

Dr. Lloyd Davies wins WKU Faculty Mentoring Award

As soon as Lloyd was designated as my primary mentor, I knew he would exceed my expectations, and he has gone above and beyond the requirements of the position."

Dr. Gillian Knoll in nominating Dr. Davies for Faculty Mentoring Award

"Above and beyond" are the words repeatedly used to characterize Dr. Lloyd Davies' dedication to mentoring new colleagues. Dr. Rob Hale, Head of the Department of English, attributes Dr. Davies' win to his "always going the extra mile" and his ability to mentor "in a more human way" than one would expect of a formal mentor. Dr. Davies humbly attributes his win to his commitment and to his **friendly encouragement** of mentees.

Dr. Davies' effort shows when new faculty members speak about his encouragement. Dr. Gillian Knoll, who nominated him for the award, mentions being really struck by the commitment he put in to welcoming her to the department and community. Dr. Davies became a mentor for Dr. Knoll as soon as she accepted the job here at WKU. He emailed her to keep her informed in current department happenings, the structure of the semester, and his own work and conference attendance. Dr. Knoll says, "By the time I arrived in Bowling Green in July, I felt as though I was greeting an old friend and colleague. During a time of transition, there is really nothing more important than this."

Dr. Knoll emphasizes Dr. Davies' specific commitment to helping her keep a balance in the areas of scholarship, teaching, and service, while making a solid transition. Both professors say that, in the process, they have each made a friend.

Dr. Davies arrived at WKU in 1990 after finishing his dissertation for a PhD in Literature at Duke University. Prior to that, he earned a master's in Toronto for Philosophy of the Arts, and two bachelor's: one in comparative literature and the other in piano. At the time of his arrival, the department did not have a formalized mentorship process, and the shy Dr. Davies learned to navigate the sequence of gaining tenure through focus and commitment. After 27 years at WKU, he has become a senior faculty member with, according to him, "a lot of experience and some wisdom."

Dr. Davies says this award speaks to the university's open, receptive culture and commitment to nurturing new faculty. Dr. Hale also encourages this system of institutional support by formalizing a mentorship program in the department. He believes the formal requirement helps solidify lasting relationships between senior and junior faculty.

Each year since the university started issuing faculty mentoring awards, a faculty member from the English department has been chosen. Faculty and students alike benefit when a system is in place to facilitate the sharing of wisdom and experience between faculty members. It is a bonus when senior faculty like Dr. Davies take such a challenge and set a high standard for what it means to be a mentor.