

# CELEBRATING

TEACHING & LEARNING EXCELLENCE AT UNB



2024 TEACHING AWARD WINNERS



## Welcome to the 2024 edition of "Celebrating Teaching & Learning Excellence at UNB"!

Welcome to the 2024 edition of "Celebrating Teaching & Learning Excellence at UNB." This year, we recognize the remarkable educators whose commitment to teaching transcends the classroom, whether in person or online. These award winners represent the best of UNB, fostering curiosity, critical thinking, and creating engaging learning environments across all modes of delivery. From first-year courses to specialized seminars, in classrooms or virtual spaces, they bring a passion for learning that resonates with their students, leaving a lasting impact. Their stories in this booklet showcase the dedication, innovation, and heart that define exceptional teaching, reminding us that great education is about more than conveying information—it's about building connections, sparking insight, and nurturing a sense of belonging in every student. A huge thank you to everyone who shapes our vibrant learning community. It's through your dedication that UNB remains a place where students thrive, ideas flourish, and excellence in teaching excellence is celebrated—whether on campus or online. Let's applaud this year's outstanding educators for setting the bar high and for turning the classroom, both physical and virtual, into a place where students can not only learn but grow. *Caroline Purdy, Director, Teaching Learning Services, CETL*



Caroline  
Purdy

As educators, we have the privilege of guiding students through academic and personal challenges, fostering growth in inclusive classrooms that empower them amidst financial pressures, evolving job markets, and a world reshaped by AI. By creating spaces where students feel valued and engaged, we help them become confident individuals ready to thrive. However, inclusivity shouldn't stop with students; faculty also face pressures from evolving technologies, standards, and diverse needs. To adapt, faculty require strong support to meet emerging student expectations and advances like AI. An inclusive university actively listens to its faculty and offers the necessary resources and development opportunities. When faculty feel supported, they can better mentor, innovate, and inspire. As we celebrate teaching excellence today, I remember Dr. Diana Austin, whose mentorship embodied inclusivity. Her generous, respectful guidance profoundly shaped the journeys of many at UNB, including my own. Though she passed away a few months ago, her legacy of fostering inclusivity continues to inspire us. Honoring teaching excellence emphasizes the importance of education. When universities prioritize and celebrate effective teaching, they create environments where both students and faculty can flourish. Inclusivity requires role models and commitment at every level of of academic life. By embracing inclusivity, universities not only strengthen their communities but also contribute to a more compassionate, inclusive world.



Emin  
Civi

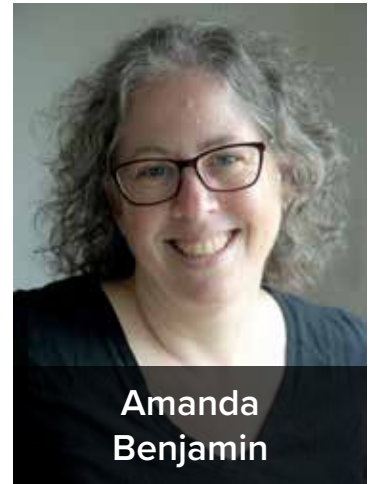
*Emin Civi, Co-Chair, Teaching and Learning Committee, Saint John*

## ALLAN P. STUART AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

### Amanda Benjamin, Faculty of Education

Dr. Benjamin began working at UNB in 2009 when she joined the faculty of education as an assistant professor. Dr. Benjamin's expertise is in adult education. She teaches both undergraduate and graduate students, and her courses are often centered around adult learning, diversity and inclusion for adult learners, and the methods and strategies of adult teaching.

Dr. Benjamin also supervises undergraduate and graduate adult education students. As an advisor, she welcomes students with open arms, helps them navigate their courses, and supports them through their academic journeys. Her students say that it is her caring, approachable nature and her extensive knowledge in her field that make her an outstanding educator. In her words;



**“I believe that fostering a strong teacher-student relationship is one of the most important aspects of being an effective teacher. To that end, I establish an open relationship with students’ that is supportive and fosters an inclusive atmosphere in which students can feel safer to learn. I believe that as an instructor I need to be approachable, friendly, and available for students. Moreover, I think it is important to encourage a reflective classroom environment in which all aspects of teaching can be explored in multidimensional ways. The learning process in the classroom moves in both directions and I have as much to learn from my students as they do from me.”**

In her classrooms, Dr. Benjamin tries to foster a critical classroom that assists students to challenge some of their entrenched understandings about teaching and learning. By creating an atmosphere where students can share personal experiences, she aims to help students relate their own thinking and experiences to the theories explored in the course material. Her belief is that the interplay between theory and practice can help students to understand how social and political forces shape the construction of knowledge. This includes deep discussions of decolonization, critical understandings of race, gender, ability and how to examine practice in ways that might lead to increasing recognition of the importance of diversity in learning.

She views the classroom environment as an important factor in creating an effective learning atmosphere. Her classes tend to be more student-centered, where discussion and group work are used as a main strategy for learning. She regularly strives to improve her teaching by seeking student feedback, talking with peers, attending teaching seminars, reading and experimenting with new methods. She continually refines her teaching practice and strives to grow as a teacher/scholar. Her teaching philosophy is a living document that evolves and is continually revisited and refined as her experience grows.

## ALLAN P. STUART AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

### Jae Ogilvie, Faculty of Forestry & Environmental Management

Jae Ogilvie is a Teaching Professor and Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Studies in the Faculty of Forestry & Environmental Management (ForEM) at UNB Fredericton.

A self-described “lifer” in ForEM, Jae began his Bachelor of Science in Forestry in 2001, where he firmly established his roots. Like many, his post-secondary journey took a few turns before he found a faculty that felt like “home”—one aligned with his goals and values, where he could meaningfully pursue his passions. Initially an introverted and apprehensive undergraduate, Jae’s confidence grew as he recognized himself in the courses he studied and began to appreciate the contributions he could make to his field. Inside and outside the classroom, Jae strives to engage with students as peers, seeing them through a similar lens.



