students in a discussion and remind them what they are learning actually has relevance to their lives.

"He has inspired me (and a few of my other colleagues in the class) to further my education into the graduate level on the same subject," a nominator wrote. "If anyone is worthy of this award it is, without a doubt, Professor Ferguson."

"Professor Ferguson comes to class every day with a passion for teaching that makes going to class easy and fun," a second nominator wrote. "He wants all of his students to succeed and holds high - but realistic - expectations of his students."

**TOM HAFFIE**  
Biology lecturer

Tom Haffie has helped large numbers of Western students learn Biology since 1985. Among other things, he has coordinated first-year Biology, helped bring clickers to Western classrooms and, this year, introduced a new third-year Biology course, *Education in Life Sciences*.

"In this course, Tom trusts students with a lot of freedom - even to the point of designing the course itself," one nominator wrote. "He also introduces students to new experiences, new ideas. He even challenges students to change the world - literally, that's the final project."

"He is extremely passionate about what he does and that's why he teaches in such a unique way," a second nominator wrote.

**QUAZI RAHMAN**  
Engineering professor

Clearly passionate about teaching, Quazi Rahman captivates his students with humour and shows the utmost concern for their understanding with individualized attention. An infectiously enthusiastic professor, it is no surprise he has been named to the USC Teaching Honor Roll for the past seven years and consecutively nominated for the USC Teaching Award since 2011.

"He is able to present computer programming in a way that is beautifully simple, yet remarkably effective," one nominator wrote.

"He cares more about his student success than any other teacher I have met so far," a second nominator wrote, "and I am glad to have had him for first-year programming."

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**WHEN:**  
Monday, May 26, 2014 | 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
*Light refreshments to follow*

RSVP to Lauralee at 519-661-2557 by May 22 as seating is limited.

Further presentations to come on June 4 and 18.  
www.garygorham.com

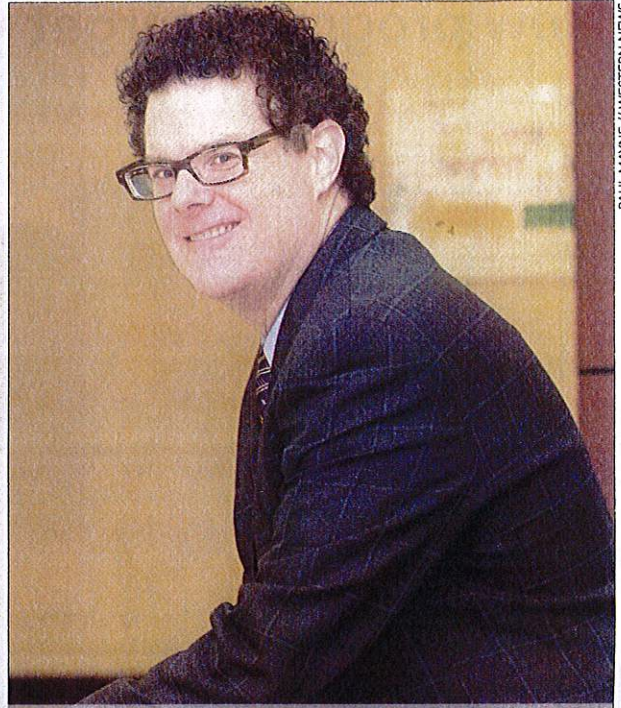
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Biology lecturer



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