Retired faculty awarded Academic Emeritus Designation

Academic Emeritus designations recognize retired faculty members for significant contributions and exceptional service during their long term association with the University.

Two retired faculty members, Dr. Rick Rollins, Faculty of Management and Bob Lane, Faculty of Social Science, received this honour in June.

The award encourages and fosters an ongoing relationship between a teacher, librarian, or scholar and the University after retirement so that the University may benefit from the continuing relationship and the recipient may benefit from using the University name in the context of appropriate scholarly endeavours.

Founder of VIU Philosophy department

Bob Lane taught literature and philosophy for 31 years at VIU (then Malaspina College).

He started his teaching career in Oregon, but moved to BC to become one of the first faculty members at the new college on Kennedy Street in 1969.

Lane was a founding member of the Philosophy department “and for years, I was the only member,” he says.

As the institution grew, he became the Founding Director of VIU’s Institute of Practical Philosophy, which is still an active player today in community issues and contemporary moral issues.

For a short while, Lane served as the institution’s Special Events Coordinator, responsible for organizing public arts performances.

“My proudest moments are those where students were involved in intellectual and artistic expressions in the community,” he says.

“I remember teaching a night school class in Parksville and as their final exam, my students performed five of their plays at the Errington Community Hall. The place was packed and the local paper covered the event as though it was a Broadway production. It was great and an example of true community engagement.”

Lane also designed, supported and coordinated new interdisciplinary courses while pursuing his interest in philosophy at the University of California-Santa Barbara and at Simon Fraser University.

In addition to his devotion to his students, Lane supported his colleagues in many administrative positions, including Area Chair (the equivalent of Dean) and President of the Faculty Association.

Since retiring in 2000, Lane has served as a commissioner on the Nanaimo Parks, Recreation and Culture Board. He also authored a book entitled Reading the Bible: Intention, Text, Interpretation and a book of short stories called Redneck.

As Academic Emeritus, Lane plans to continue to read and review books, to offer public lectures, to work with the Institute of Practical Philosophy at VIU and to write stories and poems, as well as write for and edit Episyllogism, a philosophy blog.

When asked about receiving the Academic Emeritus designation he replied, “June is an important month in my life. I first heard about Malaspina College in June 1969; I received an Outstanding Service Award in June 2008; and just celebrated 60 years of marriage with Karen Lane in June 2015. And now this! It’s quite an honour.”

Continuing connections with VIU

Dr. Rick Rollins retired from VIU in 2014 after a 23-year career as a professor and researcher with VIU’s Department of Recreation and Tourism.

Rollins is passionate about exploring the relationship between tourism and conservation and taught several courses in this area, including Environmental Stewardship, Parks and Protected Areas in Canada.

He says that “tourism can be good or bad for the environment and for host communities, so we need to better understand how to get it right.”

Looking back on his career, Rollins feels his biggest contributions to student learning have been through experiential learning.

“I believe that students learn best if they can connect what they read about in textbooks or hear about in classrooms with something they see or experience in the community,” says Rollins. “It’s a more powerful and meaningful way of learning and becomes part of the lived experience for students.”

This approach was shared by his colleagues in the Department of Recreation and Tourism, making for “a good fit between my interests and the values shared by the department.”

Rollins explored many approaches to experiential learning and learned much from his colleagues. For example, his classes have undertaken community projects in many nearby communities including Ladysmith, Salt Spring Island, Gabriola Island, Lake Cowichan, Tofino, Bamfield, Port Renfrew and Powell River. He has also involved students in international projects in Ghana, Tanzania and Thailand.

Rollins is an active researcher, having authored or co-authored more than 100 refereed journal articles, delivered more than 100 conference presentations and co-edited a major text book “Parks and Protected Areas in Canada”.

He involves students in his research and sees research as another form of experiential learning that engages students in a deeper understanding of the tourism and recreation industries.

As Professor Emeritus, Rollins will continue to supervise student thesis projects at VIU in the Master in Sustainable Leisure Management program, which he helped develop. He plans to stay connected to VIU students and with his VIU colleagues, while still enjoying his other interests and retirement.

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