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Leanne K. Knobloch : Distinguished Achievement in Social Sciences

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2016 Distinguished Achievement in Social Sciences



Leanne K. Knobloch '96

Success in academia is measured by achievement in three areas: scholarship, teaching and service. Many college and university professors can point to impressive accomplishments in all those areas, but it is rare to find one who performs at the very highest level in all three.

Leanne Knobloch, professor in the department of communication at the University of Illinois, is one of those uncommon performers. In a relatively young academic career (it is just 14 years since she earned her Ph.D.), she has done work her colleagues say is exceptional and, in many respects, unparalleled. Her research and teaching topics focus on how people

communicate during times of transition within marriage and family relationships.

Her scholarly output is prodigious. At recent count, she had published more than 40 journal articles, 15 book chapters and seven encyclopedia entries. The work is also simply excellent. A colleague offers a succinct observation on the awards Leanne has received for her scholarship:

“Leanne has received the highest honor at each career stage from every professional organization she belongs to and from the college and university she has served since receiving her doctoral degree.”

Leanne’s teaching record at the University of Illinois is equally distinguished. Her name has

appeared on the roster of teachers ranked by their students as “excellent” in every single course since earning tenure in 2008, and she has received the University of Illinois College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Dean’s Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching. In addition, as the director of graduate studies, she has created new undergraduate courses and graduate seminars, and provided invaluable mentorship for numerous graduate students.

Her service to her discipline is also stellar. Leanne has chaired a division of the National Communication Association, sat on numerous committees for the International Association for Relationship Research, and served on the editorial boards of five academic journals.

Such is the strength of Leanne’s performance in all her professional endeavors that, this year, she was named a University Scholar – one of only seven so honored among 1,900 tenure-system faculty.

Not to be lost among the plaudits Leanne has received for her work is the nature of that work itself. Leanne’s scholarship focuses on how people communicate in close relationships – in particular, couples facing transitions such as military deployments, or mental-health challenges such as depression. She is in the midst of a research project funded by the U.S. Department of Defense to understand how military couples navigate the transition from deployment to reunion, and she serves as a science advisor for the Military Child Education Coalition.

St. Norbert College is proud to celebrate this exceptional alumna with the Distinguished Achievement Award in Social Sciences.

St. Norbert College

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