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Advisory Board Announces the Sheridan Award 2008 Honorees

The Advisory Board of the Sheridan Center is delighted to announce the winners of the *2008 Harriet W. Sheridan Award for Distinguished Contribution to Teaching and Learning* at Brown University. The Sheridan Award Medal will be presented to **Professors Lynne Joyrich** (*Modern Culture and Media*) and **Diane Lipscombe** (*Bio-Med Neuroscience*) on Wednesday May 6, 2009 at the annual University Awards Ceremony to be held at 4:30 PM in Sayles Hall. Thanks to an endowment from the late Frederick Lippitt, the two recipients of the Sheridan Award will each receive a stipend of \$2000, as well as the Sheridan Award medal. Mr. Lippitt was Senior Fellow of the University's Board of Fellows and a member of the Sheridan Center's Advisory Board. The criteria for the Sheridan Award and a list of previous honorees (and their citations) can be found on the Center's web site at: http://www.brown.edu/sheridan_center/award.

Assoc. Prof. Lynne Joyrich (*Modern Culture and Media*) was nominated by colleagues from several departments across campus, as well as graduate students who have taught under her mentorship. She was recognized for the impact of her support for the pedagogy of teaching which exceeds the expected requirements of University faculty. While her skills as a teacher are a model and an inspiration to her colleagues, she was also cited for the way in which her pedagogy of teaching was explicitly integrated into all of her interdisciplinary activities.

Prof. Joyrich is noted for the way in which she makes transparent the pedagogy of her own expert teaching and scholarship. As a result, she encourages colleagues and graduate students to recognize that the relationship between teaching and scholarship is crucial to the development of deeper understanding and substantive learning. Her professional development seminars in the department are actively collaborative and valued by all who attend.

In particular, Prof. Joyrich devotes considerable time to mentoring graduate students in the critical analysis of the craft of teaching. While it is her reputation as an outstanding scholar which attracts graduate students to come to work with her, once here they discover that she is equally dedicated to their pedagogical development. Graduate students who have served as her teaching assistant note that she takes considerable time to explain the organization and educational goals of the syllabus; the varied ways of discussing assignments; and the methods for evaluating student learning. She makes sure that students have the opportunity to lecture in her courses and follows this up with individual feedback. Similarly, she reviews the feedback they give on written assignments and works with them to ensure that their responses to students enhance learning. As one former teaching assistant stated, "The net result was an intensive encounter with every aspect of teaching ... [which] has prepared Professor's Joyrich's teaching assistants well for the early years of their career..."

In sum, the letters of nomination and support reveal that Prof. Joyrich's self-conscious commitment to helping others identify the elements of effective teaching models the criteria for the Sheridan Award.

Prof. Diane Lipscombe (*Bio-Med Neuroscience*) was enthusiastically nominated for the Sheridan Award by colleagues and both current and former graduate students across the University. She was cited for her extraordinary leadership in developing a program for graduate students in Neuroscience which would provide for professional development in pedagogy in a national funding climate which does not support teaching.

Over the course of several years, Prof. Lipscombe and colleague Prof. Jerome Sanes led a redesign of the graduate curriculum to provide for integrated development of scholarship and teaching in spite of a lack of grant-funded support for graduate student teaching. In order to do this, she brought together graduate students and faculty colleagues from several departments to work collaboratively to develop a curriculum which expands

traditional issues of pedagogy within and across fields to incorporate inclusive teaching as well. The program is now some four years old and has provided a firm foundation for a large group of fledgling faculty. In addition, the innovative Graduate Partnership Program she arranged with the National Institutes of Health (NIH), involving graduate students from Brown, Oxford and Sweden, has inspired requests for the development of a program which will continue to give this international cohort of students opportunities for professional development in teaching during their time at NIH.

Junior colleagues cite the time and energy Prof. Lipscombe has devoted to support their development as faculty. They cite her as an inspiring model for the role of women in science. Graduate students and Post-doctoral Fellows attribute her extraordinary impact as a mentor to the ways in which she helps them to be active and critical participants in their educational experience in the field. For example, they describe her insistence that an effective presentation requires practice, feedback from others, and ongoing self-reflective assessment, in addition to mastery of content.