

## 2012 Teaching Excellence Award Winners

Teaching of Psychology  
39(4) 227-234  
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DOI: 10.1177/0098628312456588  
http://top.sagepub.com



### William Douglas Woody<sup>1</sup>

The Society for the Teaching of Psychology (Division Two) celebrated the 33rd year of its annual Teaching Awards Program at the August convention of the American Psychological Association in Orlando, FL. Each 2012 winner received a plaque and a check for \$1500. The Society for the Teaching of Psychology recognized outstanding teaching in six categories: (a) Robert S. Daniel Teaching Excellence Award (4-year college or university), (b) Wayne Weiten Teaching Excellence Award (2-year college), (c) Mary Margaret Moffett Memorial Teaching Excellence Award (high school), (d) Wilbert J. McKeachie Teaching Excellence Award (graduate student), (e) Jane S. Halonen Teaching Excellence Award (first 5 years of full-time teaching at any level), and, for the first time, (f) Adjunct Faculty Teaching Excellence Award.

### Robert S. Daniel Teaching Excellence Award



The 2012 winner of the Robert S. Daniel Teaching Excellence Award for outstanding teaching at a 4-year college or university is David B. Daniel of James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Dr. Daniel received his BA in Psychology from San Diego State University and his MA and PhD from West Virginia University. He is currently professor of Psychology at James Madison University.

Dr. Daniel has taught many courses, ranging from General Psychology, Child and Adolescent Development, and Cross Cultural Psychology to Controversial Issues in Psychology and a graduate Seminar in College Teaching. He has also reached beyond traditional psychology classes to teach courses such as Learning and Cognition for Physics Teachers, The Brain and Learning (cross listed with Biology), and, at the Lower Brule Tribal/Community College, Lakota Thought and Culture.

Across all of these teaching endeavors, Dr. Daniel incorporates a wide range of teaching methods. He seamlessly blends television and movie clips, references to popular

culture, and well-timed humor into his courses. He uses PowerPoint, but he presents little text, lots of ideas, and a series of critical thinking exercises, reflecting the lessons he disseminated in his widely acclaimed presentation, *Using PowerPoint to Ruin a Perfectly Good Lecture: Where Student Learning, Cognitive Psychology and Educational Practice Collide*. Additionally, Dr. Daniel consistently evaluates his own teaching, sometimes with outcomes that are published and sometimes with unpublished assessments that contribute to his own development as a teacher.

Dr. Daniel's student evaluations include stellar quantitative ratings as well as overwhelmingly positive comments. Despite the possibility that teaching hard classes could negatively impact class evaluations, students overwhelmingly accept and embrace the difficulty of Dr. Daniel's courses as a valuable challenge that encourages students to rise to his high expectations. He receives these accolades not only from committed psychology students in major-specific classes but also from students who take General Psychology to fulfill a university requirement.

His students note Dr. Daniel's broad influence in their lives. His students discussed the education outcomes that resulted from their collaborative work with Dr. Daniel or even just his lecture classes, but students also note his wider influence in their lives. Rarely does a faculty member affect people so broadly. Several students expressed gratitude for his willingness to teach creatively and, after reviewing a student's work, to ask what some called *the* most important question: "Could you do better?"

The list of teaching awards and honors, particularly student-nominated awards, on Dr. Daniel's vitae further testifies to his success. For example, Dr. Daniel was the Faculty Member of the Year for 3 years at the University of Maine at Farmington. To be clear, Dr. Daniel did not simply win the award or repeat this impressive accomplishment; he won the award *3 times in a row* before, with his help, the university retired him from eligibility. Among other accolades, he was nominated for U.S. Professor of the Year through Carnegie Foundation, he

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has been featured in Princeton Review's Best Professors Publication, and he received the 2011 Outstanding General Education Teaching Award from the Department of Psychology at James Madison University. One writer noted that Dr. Daniel was at the University of Northern Colorado for only 2 years but that he "still managed to receive 2 major teaching awards from different student groups and once again was nominated for the campus wide Teacher of the Year Award." At James Madison University [JMU], the writer continued, "David has been nominated each year for multiple awards including the General Education Distinguished Faculty Award and the JMU Alumni Association's Distinguished Teacher Award, which unfortunately he is unable to meet the criteria for until he has been at JMU for 5 years."

