

# **Vision, Innovation, Practice**

2016 Teaching Excellence Awards

*Vision, Innovation, Practice* highlights the 2016 winners of the University of South Carolina's most prestigious teaching awards. The faculty members profiled here — who represent departments across the University of South Carolina — are recognized as the best among us in their dedication to fostering student learning and success.

This year we are especially proud to announce the inaugural winners of a new teaching award, the Garnet Apple. Sponsored by the Office of the Provost and the Center for Teaching Excellence, the Garnet Apple recognizes exceptional faculty members who have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to best teaching practices and a proven record of developing innovative teaching approaches in their respective fields. The 2016 Garnet Apple winners have creatively applied methods as time-honored as case studies and as state-of-the-art as flipped classrooms.

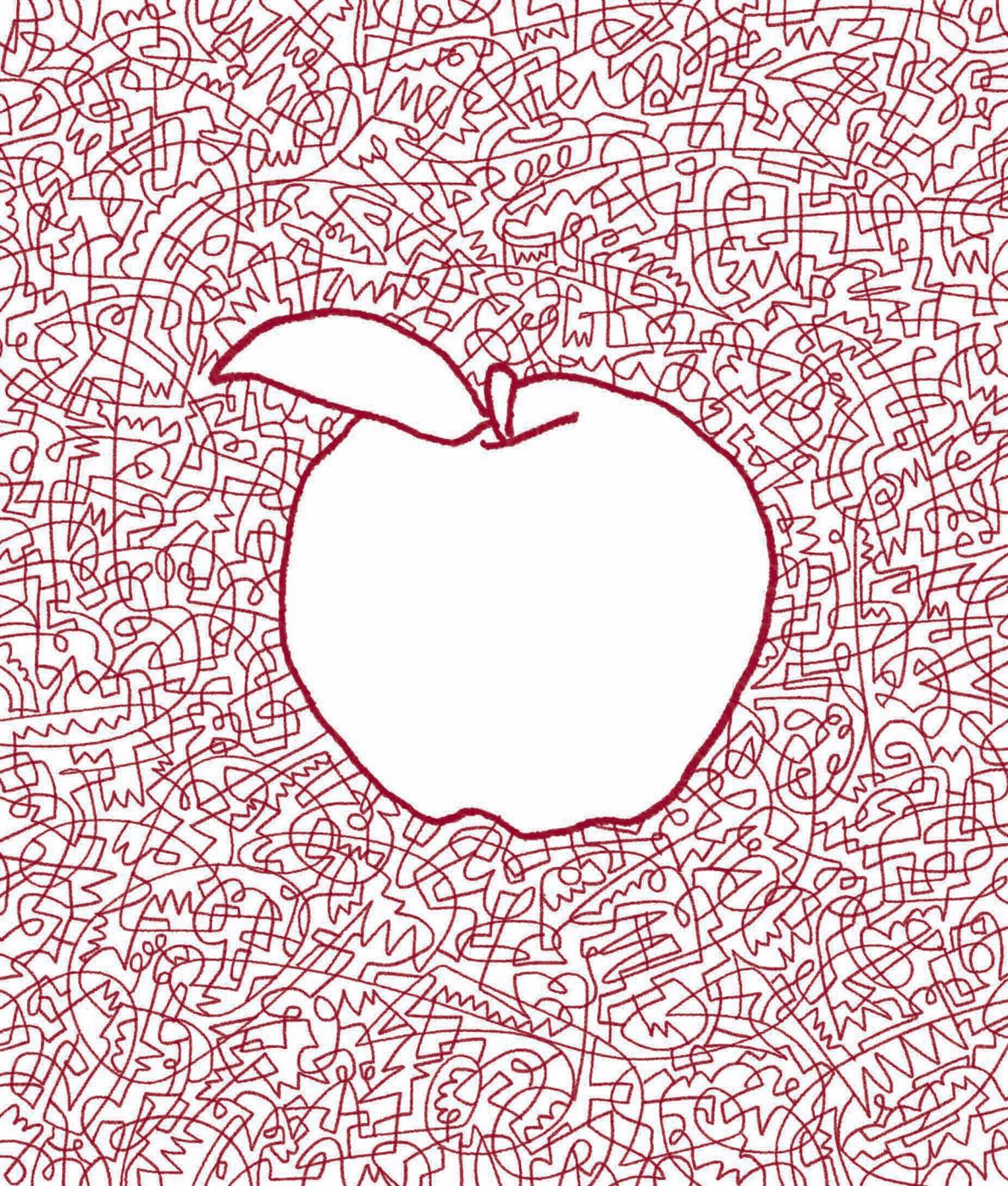
All of the faculty members represented here are building national and global reputations as teachers whose work in the classroom is grounded in distinguished research and deft application. Congratulations to all of our 2016 Garnet Apple, Mungo, Clinical Teaching, John J. Duffy and USC Education Foundation Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant award winners.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Gabel'.