Jae’s educational philosophy centers on “humanizing the experience” and “destigmatizing the struggle,” aiming to create genuine connections with students and foster an environment where resilience is nurtured through empathy and support. His approach is characterized by intentional strategies, such as using humor and informal dialogue, to make complex subjects accessible and relatable. Jae believes education goes beyond imparting knowledge; it’s about inspiring students to recognize their worth and potential.

**“As cliché as it sounds, treat others as you want to be treated. We all have rough days, so be real and empathetic with yourself and those around you. Be passionate about the path you’ve chosen and excited for what you bring to the table in teaching.”**

A testament to this is one student’s affirmation:

“Jae was an absolute delight to learn from, he was constantly open to hearing from students and creating two-way dialogues in class, he opened spaces for us to add anonymous concerns/questions/feedback throughout the year so that he could adjust some class parameters based on student need, rather than waiting until these anonymous surveys at the end of the semester. He was incredible at showing students how to put equations together through color coding, cemented core concepts with all students early in the course so that they could grow their confidence, and managed to consistently hold the attention, and attendance, of the whole class. His work in research is abundantly groundbreaking but despite his commitments in this field, he was still able to make it feel to students like they are a priority. He went out of his way to learn our names and understand our lives outside of the classroom with professionalism, kindness, and intelligence. He is a perfect fit for assistant dean and an amazing welcome to our first year ForEM students.”

**FACULTY OF ARTS TEACHING AWARD - FULL TIME, FR****Chiara Fanlangola, Faculty of Arts,**

Chiara Falangola, who joined UNBF in August 2023, has been active in educational leadership, teaching, and research since 2013. Her expertise includes Québécois and European Francophonie, disaster literature and cinema, ecofeminism, visual arts, and novel theory. She designs courses focused on anti-racist, decolonized, and inclusive materials, highlighting Francophonie as a diverse multiverse. Chiara aims to cultivate a passion for literature and cinema in students, fostering curiosity and critical thinking through literary analysis, visual literacy, and discussions of biases, taboos, values, and the deconstruction of stereotypes. She strives to create lasting interest in her courses, preparing students for success in a multicultural world. By enhancing their linguistic, literary, and transcultural abilities, Chiara ensures her students are ready to thrive in an increasingly interconnected global community.

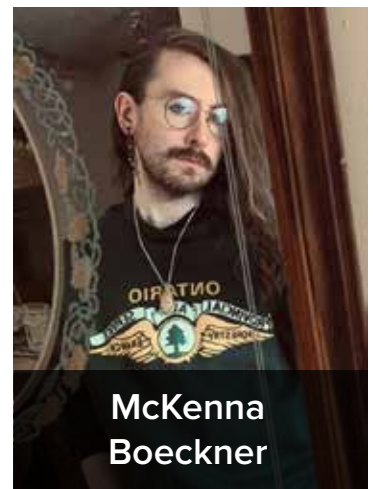


Chiara  
Fanlangola

**“As a previous first-generation university student herself, I look at academic departments as communities where first-generation or international students can find the academic mentoring and support they can’t always find at home. Students can drop by my office and know they can count on my help to succeed. This availability not only makes a difference in the grasping of course content but also in the students’ academic confidence and engagement in the program community.”**

**FACULTY OF ARTS TEACHING AWARD - PART TIME, FR****McKenna James Boeckner, Faculty of Arts**

I am beyond honored to receive the 2024 Faculty of Arts Teaching Award for part-time contract academic instructors. My specialization as a scholar means that the texts I teach are not immediately familiar to undergraduate students, located as they are in eighteenth-century England. While I have intense passion for the authors navigating the catalysts of our current world order – think: Industrial Revolution, globalization, mass urban migrations – the space that these figures write from is not yet recognizable. I broach the gap in time with my students, then, in the vein that has fueled my own academic journey since my own undergraduate studies. I implore my students, that is, not only to understand why these figures in the past tell their stories but also to use their own storytelling as praxis to study course material. Under this guiding principle, I have established a teaching philosophy that harnesses the potential of creative collaboration both in class discussions and course assignments. Stories hold us together.



McKenna  
Boeckner

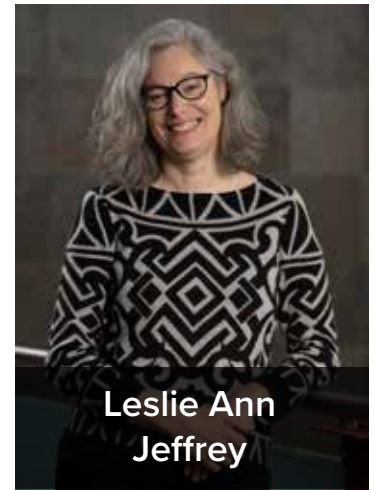
**“To quote the ever-inspirational Cherokee scholar Thomas King:  
‘The truth about stories is: that’s all we are’”**

## DEPARTMENT AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE - ARTS, SJ

### Leslie Jeffrey, History and Politics

Leslie Ann Jeffrey (PhD York, Political Science) has been teaching International Relations and Comparative Politics in the Department of History and Politics at UNBSJ for over 25 years. She has taught numerous courses in international politics over this time including Introduction to International Relations, Politics of the Developing World, Human Rights, Gender and International Relations, the Politics of Prostitution/ Sociology of Sex-work, the Politics of Food and a co-taught online self-care course in Social Work.

