



February 11, 2008

Leon & Nancy Cole Superior Teaching Award Committee
Alberto Garcia, Associate Dean
College of Engineering
The University of Tennessee

The College of Engineering
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To Whom It May Concern:

It is a pleasure to nominate Mr. Will Schleter for the Leon and Nancy Cole Superior Teaching Award. Following a career as an Engineer at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Will has been an instructor and now Lecturer in Engineering Fundamentals for eight years. Will team-teaches the entry course for all engineering freshmen, EF 151, with Dick Bennett. This critical course creates the first impression of engineering faculty for all of our students, and Dick and Will take this responsibility very seriously. They have developed a tag team style of lecturing that keeps the students attentive and involved. They receive high reviews from the students both as individual instructors and for their efforts to work together to make the transition to college work as smooth as possible. We use a more extensive feedback form (developed by Professor Schleter) than the University's student assessment form, often generating 20 pages of student feedback and comments for each of our large courses. I have attached copies of Professor Schleter's very high overall ratings, and enough student comments to convey their message. The students, of course, can also fill out the University form if they wish, and for comparison, Will scored a 4.2/5.0 (#3, Instructor's contribution to course) for all reporting students (113) in EF 151 last semester.

In addition to co-teaching EF 151 with approximately 520 students per year, Will is also responsible for all sections of EF 105, the one-hour computer methods course that accompanies EF 151. In the three-year history of this course, it has been completely revised twice. Making a one-hour computer course for 500 students a year a meaningful course that is efficient to teach has turned into quite a significant challenge. It was not until Will became responsible for EF 105 a year ago, and developed its third iteration, that the course has finally generated favorable responses from students and other faculty. This course is taught in 30 student sections, one two-hour lab/wk, with a team of two graduate teaching assistants per section. Will developed all the lessons for the course and supervises the graduate assistants who teach the multiple sections. In addition to the instructional plans and lab write-ups, Will has created almost 30 hours worth of on-line tutorial videos on the subjects of advanced calculator features, Excel basics, Matlab basics, and engineering applications of Excel and Matlab.

As our resident technology expert, Will designed and maintains all of the EF computer labs and course websites. He has developed many features that the rest of the faculty now consider essential. Many of these features evolved from the need to effectively and efficiently manage the large multi-section classes common in the freshman engineering curriculum. His online homework system allows all EF classes to provide drill and practice problems for all students that are unique to each student, eliminating copying,

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providing automatic grading and instantaneous feedback to the students. A very comprehensive and flexible custom on-line grade book system allows all EF courses to manage grades in an efficient and uniform manner while providing students with current and accurate information at any time.

Will is a past (2002) recipient of the Provost's Outstanding Instructor award. He has presented his classroom innovations at the ASEE annual conference and won an ITC award for introducing technology into the classroom.

The students consider Will approachable, patient and clear. Will uses continuous and direct feedback to improve and adjust all future lessons. His good humor and accessibility have made him a student favorite. He contributes greatly to our program and the College, and is deserving of this recognition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Roger Parsons', written in a cursive style.

J. Roger Parsons, Director
Engineering Fundamentals Division

JRP:jfc

Enclosures