**Joan T.A. Gabel**

Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost



## Garnet Apple Award

The Garnet Apple award honors exceptional faculty members who demonstrate a commitment to best teaching practices and an ongoing record of developing innovative strategies to enhance student learning in their courses.

## Tena B. Crews

### Garnet Apple Award

Professor, associate dean of diversity and operations  
College of Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management

Tena Crews has wanted to be a teacher ever since she had a teacher. “When I was in kindergarten, I wanted to be a kindergarten teacher. In the first grade, I wanted to be a first grade teacher. And in the second grade ... I see a pattern,” says Crews. “I eventually went to college, so I wanted to be a college teacher.” Crews is also director of online learning and development and program chair for the college’s Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies degree. Her research focuses on innovative techniques for teaching online, effective online course design and improving the student learning experience. She enjoys helping others become more comfortable teaching and learning in online and face-to-face classrooms. “Just as students can improve how they learn and focus on what they learn, we, as faculty, can improve how we teach and what we teach,” she says. “When students see the connection between the course content and the real world, the ‘light goes on’ and it’s energizing to watch and be a part of the transition.”





## Lara Ducate and Judith Kalb

### Garnet Apple Award

Associate professors, Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures  
College of Arts and Sciences

Along with creating an innovative comparative literature class together, Lara Ducate and Judith Kalb share something else: Since childhood, both wanted to be teachers. “I always liked to play school,” Ducate recalls. “One of my first memories is nursery school, teaching another kid how to tie his shoes,” Kalb says. Ducate, an associate professor of German and applied linguistics, and Kalb, an associate professor of Russian and comparative literature, used a grant from the Office of the Provost to create a first-year online comparative literature course titled Values and Ethics in Literature. It’s the university’s only course that simultaneously satisfies the two Carolina Core requirements of aesthetic and interpretive understanding and values, ethics and social responsibility. Students explore ethical themes from several literary traditions — among them Russian, American, Irish and Chinese — and react to the material through analysis and critique and by writing blog entries that connect class readings to their own experiences. Kalb’s passion for literature and Ducate’s expertise in pedagogy and technology came together to create the course — “a great meshing of our disciplines and expertise,” Ducate says.

## Brianne Dunn

### Garnet Apple Award

Associate professor, S.C. College of Pharmacy

When Brie Dunn traded her hard hat and steel-toed shoes for a Pharm.D. degree, she did more than change careers from laboratory chemist to clinical pharmacist. Becoming a pharmacist put her on the path to teaching, something she had never pictured herself doing until joining the pharmacy faculty at Carolina six years ago. It was unfamiliar terrain, but she quickly sought out resources such as the Center for Teaching Excellence and other colleagues to gain a better understanding of educational philosophy. “Students say I have an ability to explain things in an easy-to-understand fashion. Sometimes, I might explain it six different ways so that everyone understands,” she says. Dunn’s love for technology led her to use educational technology tools that present students with case scenarios, testing their pharmaceutical knowledge and decision-making skills. “I also create games for them so they can challenge themselves and test their knowledge. I like to engage them in active learning,” she adds. Dunn divides her working time between the pharmacy college and Palmetto Health Richland, where she works as a clinical pharmacist in cardiology. Two different pharmacy students accompany her each month — providing yet another teaching opportunity.