Dr. Daniel's work with students has also inspired his colleagues. One colleague who chose to coteach with Dr. Daniel wrote "[H]e is very dedicated to his craft and he once told me that he treats each student and teaches each student like he wants his daughter to be taught and treated and that motivates him for excellence. A very committed and resolute man is David Daniel." Another colleague noted that in her conversations with Dr. Daniel's former students "These students not only remembered the demonstrations and examples that David used in class (and importantly, the point of those demonstrations and examples), but they also remembered how caring David was as a professor." One psychology faculty member reported that she seeks to model her teaching on the experiences she had as an undergraduate in Dr. Daniel's classes. His peer evaluations also note his amazing abilities to engage 300 students throughout his General Psychology class, even when teaching topics such as research methodology.

Dr. Daniel blends his classroom expertise with strong, teaching-centered research that includes his students throughout the process. Although he has published across a range of topics, most of his research has focused on teaching, and he has published extensively in journals such as *Teaching of Psychology*, *Computers and Education*, and *Perspectives on Psychological Science*. His recent scholarship has reached audiences beyond psychology with thought-provoking pieces in *Science* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. His CV includes 38 peer-reviewed articles, invited print chapters, and electronic publications, 53 convention presentations, and a monumental 78 invited talks centered on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning [SoTL]; importantly, more than 30 of his publications and presentations involve student and junior faculty coauthors. Additionally, Dr. Daniel helped Ms. Robyn Kondrad (the 2012 Wilbert J. McKeachie Teaching Excellence Award winner described subsequently) develop her Graduate Teaching Program at the University of Virginia.

Dr. Daniel seamlessly blends service with his teaching and scholarship. He is a co-founder and Executive Director of the International Mind, Brain, and Education Society as well as the Managing Editor of the organization's journal, *Mind, Brain, and Education*; additionally, he has organized their convention and received their Distinguished Service Award. He has served the Society for the Teaching of Psychology as member of

several national committees including but not limited to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Grant Selection Committee, the Pedagogical Innovation Task Force, and the Diversity Task Force. He was also the founding coordinator of the Society for Research In Child Development's Teaching Institute and inaugural chair of their teaching committee.

Throughout all of the materials related to his teaching, a central theme is the care that Dr. Daniel has for his students. Dr. Daniel is, as one writer stated, "A transformative professor," and he clearly embraces, publicizes, and lives evidence-based pedagogy. In recognition of his exceptional accomplishments as a teacher, mentor, and scholar of psychology, the Society for the Teaching of Psychology is pleased to honor Dr. David B. Daniel with the 2012 Robert S. Daniel Teaching Excellence Award for outstanding teaching in a 4-year college or university.

### Wayne Weiten Teaching Excellence Award



The 2012 winner of the Wayne Weiten Teaching Excellence Award for outstanding teaching at a 2-year college is Virginia B. Wickline of Miami University Middletown in Middletown, Ohio. Dr. Wickline earned her BA at Anderson University and her MA and PhD at Emory University. She is currently assistant professor of Psychology at Miami University Middletown, where she teaches a

range of classes including Abnormal Psychology, Personality Theory, Introduction to Psychological Statistics, and Psychology Across Cultures.

Although she has only been at her university since 2009, Dr. Wickline has already earned a stellar teaching and service learning reputation. In her second year at her university, she received the 2011 Miami University Middletown Excellence in Teaching Award, and she was the Miami Middletown campus award winner for the Greater Cincinnati Consortium of Colleges and Universities Celebration of Teaching luncheon. Additionally, she was nominated by her colleagues for the 2011 State Teacher of the Year Award through the Ohio Association of Two-Year Colleges. These are among the six teaching and service awards she received in 2011.

Dr. Wickline's amazing reputation is well-earned. Her quantitative student evaluations are very impressive across all of her courses, and students rave about her teaching. She views her classrooms as cultures that are composed largely of nontraditional, first-generation students, and she encourages students to investigate their own cultural assumptions and to