



The Distinguished Service Award

The Distinguished Service Award is to be given to a full-time faculty member who has contributed significant service to the University of Mount Union and/or the community at large.

This year, without a doubt, the award goes to Dr. Danielle Cordaro, associate professor of English, Director of the Digital, Written, and Oral Communication Studio, and the inaugural director of the Center for Faculty Development, which will open next year. Naming an awardee for a position that has not yet may be presumptive, but much work went into researching, designing, and getting approvals and buy-in for this center.

Dr. Nicole Johnson witnessed this colossal effort as part of the Faculty Development Committee and nominated Dr. Cordaro. In her letter, Dr. Johnson summarizes Dr. Cordaro's efforts:

She has been spearheading the process of bringing an effective, well-planned, broadly- supported faculty development center to fruition. Careful not to repeat the mistakes of the institution in its creation of the first CETL, Dr. Cordaro was instrumental in convening focus groups of faculty beginning in 2017, which led to a document addressing faculty development needs and wishes, which led to a Faculty Development Working Group in 2018-19, which has finally, in turn, led to the creation of a Center for Faculty Development that promises to serve well the varied needs of faculty in their teaching, scholarship, and other commitments to student learning at Mount Union.

Dr. Cordaro has been tireless in these efforts. She has pursued avenues of networking and professional development toward enabling her to lead the process of organizational change and broad faculty buy-in. She has attended professional conferences, always returning to campus with fresh insights for the rest of us involved in the process of creating an effective and comprehensive faculty development program. In countless meetings of the Faculty

Development Committee and outside of it, she has been an enthusiastic leader and consensus-builder.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Dr. Cordaro was ready when the coronavirus closed down campus and forced all faculty to redesign their approach to teaching practically overnight. While her official job change does not start until this summer, Dr. Cordaro embraced the needs of the faculty, jumped in, solicited help from Cara McEldowney and others with distance and online teaching experience, and has worked tirelessly to ensure that students' needs are met, faculty don't burn out, and issues of equity are always considered.

Danielle, for your boundless capacity to find and share evidence-based methods of effective pedagogies, to explain patiently how to make things work now, and for all the preparation you did to be able to lead us into our unknown future teaching lives, thank you, and congratulations!