## Allison Marsh

### Garnet Apple Award

Associate professor, Department of History  
College of Arts and Sciences

For learning beyond the traditional classroom, look no further than Allison Marsh, director of USC's public history program, whose forays into the virtual world bring an added dimension to online learning. "There's been a big push to experiment with classes online," says Marsh. "I went in a little bit of a skeptic." But she's now a believer. Consider Material Culture in a Digital Age, a course Marsh developed following a fellowship at the Smithsonian Institution. She designed the course around the Smithsonian's digital initiatives, then analyzed her students' experiences with Smithsonian website videos, photos and 3D images. "The course itself became a research project about online learning," Marsh says, "about how my department can create online classes that challenge students to think." Marsh hasn't abandoned the real for the virtual, though. Last year she took graduate students to Guantanamo Bay, where they learned about the military presence the U.S. has had there since the late 19th century. "They had to question their own assumptions and preconceptions multiple times a day. They became much more conflicted as they discovered that things aren't so black and white as they might have thought. Well, that's what learning looks like."

## Caryn Outten

### Garnet Apple Award

Associate professor, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry  
College of Arts and Sciences

As a teacher, Caryn Outten achieves her greatest success when she passes on to biochemistry students an enthusiasm that comes to her naturally. “I like biochemistry because you can see how it applies to everyday life, how it’s relevant to health,” she says. “It’s really interesting to understand how our cells work at a molecular level.” Harnessing technology and the flipped classroom model, Outten turns classroom time into an interactive experience heavily focused on clinical case studies such as the 1980s Tylenol cyanide poisoning incident. Breaking the class into small groups, students take on the role of medical examiners, deducing how symptoms develop from interruptions in biochemical processes. Outten uses short, pre-taped lectures available online to prepare students for the interactive problem-solving sessions. She had to convince the students, who were more accustomed to a lecture format, that the classroom was now essentially a homework problem session, but one that was more interactive than they were used to. “The reviews were great,” Outten says. “They love it. I think it makes them excited that they can use what they learn to solve a real problem.”



