

In the Spotlight

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Bourg Named 2015 Teacher of the Year

Catherine Bourg, a clinical assistant professor at the University of Georgia College of Pharmacy, had never planned on a career as a pharmacy educator when she was a student. So she was quite surprised, and honored, when she was recently named Teacher of the Year for 2015.

"After finishing pharmacy school, I completed a one-year postgraduate (PGY-1) hospital residency at the University of West Virginia Hospitals in Morgantown, West Virginia and then a PGY-2 ambulatory care residency with the UGA College of Pharmacy and the VA clinic in Athens," she said, adding that she had specifically looked for a two-year residency program that included an academic component. "By then I was certain that I wanted a career in academia with a clinical focus that would provide longitudinal care with patients."



As a second-year resident she established pharmacotherapy services at Mercy Health Center in Athens to help indigent and uninsured patients manage chronic conditions in collaboration with clinic providers. There she was able to combine clinical care with student and resident experiential instruction. She joined the College faculty in August 2011.

"I had always wanted to help people and I viewed pharmacists as being very accessible in the healthcare profession in their ability to interact with patients," she said. "Practicing at Mercy has been very rewarding because I enjoy helping students understand how knowledge acquired in the classroom can be applied to actual patients."

More recently she has become more interested in innovations in the classroom that incorporate new teaching techniques and new technology. She coordinates a course in disease state management that has traditionally been lecture based. Her approach now is to form student teams that analyze cases together to reach conclusions for patient care.

"We are also developing cases that use videos to simulate the interaction between pharmacists, patients, and other healthcare professionals in various disease state scenarios," she said, adding that she has been surveying students to assess whether case-based teaching and video scenarios have positive effects on student learning.

Bourg feels her innovations strengthen her role as a mentor and as a teacher in the classroom and in the clinic.

Her teaching philosophy focuses on leading by example, challenging students to make a commitment to life-long learning, and development of interprofessional collaborations. "I enjoy seeing the learner progress and being able to facilitate independent learning. It's rewarding seeing a student or resident feel confident in what they know and to be able to take care of patients," she added.

Her award includes an engraved memento, a \$1000 cash gift, a \$1000 salary increase, pending approval by the UGA Provost, and funds to attend the annual meeting of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy in Washington, DC.

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