

Award for Excellence in Teaching Geography Dr Fes de Scally

Dr. de Scally has distinguished himself as an educator in courses with a range of enrolments, at various levels of instruction, since the early stages of his career as a Teaching Assistant at the University of Alberta. In 1988 Fes was runner-up and then in 1989 he was recipient of the prestigious Dr. Lorne H. Russwurm Award for Outstanding Teaching Assistant in the Department of Geography at the University of Waterloo. Fes subsequently took up a professorship at Okanagan University College in the summer of 1989, where he has distinguished himself as a teacher, scholar, mentor and colleague ever since. Fes consistently obtains some of the most positive responses from students on his student teaching evaluations of any faculty member in the whole university.

Dr. de Scally has spent the last 14 years working with colleagues to build the Geography program at Okanagan University College from a handful of first- and second-year courses to a full-fledged university degree program. In developing and teaching his courses, Fes has instilled his enthusiasm for geography in a number of generations of undergraduate students, many of whom have gone on to graduate studies and professional careers that draw extensively on their geographic education at Okanagan University College. Fes's teaching philosophy rests on three core values:

- respect for students as people and for their diverse backgrounds;
- exhaustive preparation of course material and lectures; and,
- enthusiasm for the classroom experience and subject matter.

Part of the reason that Fes's classes are so popular is that he makes constant efforts to bring his excitement for research into the classroom and to transform the classroom into an opportunity for students to experience research first-hand. Over his time at OUC, Fes has maintained an active research programme as well as developed and taught 12 new Geography courses here (not including his directed studies courses, which he offers across a range of topics each year). All of his courses incorporate components of his own research program through both problem-based-learning and fieldwork.

Perhaps his most important contribution to our department and to the discipline as a whole in Canada, however, is his commitment to a vision of Geography that is 'inclusive' in all senses of that word. His teaching is inclusive of a broad range of approaches, both technical and theoretical. He is always talking to both colleagues and students about the need to encourage and develop geography as a holistic and inclusive science that involves the study of humans and their environments. His students take this commitment with them into their later endeavours. Finally, Fes helps to create an inclusive Geography through his commitment to equity in the discipline and through his support for equity programs in teaching, hiring and promotion at OUC and the new UBC-Okanagan.