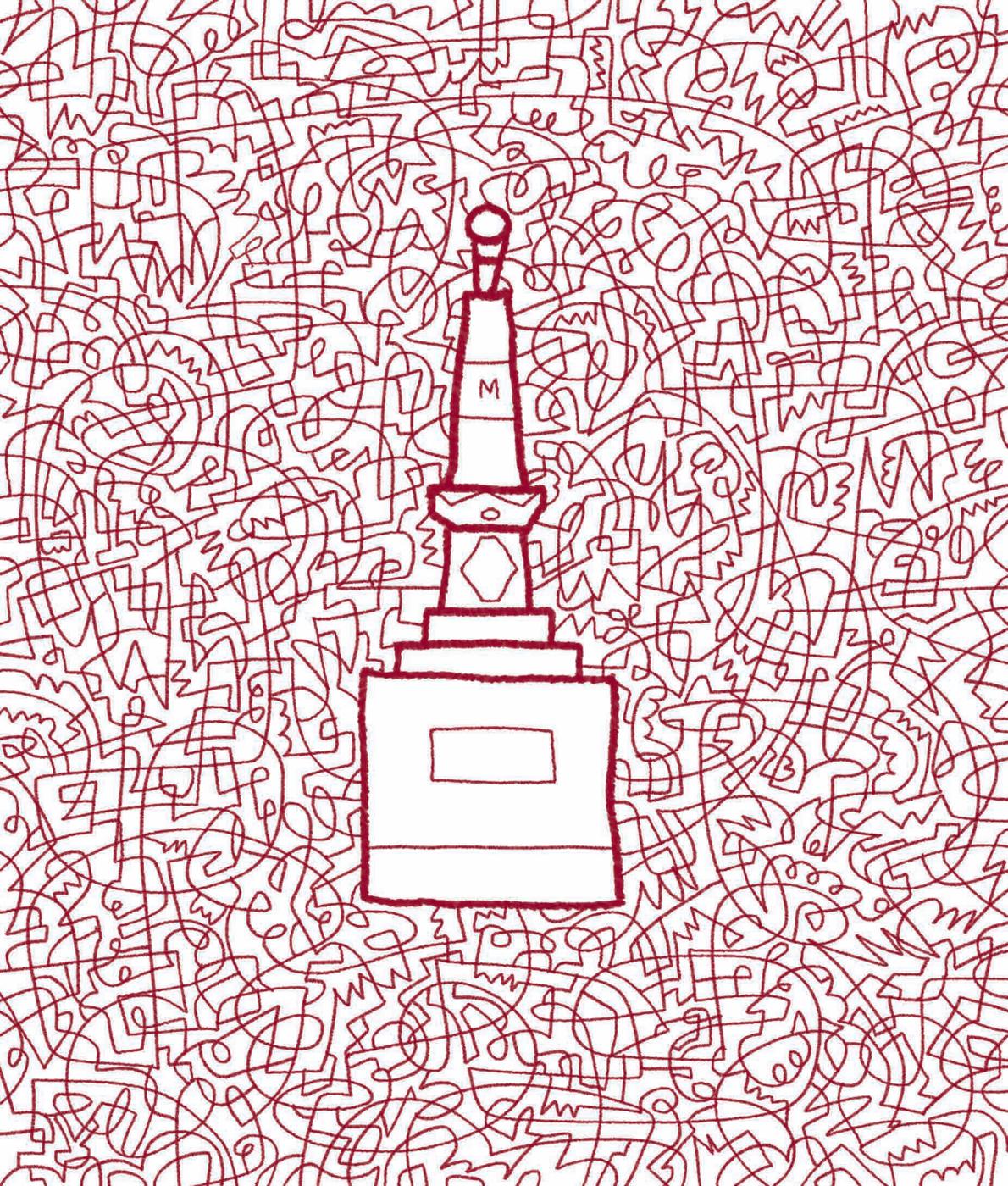


## Terry Wolfer

### Garnet Apple Award

Professor, College of Social Work

It wasn't until he started his career as a social work professor at USC that Terry Wolfer found a teaching approach that resonated with him and his students. He was a freshly minted Ph.D. graduate with little formal teaching experience when he arrived at USC in 1996. Michael Welsh, a now-retired education professor, introduced Wolfer to the case method, which uses real-life narratives to teach textbook concepts. "Mike showed me the decision case, a story that ends with a cliffhanger," Wolfer says. "The students have to formulate a preferred intervention by using their analytical and critical thinking skills, their knowledge of social work theory and research, and their common sense and collective wisdom." In 1999 Wolfer helped launch a capstone course for Master of Social Work students that revolves around the decision case. Students write a case analysis outlining the problem and how it should be resolved, then discuss the case in depth in class. "There are wrong answers, but there's no one right answer," Wolfer says. "Students are developing critical-thinking skills from this approach. They're learning to think from multiple perspectives, to be aware of their assumptions and to provide practical reasons for their decisions in an articulate way."



## Michael J. Mungo Teaching Award

The Michael J. Mungo Distinguished Professor award, Undergraduate Teaching award and Graduate Teaching award recognize faculty members who have a sustained record of excellent teaching. The awards were endowed by the late Michael J. Mungo, a USC graduate and Columbia businessman who served with distinction on the university's Board of Trustees from 1968 until his death in 2010.



## **Maria Girardi**

**Michael J. Mungo Distinguished Professor of the Year Award**

Professor, Department of Mathematics

College of Arts and Sciences

Succeeding in college math requires hard work, but Maria Girardi's students encounter a professor who is willing to meet them at least halfway. Girardi, a math professor at Carolina since 1990, has built a support system to help her students succeed. She orchestrates study groups, is readily available outside the classroom and has devised a grading system that rewards diligence while recognizing different learning styles. "I try to get them to believe in themselves," says Girardi. "I often say to them, 'Oh, you know this, you just don't realize you know it' — and then start from what they know and take small steps until they can walk by themselves. Usually they are missing small steps, not the whole picture." Girardi learns students' academic major, then draws examples from those disciplines to illustrate mathematical concepts — a small gesture that simultaneously communicates the professor's interest in her students' goals and the real-world applications of math. Want students to succeed? Treat them as individuals, Girardi says, and find out what their dreams are. "A good class is when you have a lot of students who are working above where they believe they can achieve."