Dr. Jeffrey has been researching and implementing contemplative approaches to education, focusing on introspection, reflection, and embodied awareness to engage students' whole being in the learning process. In her courses, students participate in mindful outdoor walks, mindful listening, compassion practices, and mindful technology exercises to improve focus, reflection, and personal transformation. These approaches, she believes, help lessons resonate deeply, fostering a more transformative educational experience. Dr. Jeffrey has published her findings in the co-edited collection *Presence on the Online World: A Contemplative Perspective and Practice Guide for Educators* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2024).



Leslie Ann  
Jeffrey

## DEPARTMENT AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE - ARTS, SJ

### Eric Weissman, Social Sciences

Dr. Weissman, a scholar and advocate, has focused on homelessness, housing, and mental health since recovering from episodic homelessness and Substance Use Disorder in 1996. His advocacy for tiny homes and alternative housing began at Toronto's Tent City in 1999, inspiring his first film, *Subtext-real stories*. His award-winning dissertation at Concordia University in 2013 was based on fieldwork at Oregon's Dignity Village, the first legal emergency transitional campground in the U.S. Dr. Weissman employs community-based critical and pragmatic ethnography, asking stakeholders in housing, homelessness, and mental health, "How do you see the world, and how might you change it?" He has led research on housing policies for vulnerable populations, published two books, and collaborated on studies, including CIHR-funded research on COVID-19's impact on frontline homelessness workers. As Principal Investigator on a national study of post-secondary student homelessness, funded by the Making the Shift Social Innovation Lab, he works with researchers, policymakers, and students to address housing precarity. A proponent of innovative solutions to social issues, Dr. Weissman supports harm reduction and affordable housing initiatives. His lived-experience pedagogy integrates personal narratives with sociological concepts, teaching courses on theory, visual research, and lived-experience scholarship while mentoring students.



Eric  
Weissman

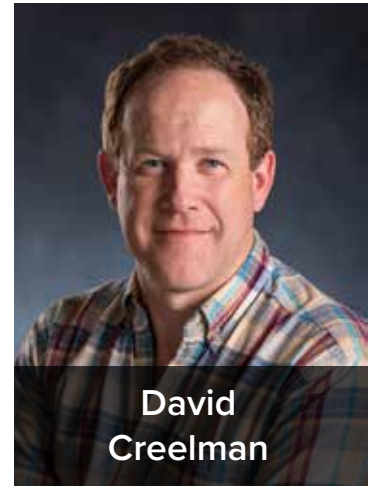
## DEPARTMENT AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE - ARTS, SJ

### David Creelman, Humanities & Languages, Faculty of Arts

The best thing about teaching at UNB, and there are many great things, is that we really get to know our students.

This current cohort, for all the challenges they have faced, is one of the most connected and empathetic group of students I've encountered. They listen to each other with respect and that makes for great group work, discussions, and debates in class. And if you get to teach in a department like mine, that has numerous great teachers with a lot of experience, and a host of new colleagues who are enthusiastic and inventive and really passionate about their disciplines, well, then its even easier to commit to the work of teaching. Its helpful, as well, that our campus, and UNB as a whole, has a tightly knit teaching culture with curious and effective teachers and growing teaching supports across the board.

If our teaching goes well, its because we have a great community of people around us.



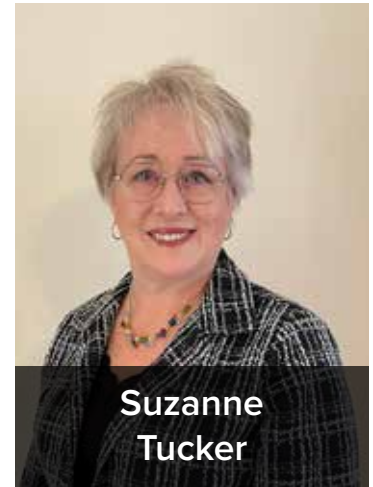
David  
Creelman



## FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD

### Suzanne Tucker, Faculty of Management

Suzanne Tucker, a Teaching Professor in Accounting and Associate Dean, Strategic Initiatives in the Faculty of Management, joined UNB in 2016 after serving with the Faculty of Business at UNB Saint John. Suzanne is an active member of the Chartered Professional Accountants of New Brunswick and was awarded her Fellow in 2014 for exemplary achievements in her career and contributions to the accounting profession. Suzanne's teaching journey began in 2007 as a stipend instructor for a fourth-year advanced management accounting course at UNB Saint John. In 2012, she left the corporate world to become a full-time university professor. Suzanne is known for her energy and light-hearted humour in the classroom, embracing technology as a powerful tool in teaching, her passion for the world of accounting, and her willingness to really listen to students.



Suzanne  
Tucker

**“I’m honored when students reach out for questions, advice, or support, seeing me not just as a teacher but as an advisor and confidante. Receiving this award is truly delightful and reaffirms my decision to become a full-time instructor. Sharing my knowledge and being part of my students’ career journeys brings me immense gratitude and joy—I’ve never regretted choosing this path.”**

## MBA SOCIETY PROFESSOR RECOGNITION AWARD

### David Foord, Faculty of Management

Dr. Foord is an associate professor at the University of New Brunswick. He teaches innovation and entrepreneurship in the Faculty of Management BBA and MBA programs, as well as a reading course on sociotechnical transitions for thesis and dissertation students. He has recently developed new five courses for the Faculty of Management, including one on sustainability and another on business history. He previously taught in St. Thomas University’s Science and Technology Studies Programme (2010-2016) and the UNB Faculty of Engineering’s Technology Management and Entrepreneurship Program (2017-2019). In 2023 he was appointed the Wilson-McKenna Fellow in Digital Sustainability. He is the recipient of the UNB Student Union Red Award for Teaching Excellence (2021), UNB Teaching Scholar Award (2022), UNB Merit Award (2022), Faculty of Management Excellence in Research Award, 2016-2022 (2023) and MBA Graduate Student Society Professor Recognition Award (2024). In his undergraduate teaching he applies project and team-based learning scholarship. This includes use of individual readiness assurance tests, team tests, written appeals from teams and in-class instructor feedback on the tests. His lecture notes, business case studies and presentation materials, made available to students via D2L, are drawn from his management experience and research training.



