



In 2015, I was immensely honored to receive the campus-wide Distinguished Teaching Award.

With my Chair, Penny Remsen, at the Awards Dinner.

Story on The College of Humanities and Fine Arts' webpage.

<https://www.umass.edu/hfa/news/theater-professor-megan-lewis-receives-umass-distinguished-teaching-award>



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Theater Professor Megan Lewis receives UMass Distinguished Teaching Award

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Monday, March 30, 2015

The College of Humanities and Fine Arts and the Department of Theater are proud to announce that Professor Megan Lewis has received the UMass Distinguished Teaching Award, a university-wide honor granted to only a select handful of faculty members annually. Lewis is the first member of the theater faculty to receive the award since the late Doris Abramson, a department founding member, received it in 1978.

Lewis, who joined the department in the 2011-2012 school year, received the award on the strength of her passion and skill for teaching both general education and advanced theater courses, her embrace of modern technologies to engage students, and a breadth of course topics that ranges from the arts in South Africa to drama and the media. Student reviews of her classes consistently speak to her enthusiasm and also mention the way Lewis successfully encourages students to engage with potentially intimidating or hot-button topics. "Professor Lewis made this class of 80 feel like a class of 20," one student said.



Megan is a consummate teacher, an inspiration in her classrooms who is always committed to honing her skills so that she can impact each new generation of students. She has curricular vision and has developed some thrilling new courses for our department and this university. It is an incredible honor for a pre-tenure faculty member like Professor Lewis receive this award. I believe it stands as an exemplar of how faculty in the arts can make a significant and impactful difference in the lives of the students on this campus and I offer her my congratulations.

Lewis originally hails from South Africa but has lived in the United States for many years. She came to UMass Amherst by way of Minnesota; she received her PhD in theater from the University of Minnesota, where she also taught theater, media and film courses for several years. Lewis's areas of interest as a teacher and scholar include the staging of national identity, gender, and race in a variety of performance media—including monuments and public pageants, traditional staged texts, and documentary and narrative films. Her book *Magnet Theatre: Three Decades of Making Space* a collection of essays and interviews about Cape Town-based Magnet Theatre's 25 years of theatremaking in South Africa she is co-editing with Anton Krueger of Rhodes University, is due out in early 2016 from Intellect Books and UNISA (Univ of South Africa). A manuscript, *A Whitely Nation: Performing and Reforming the Afrikaner in South African Theatrical and Public Life*, is currently in review.

Honoring individual excellence, the campus-wide Distinguished Teaching Award is highly competitive and prestigious. Only current students and alumni may nominate faculty for this award. Each year faculty, graduate, and undergraduate student committees review more than 100 nominations in a two-step process of data collection and analysis prior to selecting three faculty and two teaching assistant awardees. Recipients receive a monetary prize and are recognized at both the undergraduate and graduate commencements.