## Beth Krizek

### Michael J. Mungo Undergraduate Teaching Award

Professor, Department of Biological Sciences

College of Arts and Sciences

Biology professor Beth Krizek fell in love with research as an undergraduate. Two decades into her career as a plant biologist, research remains her passion — but her classroom skills are top-notch, too. Krizek is “very knowledgeable and passionate about what she teaches,” one student wrote in a teaching evaluation. It’s well-earned praise for a professor who remembers the days when she was nervous in front of a classroom. “You get better,” she says. “You practice, you do it, and you get better.” These days, Krizek receives high praise for her teaching — especially for Biology 523, a course on plant development that she designed. Students learn about the research process and acquire critical-thinking skills by studying original papers that led to important discoveries. “It’s hard in the beginning, and they struggle a little bit,” she says. “But by the end, they get a lot of confidence.” It’s an approach that combines Krizek’s love of research with her desire to engage students. “It wasn’t my first love — research has always been my love,” Krizek says of teaching. “But, of course, introducing undergraduates to research is really rewarding, too.”





## Leah McClimans

**Michael J. Mungo Undergraduate Teaching Award**

Associate professor, Department of Philosophy  
College of Arts and Sciences

When Leah McClimans started teaching at Carolina, she was still finding her footing in academia and wanted to be taken seriously. What the associate professor of philosophy hadn't figured out yet was how to help her students find their own footing in the classroom. "I was concerned about being seen as a 'real' academic, a 'real' philosopher," she says. "This affected my teaching." McClimans assigned important but often difficult texts but admits to not always considering the bigger picture where her students were concerned. "In lectures, I discussed analytic distinctions important to the field, for example bioethics," she says. "I was very attuned to the discipline, not very attuned to my students. I had to get over myself, get over 'being a philosopher.'" Her classroom discussions are still plenty rigorous, of course, whether her students are exploring the finer points of medical ethics or contemporary moral issues, but the target has shifted. "Now I center my syllabi around what my students need from me and the literature to gain certain general competencies that can serve them well in life and their chosen professions," she says. "Leadership and communication skills, teamwork and empathy."

## Rekha Patel

### Michael J. Mungo Graduate Teaching Award

Professor, Department of Biological Sciences  
College of Arts and Sciences

Rekha Patel was working toward her master's degree in India when one of her professors changed the way she thought about biology, imparting a new mindset that shaped the remainder of her graduate work and, ultimately, her own academic career in the U.S. "I will always be grateful [for that], and I would like to spend my career being the same great teacher to my students," says Patel, a biology professor at Carolina since 1998 who has earned a long pedigree in teaching excellence at Carolina. She has also won the Mungo Distinguished Professor Award, the Mungo Undergraduate Teaching Award and the Mortar Board Award for Excellence in Teaching. "Teachers always have a lasting impact on a student's mind, and the good teachers are remembered with great respect and are held in the highest regard in our minds," she says. Teaching at the graduate level extends beyond excellence in classroom pedagogy. Patel takes an active role in advising graduate students and has formally served on 65 graduate advisory committees for USC students.





## Linda Shimizu

**Michael J. Mungo Undergraduate Teaching Award**

Professor, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry  
College of Arts and Sciences

Linda Shimizu fell in love with science at Wellesley College, but she fell in love with teaching as a grad assistant at MIT. Shimizu now teaches organic chemistry for students in several science majors and pre-medicine. Some have even gone to law school, applying their chemistry backgrounds in patent law. “Science is learning to ask the right questions and framing those questions so you can find an answer,” Shimizu says. “Organic chemistry is very much an experimental science. We come up with plausible explanations and then test them to see if they are true.” It’s this love of constant learning that she hopes to pass along to students. “Organic chemistry is often the first class students encounter that they cannot ‘cram’ for,” she says. “I try to get them to approach it like a language course: Practice every day.” Shimizu also tries to interest younger students in science. Her outreach program has reached more than 17,000 S.C. students in elementary, middle and high schools since 2001. “Bringing demonstrations into the classroom immediately engages a student’s curiosity,” Shimizu says. “It gives them a tangible connection to the material they are learning.”

