

AGLS Faculty Award Winners 2002

The Association of General and Liberal Studies, at its 42nd annual conference held in Louisville, Kentucky, in October, presented three individuals with faculty awards in appreciation of their contribution to teaching and leadership in general and liberal studies at their respective universities. Mary Dickson, Chair, English Department at Broome Community College, Binghamton, New York; Fred Albertson, Department of Art at the University of Memphis, Memphis, Tennessee; and Gail Schiffer, General Education Science Coordinator at Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw, Georgia.

Mary Dickson chairs the Broome Community College's General Education Steering Committee. In December 1998, the SUNY Board of Trustees mandated a system-wide, 30 credit General Education Program. Between then and June 2002, campuses submitted hundreds of courses for approval, recreated advisement materials, modified or jettisoned their home grown General Education programs to accommodate the SUNY requirements and communicate the changes to all faculty and staff. Further, the SUNY Provost had been charged by the Trustees with system-wide General Education assessment, entailing the design and submission of campus plans and implementation schedules, all on an accelerated timetable. Professor Dickson has diligently and perspicaciously led her committee through these complex processes, while also carrying out her department duties and providing leadership as workshop facilitator for course-based "Learning Outcomes Assessment" initiatives.

Fred Albertson's arrival to the University of Memphis in 1987 coincided with the inception of their new General Education Program. Fred immediately threw himself into developing curricula for their new program. He actively participated in the committee that redesigned the Introduction to Art course so that it met the new General Education criteria. He became the only non-tenured member of a seven-person faculty committee that created two new interdisciplinary Humanities courses specifically for General Education. Fred helped obtain a substantial NEH grant for faculty development to teach these courses and participated in the summer seminars on the courses.

Gail Schiffer was a key person developing the interdisciplinary General Education science courses for Kennesaw State University. Her service on the General Education Council has been consistent and noteworthy. The General Education Council is composed of representative faculty from every department of the campus offering General Education courses. She has taught the freshman seminar, KSU1101 and is again involved with it closely in her work with Learning Communities (CLASS). This involvement in the First Year programs has led to Kennesaw State University being honored by Time magazine as one of the top four Colleges of the Year for its First Year Student programs and learning communities.

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