David  
Foord



## FACULTY OF BUSINESS TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD

### Shauna Cole, CAE Faculty of Business

Shauna Cole, an award-winning university instructor, teaches Effective Communications and Management Skills Development in UNB's MBA Program. A Chartered Professional in Human Resources (CPHR) and Senior Certified HR Professional (SHRM-SCP), she holds an MBA and a BA in Communications from UNB. Shauna is the Founder of hirediverse.ca, a job board showcasing employers' commitment to diversity and inclusion. As a content creator, she addresses topics related to diversity, inclusion, and career development, engaging an audience of over 16,000 on LinkedIn. Shauna also serves as a workplace columnist for CBC Radio, with her work featured in publications such as Canadian HR Reporter, CBC, Motherly, The Maritime Edit, and Ladders 100K Club. Shauna brings energy, fun, and care into her classes, often using music to create an engaging learning environment. She believes communication is essential for business success and a foundation for leadership growth. In her teaching, she challenges students to think critically, disrupt the status quo, and explore leadership concepts through real-world interactions.



Shauna  
Cole

**“For me, it’s about understanding the complete picture of the student. Many students in the Master’s Program are navigating significant life and career transitions. Acknowledging these challenges adds depth and meaning to our discussions around effective communication and leadership.”**

## DEPARTMENT AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE - BUSINESS

### Gholamreza Amin, Management Science, Faculty of Business

Dr. Gholamreza Amin, Associate Professor of Management Science at UNB Saint John, specializes in performance measurement and efficiency analysis. An Associate Editor of the IMA Journal of Management Mathematics, he has published in top journals like Operations Research. Before joining UNB in 2016, he taught at Sultan Qaboos University, earning the Distinguished Research Award. He received UNB's Merit Award for 2019-2020. Dr. Amin teaches quantitative courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, focusing on enhancing student engagement and fostering critical thinking, empowering students to develop skills that enable them to solve problems independently rather than simply providing them with answers. His teaching philosophy emphasizes maximizing student interactions to enhance learning and create an environment where students can grow intellectually, develop critical thinking skills, and build confidence in their abilities.



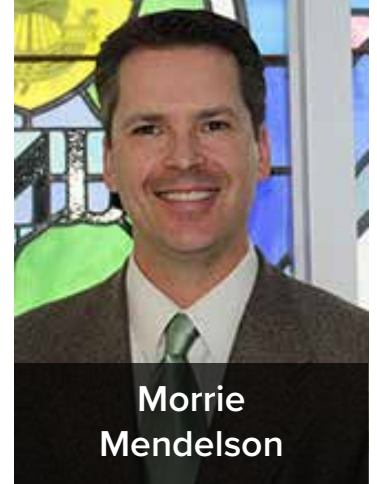
Gholamreza  
Amin

**“Students need to see instructors who are truly passionate about their field, as this passion can create a more dynamic learning atmosphere and motivate students to pursue their own interests and ambitions.”**

## DEPARTMENT AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE - BUSINESS

### Morrie Mendelson Human Resources and Management

Dr. Morrie Mendelson, Associate Professor in Human Resources at UNB Saint John since 2001, teaches HR and leadership at undergraduate and graduate levels while supervising Master’s and PhD students in the IDST program. A recipient of the Faculty Excellence Award for Teaching (2008) and multiple Allan P. Stuart Award nominations, Morrie is dedicated to student success. He collaborates with Chartered Professionals in Human Resources New Brunswick (CPHRNB) to provide accredited programs that allow HR students to waive the National Knowledge Exam (NKE). Morrie designs courses to mirror real-world HR challenges, incorporating assignments with live cases where students work with local organizations. Through interviews with HR leaders, data analysis, and solution proposals, students gain valuable experience and potential job opportunities, while organizations benefit from practical recommendations. Emphasizing engagement, empathy, and respect, Morrie fosters a safe space for open discussion and critical thinking. He encourages students to challenge assumptions and develop innovative solutions. Through continuous feedback and adaptability, Morrie remains dedicated to enhancing both his teaching and students’ learning experiences.



Morrie Mendelson

## DEPARTMENT AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE - BUSINESS

### Jan Waldschutz, MBA Program

Jan teaches effective communication in the UNB Saint John MBA program, covering written, verbal, nonverbal, and interpersonal communication. She also teaches a first-year writing course and works full-time as a consultant at the UNB Saint John Writing Centre. With real-world experience as a communications professional, including at Irving Oil, Jan brings a passion for clear communication to the classroom. She helps students adjust to the MBA program and life in Canada with kindness and care, using her positive attitude to put students at ease. Jan emphasizes navigating grey areas in communication and shares best practices to guide students in making good communication decisions. A communications course may seem light, but it teaches essential skills for success. Effective communication is the foundation for everything—if individuals cannot express ideas clearly or work well with others, other skills become irrelevant. Communication skills are crucial for both professional and personal success, though they are often undervalued.



Jan Waldschutz

**“Learning can be enjoyable and impactful. I use storytelling and humor to create a relaxed, engaging atmosphere while ensuring classes are educational. Students remember feeling cared for, valued, encouraged, and understood, as I model the behavior I teach.”**

## **DR. BALASUBRAMANIAN EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD**

### **Adam Wilson, Electrical and Computer Engineering**

Adam, an Associate Teaching Professor and Department Chair of Electrical and Computer Engineering, holds an Electronics Engineering Technology diploma from NBCC, a BScEE and MScEE from UNB, and is pursuing a PhD at UNB. Beginning at UNB in 1997 as an Electronics Technician, he worked full-time while earning his BScEE part-time. After graduation, he served as a Project and Research Engineer at the Institute of Biomedical Engineering, completing his master's and starting his PhD part-time. In 2005, Adam taught his first course, sparking a passion for teaching that led to a full-time Instructor role in 2017. Adam leverages his technical background to connect theoretical concepts to real-world applications, fostering student engagement through interactive and dynamic teaching methods. Adam emphasizes hands-on learning, encouraging students to apply classroom theory to practical labs and projects. His ultimate goal is to produce confident, competent professionals equipped with theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and industry-ready terminology to succeed in their careers.