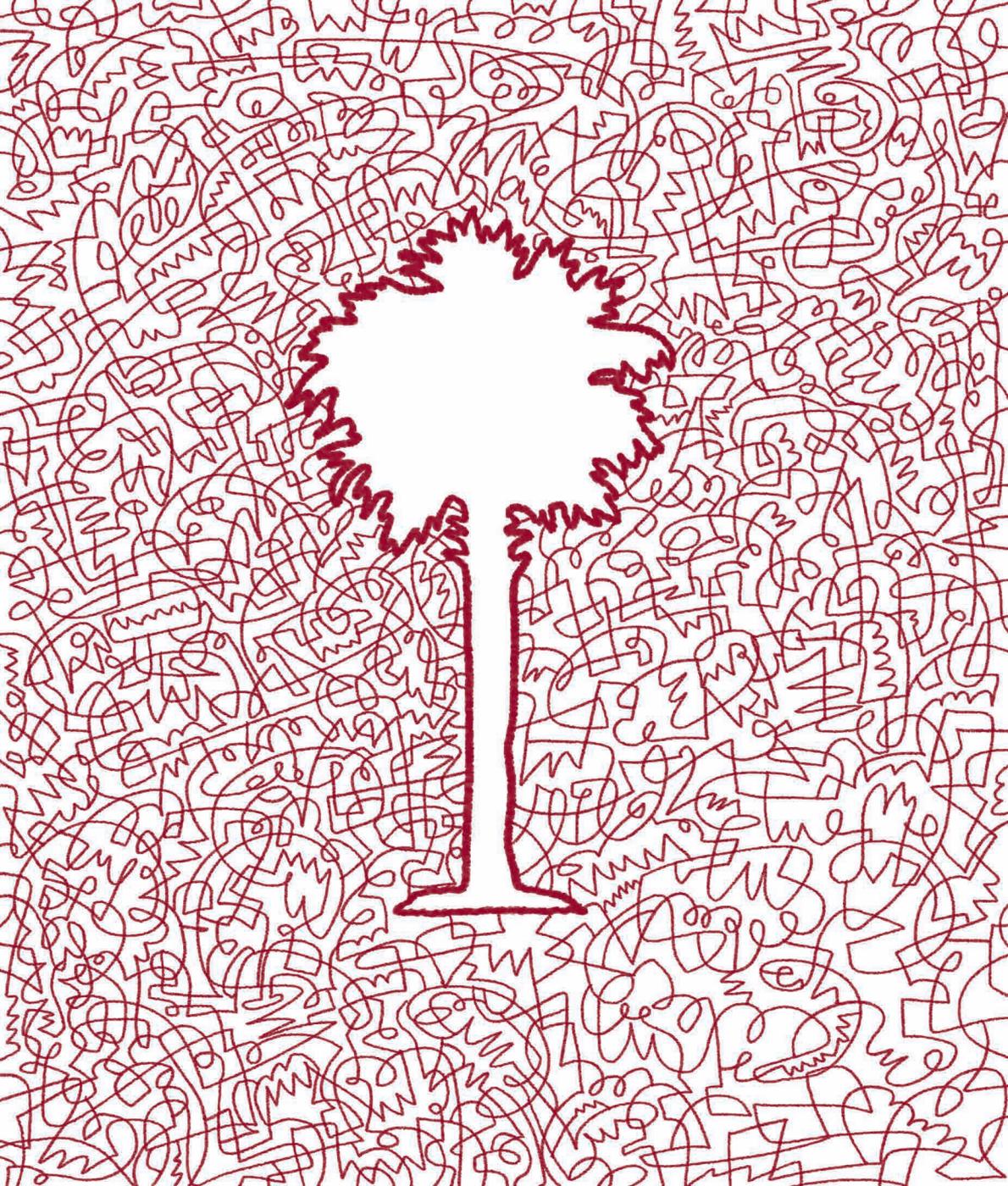
## Joshua Tarbutton

### Michael J. Mungo Undergraduate Teaching Award

Associate professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering  
College of Engineering and Computing

Joshua Tarbutton doesn't see the classroom as a place merely to convey information. He uses it to try to instill a credo that will serve his students the rest of their lives. "I give a productivity lecture every semester," Tarbutton says. "I summarize about 10 different books and extract the philosophy of work and the philosophy of excellence. I try to persuade them to adopt a craftsman mentality." Maturing into a master craftsman takes time and effort. Using the 10,000-hour rule popularized in the book "Outliers," by Malcolm Gladwell, Tarbutton says that it takes about five years, working 40 hours a week, to achieve that kind of expertise. He shows his students where they are now and where they should be once they graduate. A former platoon sergeant who served in Iraq, Tarbutton's teaching philosophy is shaped considerably by an Army motto: Set your soldiers up for success. "I try to organize my class and my pace so that they constantly feel my hand on their back," Tarbutton says. "Not only pushing them, but also guiding them. Engineering is one of the disciplines where getting it right really matters. It's important for them to do things the right way."





