

# Winners of fall 2015 WSU First-Year Seminar Awards

The First-Year Seminar Awards on March 10, 2016, recognized eleven special award recipients honored for their work in fall 2015 First-Year Seminars (FYS) at Wright State University. Photos of “Fysie” recipients can be viewed on [wrightstate.smugmug.com](http://wrightstate.smugmug.com). Peer mentor Hunter Cregger participated in a spring internship with a CPA firm and was held captive by tax season until after April 15. As shown below, First-Year Seminar Award recipients are:



## Standing:

- **Betsie Turner, Peer Mentor**, Doug Saul Award for Excellence in First-Year Seminar Instruction with Kim Stephens
- **Kim Stephens, Staff**, Doug Saul Award for Excellence in First-Year Seminar Instruction with Monica Ratliff and Betsy Turner
- **Monica Ratliff, Peer Mentor**, Doug Saul Award for Excellence in First-Year Seminar Instruction with Kim Stephens
- **Dan Dakin, Staff**, Outstanding Collaboration with Wiz Sugiarto
- **Dr. Nicole Carter, Faculty**, Outstanding Faculty Commitment to First-Year Seminars
- **Nicole Loy, Staff**, Holly Jackson Award for Outstanding Innovation in Co-Curricular Activities

## Seated:

- **Amanda Spencer, Staff**, Outstanding Classroom Innovation with Hunter Cregger
- **Harolynn Williams, Staff**, Outstanding Classroom Innovation
- **Dr. Christa Agiro, Faculty**, Outstanding Faculty Commitment to First-Year Seminars
- **Wiz Sugiarto, Staff**, Outstanding Collaboration with Dan Dakin

## Inset:

- Catherine Queener, Director of First-Year Programs, presenting certificate to Hunter Cregger
- **Hunter Cregger, Peer Mentor**, Outstanding Classroom Innovation with Amanda Spencer
- **Amanda Spencer, Staff**, Outstanding Classroom Innovation with Hunter Cregger

## **Celebration of 16 Years of WSU First-Year Seminars**

Wright State University observed an historic moment for the first-year seminar awards program at Wright State University this spring, as presenters transformed the 16th annual “Elsies,” short for Learning Communities Awards, to the 1st annual “Fysies,” short for First-Year Seminar Awards.

About recipients and award categories:

### **Doug Saul Award for Excellence in Learning Community Instruction**

A staff / peer mentor team were the 2015 recipients of the Doug Saul Award for Excellence in Learning Community Instruction. **Kim Stephens** taught an exploring UVC 1010 for students undecided about major, with assistance from peer mentors **Monica Ratliff and Betsie Turner**. This instructional team’s extensive efforts helping students learn about majors of interest plus career options and take part in several Raider traditions like attending athletic, diversity, and common text events resulted in the very highest student evaluation results.

- This category recognizes FYS instructors who excel in several areas and who serve as models of very effective instruction. Very effective FYS instruction includes:
  - Strong integration of FYS goals into the class,
  - Noteworthy service to FYS students,
  - Strong academic focus, content, and challenge,
  - Strong ratings on student evaluations,
  - Achievements of note in other categories, such as innovation in teaching, co-curricular activities, and collaboration
  - Strong connections between the seminar and a linked core course, when linked
  - Fostering a strong sense of community among FYS students

The awards were presented to Stephens, Ratliff and Turner by Tutoring Center Director Jennifer Lobo, who began the 2015-16 academic year as Coordinator of First-Year Programs.

### **Holly Jackson Award for Outstanding Innovation in Co-Curricular Activities**

**Nicole Loy** was the winner of this year’s Holly Jackson Award for Outstanding Innovation in Co-Curricular Activities. By involving a first-year seminar for nursing students in activities such as how to insert a catheter, insert an NG tube, and check pulse rates in various parts of the body using patient simulators, she fully immersed new students in all aspects of their intended major. Dr. Deborah Ulrich presented the award.

- The Holly Jackson Award category includes field trips, class projects that complement linked core courses, service learning, and similar activities. The category focuses mainly on out-of-class activities and experiences.

### **Outstanding Classroom Innovation award**

**Harolynn Williams** raised WSU student awareness of the issues of first generation and under-represented school children by inspiring her first-year seminar class to take on a pen pal project. In three separate exchanges, WSU students introduced themselves, learned about the fifth graders, and gave advice about being successful in school. College of Science & Mathematics Interim Dean Kathy Engisch presented the award.

### **Outstanding Classroom Innovation award, continued**

Staff instructor **Amanda Spencer**, assisted by peer mentor **Hunter Cregger** truly built a community and addressed additional aspects of college with a time budgeting system, a “best v. worst” email communication competition, a sexual health & alcohol safety trivia game, and team-building exercises and yoga instruction through Campus Recreation. Dr. Arijit Sengupta presented the awards to Spencer and Cregger.

- This category includes innovations which integrate technology into FYS, including use of multimedia, email discussions, etc. It also includes all other new and/or creative activities and strategies related to enhancing the teaching/learning experience. The category focuses mainly on in-class experiences and related work.

### **Outstanding Collaboration award**

Staff instructors **Dan Dakin** and **Wiz Sugiarto** formed an Academic Affairs / Student Affairs dream team and provided new students with an exceptional first semester. Collaborative partners included the professor of the students’ linked Finance class, staff from the Raj Sooin College of Business, Dunbar Library, and Housing. Residence Life & Housing Director Dan Bertso presented the award to Dakin and Sugiarto.

- This category include collaboration between different colleges, between Academic and Student Affairs, between the FYS instructor and linked core faculty, between instructors of different FYS, and between the FYS instructor and various organizations, both on and off campus. The collaboration may involve development or revision of a learning community and /or planning FYS events or projects.

### **Outstanding Faculty Commitment to First-Year Seminars**

**Dr. Christa Agiro** provides multiple ways for first-year students to understand diversity -- and she helps talented returning students become peer mentors. She speaks in peer mentor trainings, faculty development, and First-Year Student Distinction Award events. College of Education & Human Services Dean Joseph Keferl presented Dr. Agiro’s award.

**Dr. Nicole Carter** received the **Outstanding Faculty Commitment to First-Year Seminars** award for teaching the seminar themed Black Students and Leadership. She inspired her class early on, changing student perspectives and relationship to learning with an ethics of care-based class. In course evaluations, students overwhelmingly recommended this instructor to next year’s new students, and about half of them also enrolled in Dr. Carter’s spring term Intro to Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies course. Dr. Herb Dregalla presented Dr. Carter’s award.

- This award recognizes faculty teaching a FYS or university course linked to a first-year FYS. Their significant/active role in the FYS’s experiences exemplifies a commitment to first-year students and FYS goals. Examples include class visits, joint field trips, and collaborations & consultations regarding course materials or activities.

Please join us in congratulating these dedicated First-Year Seminar instructors and peer mentors!

Catherine Queener, Kim Stephens, & Mindy Louderback

First -Year Programs, University College