**Adam  
Wilson**

**“By sharing personal and professional experiences, he helps students embrace challenges and view failure as a valuable learning tool.”**

## **TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP (TME) TEACHING AWARD**

### **Dominic Blakely, J Herbert Smith Centre, Faculty of Engineering**

Dom is the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Strategist at the J Herbert Smith Centre, a Senior Advisor to the President of UNB, and UNESCO Chair in Anticipatory Systems for Innovation and Venture Creation. He joined JHSC after thirteen years at the university in fundraising and senior administration. He is an instructor within the Master of Technology Management and Entrepreneurship Program, manages student support funds for prototype development, customer acquisition plus travel, is the Director of the new I-STEM program for testing of commercial viability for researcher's IP and works to develop new program offerings within the unit. Dom has a diverse work history in provincial and federal politics, sales, non-profits, and fundraising. However, he brings most of all his work back to the need to develop deep and long-lasting networks to accomplish our goals.



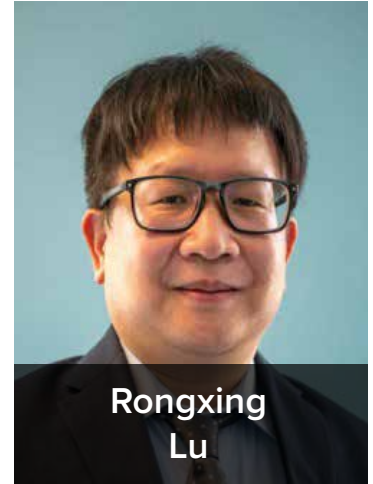
**Dominic  
Blakely**

**“I believe in creating a learning environment in which students can express themselves in an authentic way, sharing their experiences and learning from each other.”**

## FACULTY OF COMPUTER SCIENCE TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD

### Rongxing Lu, Faculty of Computer Science

Dr. Rongxing Lu, a full professor in the Faculty of Computer Science at UNB, serves as the Mastercard IoT Research Chair and Acting Director of the Canadian Institute for Cybersecurity. With a PhD from the University of Waterloo and SJTU, his expertise spans IoT-Big Data security, privacy-enhancing techniques, and applied cryptography. A prolific researcher, Dr. Lu has over 36,700 citations and an H-index of 90 on Google Scholar (as of November 2024) and has received ten Best (Student) Paper Awards from IEEE journals and conferences. The courses taught by Dr. Lu are highly technical, encompassing extensive theoretical/ mathematical analysis and practical programming. To ensure effective teaching and clear communication, he meticulously prepares detailed lecture notes and shares them with students before class. During class, Rongxing utilizes Blackboard to methodically discuss each topic with students, fostering better learning through interactive sessions. After class, he provides additional lecture notes and encourages students to compare these with their own notes for a deeper understanding of the material. Given the complexity of computer science courses, Students find his teaching methods highly effective.



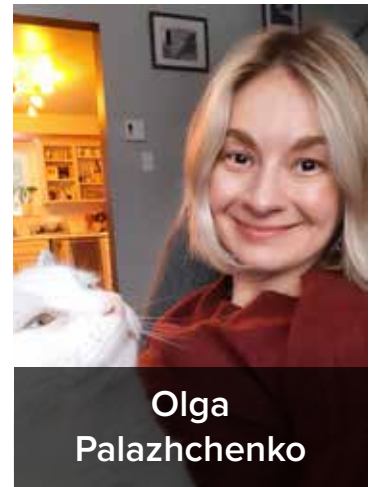
Rongxing  
Lu

**“I strive to simplify thick textbooks into more manageable content and use as many typical examples as possible to help students grasp key concepts.”**

## GOLDEN APPLE AWARD

### Olga Palazhchenko, Chemical Engineering

Olga Palazhchenko, Associate Professor in Chemical Engineering and member of the Centre for Nuclear Energy Research, teaches courses from Intro to Chemical Engineering to advanced electives like Nuclear Engineering, Corrosion Processes, and Research Methods. She connects learning to real-world applications, especially in energy generation. In Intro to Nuclear Engineering, students toured the Point Lepreau Nuclear Generating Station, gaining insights into operations and careers. Research Methods featured guest speakers from academia, industry, and R&D, broadening graduate students’ perspectives on career opportunities. . In Corrosion Processes, student projects explored diverse topics such as corrosion in marine structures, coal gasification plants, nuclear facilities, and airplane components. Olga believes in sparking student fascination by connecting course material to its broader significance and practical applications, encouraging immersion akin to the enthusiasm people show for their hobbies. Her innovative teaching methods inspire students to explore and engage deeply with their fields, preparing them for impactful careers.



Olga  
Palazhchenko

**”If there could be a hook for that level of immersion in a class setting, especially an elective a student is choosing to take, that could be the start of a life-long passion and career trajectory.”**

## FACULTY OF KINESIOLOGY TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD

### Maryam Kebbe, Faculty of Kinesiology

Maryam Kebbe, Assistant Professor of Nutrition in the Faculty of Kinesiology, joined UNB in January 2023. She holds a PhD from the University of Alberta and completed postdoctoral wtraining at the University of Oxford and the Pennington Biomedical Research Center. Dr. Kebbe teaches courses in nutrition, exercise and sports nutrition, and maternal and child health, integrating her research on early-life nutrition and metabolism into her teaching. Recognized with the Faculty of Kinesiology Teaching Excellence Award (BScKin), students praise her knowledge, passion, and compassion. One student remarked, “Her compassion for her students makes her stand out. She allowed feedback on her course and tailored it to our suggestions, always striving to help us thrive.” Dr. Kebbe’s teaching philosophy focuses on fostering inclusivity, encouraging critical thinking, tailoring learning to student needs, and promoting well-being. She aims to enrich academic experiences through diverse perspectives, mutual learning, and collaboration, helping students develop both academically and personally.