## **John J. Duffy** Excellence in Teaching Award

The John J. Duffy Excellence in Teaching award recognizes outstanding teaching at the Palmetto College campuses.

The award is named in honor of the longtime history professor and university administrator.

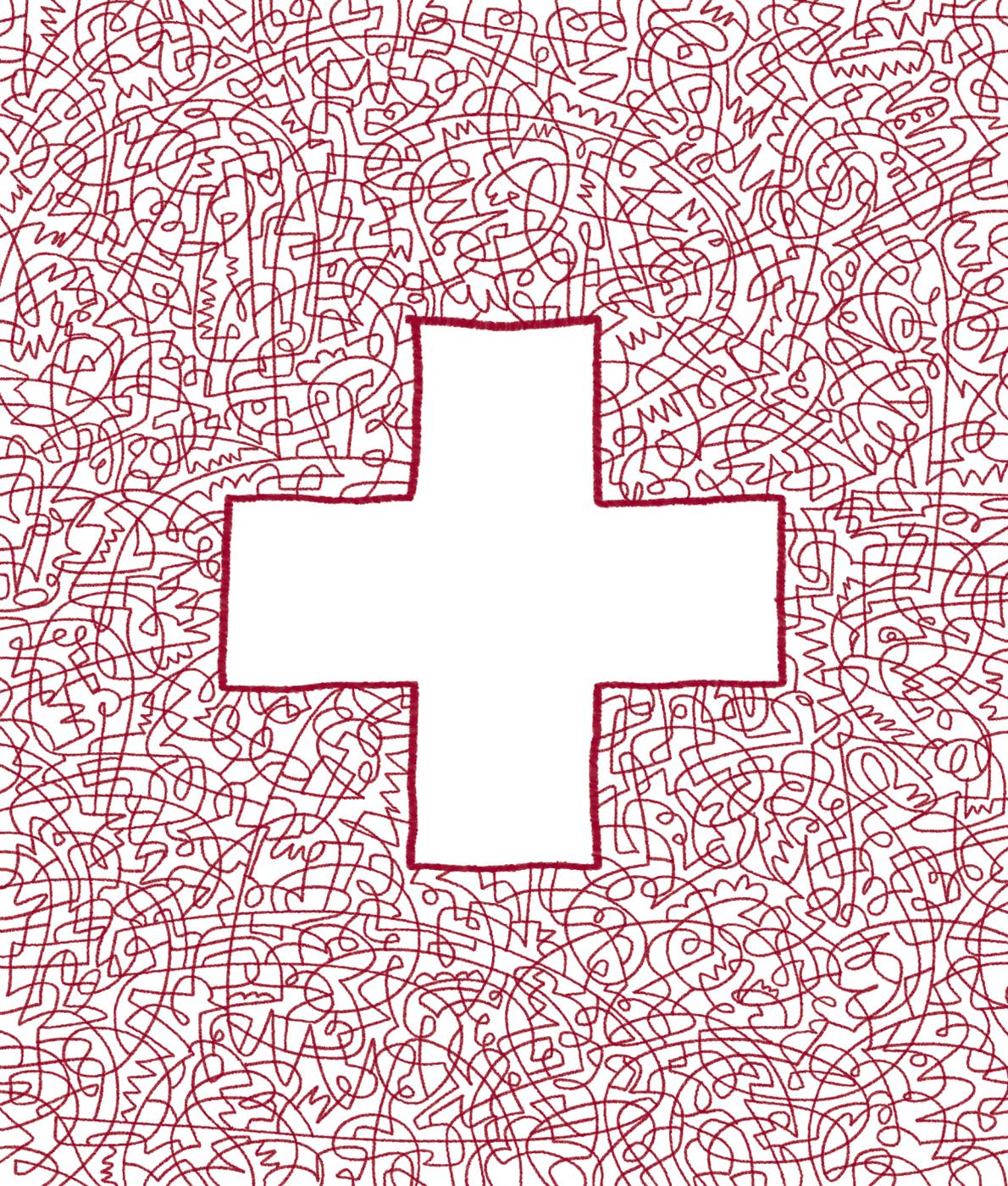
## Kajal Ghoshroy

### John J. Duffy Excellence in Teaching Award

Associate professor, Division of Science, Math and Engineering  
USC Sumter

Students in Kajal Ghoshroy's Biology 101 courses might arrive a little rough around the scholarly edges, but their academic skills evolve quickly under her tutelage. "Mentoring begins as soon as my students come in the classroom," Ghoshroy says. "About 70 to 75 percent of the kids come from very small high schools where they have not been taught how to study, and especially how to study science." Ghoshroy has developed ways to bring many of her underprepared freshmen up to snuff, teaching good study habits along with the biological curriculum. She promotes a continuous conversation with her students, which she says enhances engagement and active learning. It also helps them prepare for exams that involve mostly essay questions. Ghoshroy has built lifelong relationships with many students — including a few who came to USC Sumter without particularly high aspirations but ultimately went to medical school. "If they were to lock me in a lab, I would wither and die," Ghoshroy says. "I need to be around people, and I love students because many of them come in as open slates, and it's remarkable to see them mature and grow up. I love teaching."





## **Clinical Practice Teaching Award**

The Clinical Practice Teaching award recognizes faculty members for outstanding teaching in clinical practice settings in the health professions, including nursing, pharmacy and medicine.



## Selina Hunt McKinney

### Clinical Practice Teaching Award

Clinical associate professor, College of Nursing

The complexity of a medical environment can be stressful for a nurse trying to coordinate care. That's perhaps even more true when a patient has serious mental health issues. Luckily for nursing students, Selina Hunt McKinney, director of the graduate-level Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Program, has thought long and hard about their education. In a setting where patients are grappling with mental health issues, "not only are there specific skills the students need to know how to do — the tasks — but they also need to be able to manage their own feelings," McKinney says. Increasingly, soft skills like communication and diplomacy are important, too, she adds. McKinney's educational efforts extend to classroom teaching and simulation labs. In her undergraduate classes, she uses music, video and other interactive techniques to engage students. Ultimately, it's about integrating classroom and clinical learning — and the work is paying off. The College of Nursing's online nurse practitioner program was recently named No. 1 in the country by U.S. News & World Report. And since 2013, average proficiency scores on standardized tests for mental health nursing have increased from 66 percent to 90 percent.



