

Sauk Valley Community College
April 27, 2020

Action Item 4.6

Topic: ICCTA Full-Time Faculty Outstanding Award

Strategic Vision: Sauk Valley Community College will be a leader in student achievement while expanding access to higher education across the Sauk Valley Region.

Presented By: Dr. David Hellmich, Dr. Jon Mandrell, and Kathryn Snow

Presentation:

Associate Professor Rachel Brunner has been selected for this year's SVCC Outstanding Full-time Faculty Award and, as such, is the College's nominee for the 2020 ICCTA Outstanding Full-time Faculty Award.

Academic background: Rachel received an Associate of Arts from Rock Valley College, Bachelor of Arts in English from Rockford University, and a Master of Arts in English from Bradley University.

Professional background: Prior to joining SVCC as a full-time faculty member, Rachel worked for a year as an adjunct faculty member at the College. She also worked as an adjunct faculty member for Rockford University, Kishwaukee College, and Rock Valley College. Additionally, she was a writing center tutor at Bradley University.

Comments from Nomination: Associate Professor Brunner diligently works to make her English learning outcomes relatable to her students' academic and career goals. This personal touch assists students in seeing the importance of quality writing in whatever field they seek to enter. When students are able to relate content to their career interests, they see assignments as building blocks for their own lives.

In order to engage learners, Rachel works to incorporate Canvas as an accessible resource, utilizes low-cost or free textbooks, and creates assignments that encourage student dialogue and participation. Each of these strategies facilitates a dynamic learning environment, effectively engages students, and ultimately nurtures academic success.

Rachel has collaborated with English faculty to create new tutor training tools for the Learning Commons and future Writing Center. These tools specifically address the most common issues seen in writing, regardless of the discipline. The new tutor checklist, which is sent to teachers if their students seek assistance, helps teachers to identify the specific areas students may be struggling with in terms of their writing assignments. In addition, Rachel has worked alongside IAI for the last two years to ensure that Humanities classes meet the necessary requirements for articulation that is essential to our continuity as an institution.

As the Phi Theta Kappa advisor to the Beta Alpha Gamma chapter since 2017, Rachel has successfully completed two Honors in Action Projects, helped with numerous service activities (ranging from volunteering with Granny Rose Animal Shelter, Dixon Christmas Walk, Leydig Center, Buddy Bags, United Way, Walk to End Alzheimer's, and more), and hosted three Formal Induction Ceremonies. She has led SVCC faculty, staff, and students to improve and expand the college's prairie plot and manages the SVCC Prairie Facebook page. Each school year, she leads multiple workdays that involve burning the prairie, harvesting seeds, and weeding. She has also hosted several educational speakers at Sauk to discuss relevant environmental topics.

Rachel is also very active in promoting wellness on campus: she leads a Couch-to-5k group participates in the Dixon Family Shamrock Shuffle, is an advocate for healthy living, and recognizes that physical and mental health of college employees translates to better instruction and services.

Recommendation:

The Administration recommends the Board approve the nomination of Rachel Brunner for the 2020 ICCTA Outstanding Full-time Faculty Member Award.