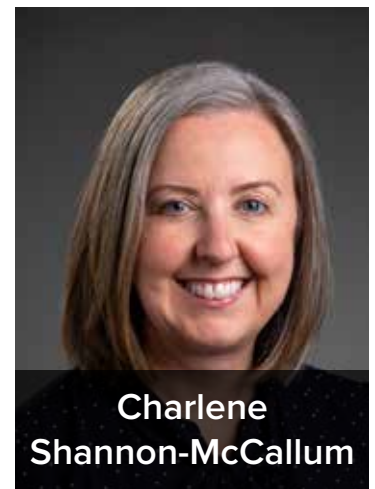


**“I believe that a good teacher effectively implements their instructional knowledge, while a great teacher is a lifelong learner who learns from their students and continually expands and enhances their teaching practices.”**

## FACULTY OF KINESIOLOGY TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD (BRSS)

### Charlene Shannon-McCallum, Faculty of Kinesiology

Dr. Shannon-McCallum, Professor and Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs) in the Faculty of Kinesiology at UNB, teaches courses including Concepts in Recreation, Leisure and Sport, Youth Development through Recreation and Sport, and Gender, Leisure and Sport. With a BBA and BRM from Acadia and an MA and PhD in Leisure Studies from Waterloo, she has inspired first-year students since joining UNB in 2002. Her research focuses on family-centered leisure, including the invisible burdens women faced managing family leisure during COVID-19. Charlene’s courses address complex community challenges where recreation and sport organizations play a role. She prepares students for practice by fostering critical and creative thinking, emphasizing that problems can have multiple solutions. To encourage this, she reduces the risk of “getting it wrong” by using reflections with feedback instead of grades, creating a safe space for skill development.



**“In upper-level electives, I use a “grading for growth” approach, prioritizing individual progress. Students reflect on how course content and research challenge assumptions, deepen understanding, or contrast with their experiences.”**

## FACULTY OF LAW TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD

### **Maria Panezi, Faculty of Law**

I am honoured and touched to have received the 2023-24 Teaching Excellence Award. I have found teaching to be the fun part of academia, I feel lucky to do what I love and to have fun while I'm doing it. My teaching philosophy begins with empathy. I actively listen to what my students have to say, both in and outside of the classroom.

I often reflect on the Socratic Method, as described in the Platonic Dialogues. The Greek term maieutiki means "the art of midwifery," which Socrates applied to teaching, guiding students to "give birth" to truth. The method involves helping the truth emerge not through interrogation, but through interactive questioning that students can relate to. Another influential work for my teaching is Jacques Derrida's *The University without Condition*, which emphasizes entering the classroom without expectations. In this approach, everything is open for inquiry and examination, fostering the best environment for learning.

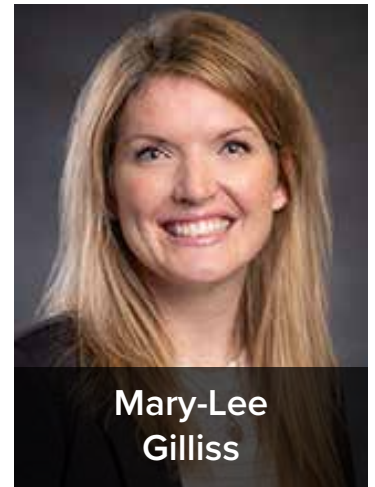
Finally, there's no such thing as too much preparation; I prepare ad nauseam. I never go to class and wing it; that is not a word in my vocabulary. But as we know, nothing ever goes to plan, so you must be ready to change things up on the fly, go off script.



## **FACULTY OF NURSING TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD**

### **Mary-Lee Gilliss, Faculty of Nursing (Moncton)**

Mary-Lee Gilliss is a Teaching Professor in the Faculty of Nursing at the Moncton Site, joined the UNB teaching community in 2021. Previously, she taught in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program through Laurentian University at Northern College in Timmins, starting in 2017, and also instructed in Paramedic and Practical Nursing programs. Her diverse nursing career spans primary health care, maternal care, diabetes education, acute care, homecare, neurology, and long-term care. For Mary-Lee, teaching nursing students is both a privilege and an evolving journey. She aims to create a safe, dynamic learning environment where students feel empowered to ask questions, challenge norms, and share experiences. Her approach encourages respectful discussions, values student feedback, and incorporates guest speakers to provide unique perspectives on nursing. Mary-Lee embraces life-long learning, acknowledging that she won't have all the answers but is committed to seeking solutions collaboratively. Her teaching philosophy evolves with new challenges, fostering mutual growth for both students and herself. She looks forward to continuing her work with students, colleagues, and clinical partners at UNB, contributing to a rich and supportive educational experience.