**USC Education Foundation**  
Outstanding Graduate  
Teaching Assistant Award

USC's Education Foundation considers nominations each year for two outstanding teaching/instructional graduate assistants: one in humanities, social sciences, education and related professional programs and one in science, math and related programs.



## Marc Demont and Elizabeth Nelson

USC Education Foundation

Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award

**Marc Demont**, a Ph.D. candidate in languages, literatures and cultures, has taught eight different undergraduate French language courses at Carolina, receiving consistently outstanding student evaluations. He has successfully reconfigured several of his courses to introduce innovative and relevant new materials that allow him to effectively engage in students' interests while also broadening their horizons.

**Elizabeth Nelson**, a Ph.D. candidate in geography, has successfully taught the introductory human geography course while also completing her own doctoral course work and preparing to do field research on Algerian-immigrant social networks in Paris. Her teaching has consistently received highly positive evaluations from students.

The Center for Teaching Excellence is a division of the Office of the Provost charged with fostering excellence and innovation in teaching. We believe that everyone has the power to be an excellent teacher — tenured and tenure-track faculty, clinical faculty, adjunct faculty and graduate teaching assistants alike. We provide programming, resources and opportunities that foster best teaching practices and pedagogical innovation among all who teach at Carolina.

The CTE is proud to recognize the 2016 recipients of university teaching awards, who demonstrate these qualities of excellence and innovation daily in their classrooms. We invite you to visit [sc.edu/cte](http://sc.edu/cte) to learn more about these faculty members and about the many events and resources CTE offers: workshops, courses, grant programs, instructional design services, guest speakers, webinars, learning communities and more. No matter where you are in your teaching career, we are here for you.

With best wishes for a successful academic year,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christy Friend". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Christy Friend**

Director, Center for Teaching Excellence

Professor, Department of English Language and Literature





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SOUTH CAROLINA