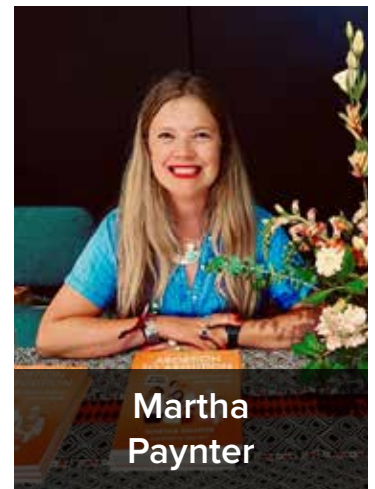


**Mary-Lee  
Gilliss**

## **FACULTY OF NURSING TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD**

### **Martha Paynter, Faculty of Nursing (Fredericton)**

Martha Paynter, Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Nursing at UNB, joined in 2022. Her research focuses on reproductive health and the criminal-legal system, and she teaches community nursing, therapeutic communication, and qualitative research methods. She also works nationally to advance family planning care competencies for nurses and other health professionals. Dr. Paynter's teaching philosophy centers on compassion and justice, treating students fairly and encouraging them to use their lived experiences. Her students highlighted how she creates a supportive, safe environment that challenges them to learn deeply and builds their confidence through collaboration. They praise her openness, knowledge, and genuine concern for learning, noting that her classes feel like a supportive community. Reflecting on her approach, Dr. Paynter explains:



**Martha  
Paynter**

**“I aim to help students put together their own toolboxes to understand and critically appraise experiences and information in health systems and make connections to other social forces. I support students to be reflective of privilege and power, to know themselves and to experience imagination and hopeful thinking about how things could change. I support them to feel agency and generosity as they continue learning.”**

## FACULTY OF SCIENCE TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD

### Vlad Tasic, Mathematics and Statistics

Vladimir Tasić is a Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at UNB Fredericton. He joined UNB in 1995 after completing his PhD at the University of Manitoba and an NSERC Postdoctoral Fellowship at Oxford University. Vlad has taught a wide range of courses across all levels, from large first-year classes for science, engineering, and management students to advanced courses in formal languages and mathematical logic. He has a particular passion for teaching the history of mathematics, a course that introduces students to the evolution of mathematical thought across different cultures and eras. The course emphasizes the historical and broader social context of mathematical ideas, exploring their similarities, differences, cultural exchanges, as well as appropriations and exclusions over time. Vlad's research focuses on the role of mathematics in contemporary philosophy, with recent writings on Ian Hacking and Alain Badiou. In teaching, Vlad strives to convey his curiosity and sense of wonder at the interconnectedness of mathematics with natural sciences and the humanities.



Vlad Tasic

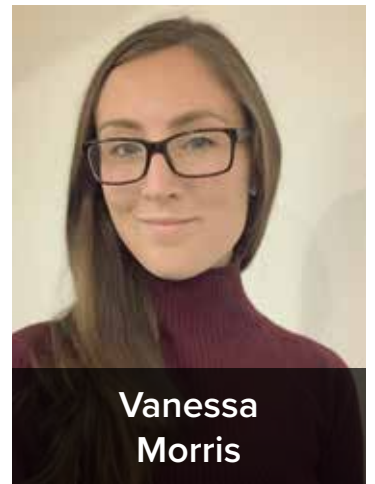
**“Teaching is always also a learning experience for the teacher. At least it has been for me. I try to learn what students find interesting and intellectually stimulating, what they find difficult or challenging and why. I am still learning, and I believe it is my responsibility to do so”**

## SCIENCE, APPLIED SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FACULTY AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

### Vanessa Morris, Psychology

Dr. Vanessa Morris joined UNB Saint John as an Assistant Professor in the Psychology Department in 2022. Vanessa obtained her PhD in Neuroscience from McMaster University in 2021 and completed her post-doctoral fellowship at York University in 2022. Vanessa's research seeks to examine the effects that prolonged alcohol and substance use can have on the brain.

**“I know it can be hard for students to grasp some neuroscience material when we're talking about concepts at the nanometer level, such as neurotransmitters. In these cases, I work to provide real world examples so students can try to apply concepts to their own experiences. For example, what might humans “feel” when a particular neurotransmitter is exerting its effects, or examples of what can happen to human behaviour and physiology when our neurotransmitters are blocked or disrupted.”**



Vanessa  
Morris



## **SCIENCE, APPLIED SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE**

### **Jeff McNally, Computer Science**

Jeff, a long-term Contract Academic and Assistant Teaching Professor in Computer Science at UNB Saint John, has taught over 160 courses and 90 labs since 1998. His expertise spans mathematics, statistics, programming, and scientific computing. A four-time UNB Saint John alumnus, Jeff began his journey as an undergraduate in 1991. Jeff has taught in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, and the Faculty of Business on both campuses and serves as Vice-President for Contract Academics with AUNBT. Jeff emphasizes foundational learning, helping students master core concepts essential for success in their disciplines.



**“I think the most important thing to remember when you are an experienced instructor in front of an introductory class is that although you are teaching a topic for the Xth time, the students in the room are seeing it for the first time. Forget why you know what you know and take the time to explore wrong avenues that eventually lead to the right path. It will help students feel engaged and excited about the material, giving them the critical thinking skills they so need in today’s world.”**

## **SCIENCE, APPLIED SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE**

### **Sadi Abujayyab, Engineering**

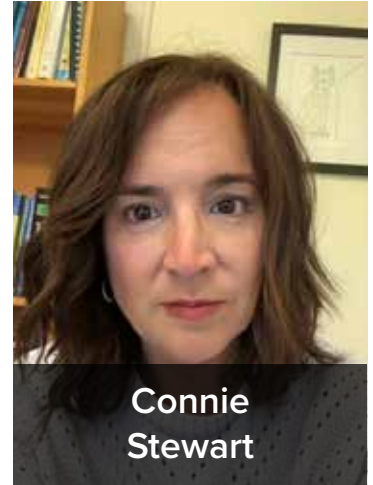
With extensive experience in computer and electrical engineering, I have worked on advanced projects with leading multinational companies across North America, Europe, and Asia, including Calgary and Fort McMurray. This global exposure informs my teaching philosophy, emphasizing real-world applications and sustainable, environmentally conscious engineering. To address the vast knowledge engineering students must acquire, I prioritize team-based learning, creating collaborative environments where students view me as part of their team. This fosters a supportive atmosphere, encouraging them to seek guidance freely. Practical labs are integral to my teaching, enabling students to validate calculations by comparing theoretical and measured values, while final semester projects allow them to apply skills in design, analysis, and construction. My goal is to inspire students to pursue technical excellence and responsible engineering practices. I encourage them to engage with local tech communities, apply classroom knowledge, and develop sustainable solutions. By fostering innovation and responsibility, I aim to prepare students to meet the challenges of modern engineering with skill and vision.



## SCIENCE, APPLIED SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

### Connie Stewart, Mathematics and Statistics

Connie Stewart is a Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics. Over the past 2 decades, she has taught a variety of statistics courses to students in diverse programs. In recent years, she has noticed an exciting shift in students' attitudes in her courses as they increasingly recognize the essential role of statistics in navigating and understanding today's data-driven world. Her main area of research is in ecological statistics where she collaborates with biologists to develop statistical methodology for estimating marine predator diets through fatty acid analysis. Connie's first piece of teaching advice from a well-respected mentor was "be genuine". While brief, this principle has fundamentally shaped her teaching practices. Being authentic builds trust and helps create an environment where students feel comfortable asking questions and sharing their challenges.

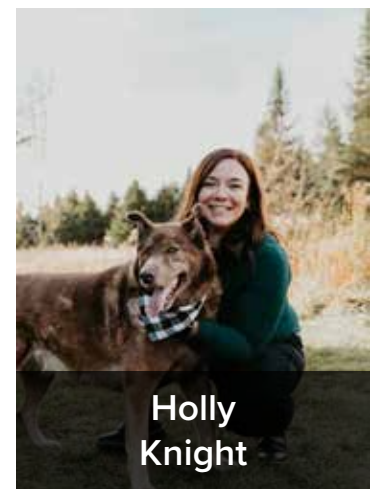


**"When students seek help on course material, use the opportunity to build a connection and ensure that they understand that you are invested in their overall well-being. Demonstrating sincerity in this manner, I believe, can have a positive impact on student learning and success."**

## SCIENCE, APPLIED SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

### Holly Knight, Nursing

Holly Knight joined UNB as an Assistant Teaching Professor in the Department of Nursing & Health Sciences in 2021. Before that, She worked as a Nurse Manager in the Coronary Intensive Care and Cardiac Stepdown unit at the Saint John Regional Hospital. With 22 years of experience in acute and critical care, she developed leadership, clinical, and communication skills that have enhanced her role as an educator. Holly is passionate about helping students grow in clinical, lab, and classroom settings, watching them apply learned concepts to improve patient outcomes. Her Focus is on challenging students to think critically, encouraging further learning, and fostering a supportive environment where students can step out of their comfort zones. Inclusiveness and social justice are core values in Holly's teaching.



**"Don't be afraid to show your personality to the students. I find adult learners are craving connection in the learning environment. Showing your human side can foster a level of comfort in our classrooms that can help facilitate the learning process, opening channels for deep discussion and discourse."**

**SCIENCE, APPLIED SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING  
DEPARTMENT AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE****Sean Roach, Psychology**

Sean Roach, an Associate Professor in the UNBSJ Psychology Department, holds a PhD in Psychology & Neuroscience from Dalhousie University. His primary research concerns songbirds and how they use their songs to communicate with each other. He also researches a variety of topics within human psychology, including how we are influenced by our chronotype (whether we are a “morning person” or a “night owl”) and how our thoughts and actions are influenced by nature and our connection to it.

Sean teaches a variety of courses including Drugs and Behaviour, Research Methods, and Human Sexuality, along with numerous neuroscience courses. He has received both the Faculty and Departmental Excellence Award for Teaching and nominated several times for the Dr. Allan P. Stuart Memorial Award for Excellence in Teaching.



Sean  
Roach

**“Beyond making sure that I am clearly and accurately conveying course content, I am always thinking about how I can engage the students sitting in front of me. Regardless of how that is accomplished, there’s no doubt that a student learns more if they are paying attention or even somewhat intrigued by the content. In my case, that is often accomplished through humour and relatable examples, but it can be done in many ways depending on the teacher and their strengths”.**



**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2022 NOMINEES FOR THE  
ALLAN P. STUART AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING!**

**Fredericton:**

**Mary Lou Batty (Nursing), Dominic Blakely (Engineering), William Bonfiglio (English), Murshed Chowdhury (Economics), Sarah Crymble (Education), Stephan Dombrowski (Kinesiology), Kenneth D'Souza (Biology), Afshin Kamyabniya (Management), Andrew McAllister (Computer Science), Ben Newling (Physics), Noah Pleshet (Anthropology), Suprio Ray (Computer Science), Roxanne Reeves (Renaissance College), Valerie Reeves (Chemistry), Sherry Rose (Early Childhood Centre), David Scott (Kinesiology), Ken Seaman (Kinesiology), Shari Smith-Ellis (Education), Biljana Stevanovski (Psychology), Alireza Tajbakhsh (Management), Ann Timmermans (Earth Science), Angela Tozer (Education), Bharat Verma (Management), Natalie Webber (Computer Science), Claire Williams (Nursing), Lin Wang (Mathematics and Statistics)**

**Saint John Campus:**

**Meghann Bruce (Biology), Rolyne Butler (Business), Dibyendu Debnath (Business), Wayne Hansen (Communications Studies), Mostaq Hussain (Business), Leslie Jeffrey (Politics and History), Gemma Marr (Language), Morrie Mendelson (Business), Ronald Vair (Business), Jan Waldschutz (Business)**





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The mission of UNB's Centre for Enhanced Teaching and Learning (CETL) is to promote effective and engaging teaching and learning through instructional excellence and the integration of classroom technology and media.