Graham Thurgood
Outstanding Professor 2006/2007

Professor Thurgood received his PhD in linguistics from UC Berkeley. He has been at CSU, Chico since 1999.

Thurgood is a distinguished and prolific scholar. He has written three books, more than 100 articles, and 27 reviews, and has presented over 100 papers at national and international conferences. He has received three prestigious National Science Foundation grants and won two Fulbright awards.

His current research field work in China shows his strong interest in the description and preservation of endangered languages, with an emphasis on what these tell us about Southeast Asian history. His co-edited volume *The Sino-Tibetan Languages* contains grammatical sketches of a large number of minority languages of China.

In the classroom, Thurgood is an inspiring teacher. Well organized and well prepared, he demands the best from his students and works tirelessly to guide them and help them to realize their potential. He effectively explains complex concepts in simple and readily understood terms. One student cites not only his devotion and genuine enthusiasm but also his warmth and humor: “He is a world-class punner, always eliciting good-natured groans from his students.”

Thurgood’s record of service is equally impressive. He has served on numerous campus committees and was instrumental in designing and developing the linguistics major. He is on the advisory board of several journals and regularly reviews papers for several others. He co-founded the prestigious Berkeley Linguistics Society and the journal *Linguistics of the Tibeto-Burman Area*. He is a regular reviewer for NSF, NEH, and other grant agencies and foundations.

Gordon Wolfe
Outstanding Professor 2007/2008

Gordon Wolfe, Biological Sciences, earned a BA in physics at Harvard University and a PhD in biogeochemistry from University of Washington. He joined the CSU, Chico faculty in 2000.

Wolfe’s research focuses on microbial eukaryotes, a diverse group previously known as “algae” and “protozoa.” This group is emerging as one of the last great areas of biology to be explored. “It is such a privilege to be able to participate in one of the greatest eras of discovery in human history,” said Wolfe.

Wolfe has published 23 articles, edited one book, and has presented at 30 national and international conferences. He has received 10 prestigious National Science Foundation grants. He received the CSU, Chico College of Natural Sciences Professional Achievement Award in 2007 and the CSU, Chico Professional Achievement Award in 2006. He is a leader in the Department of Biological Sciences, providing updated and new equipment for the department and the Science Field Station at Eagle Lake.

He has taught 11 different courses, developing three of these to align the microbiology program with national standards. His students describe him as a patient and mentoring professor.

He works closely with graduate and undergraduate students, including co-authoring articles with students.

Former graduate student Patricia Bitterman Brown, a microbiologist with the Department of Defense, wrote, “I came to this position because I had the necessary skills learned in Dr. Wolfe’s lab.”

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Kimihiko Nomura
Outstanding Teacher 2006/2007

Kimihiko Nomura, professor of Japanese in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, received his doctorate from Northern Arizona University. He came to Chico in 1991. He is known for infusing Japanese culture into his teaching, and was also instrumental in developing a new minor in Japanese that enrolled students for the first time in fall 2006.

“Dr. Nomura does more than teach Japanese characters and different alphabets in his classroom,” said colleague Char Prieto. “He educates students about Japanese traits, civilization, good manners, and the intricate culture behind the language.”

His passion for teaching was one of the characteristics mentioned most often by students and colleagues in his nomination letters. “The entire world is his classroom,” said Sara Cooper, Nomura’s colleague. “Incredibly, Kimi has his textbooks committed to memory, so whether in class or answering a cell phone call while walking across campus, he is able to answer a student’s questions and point her exactly to the textbook page number where more clarification may be found.”

Nomura’s excellence in teaching is demonstrated by the success of his students. More than 100 students who have taken Japanese at Chico State have participated in the Japan Exchange teaching program for the Japanese Ministry of Education.

Antoinette Martinez
Outstanding Teacher 2007/2008

Antoinette “Nette” Martinez, Anthropology, came to CSU, Chico in 1999, from UC Berkeley with a specialization in California archaeology. Those who nominated her for the award named her academic excellence and rigor, her rapport with students, and her commitment to graduate students as a few of her outstanding qualities.

The 12 courses taught range from general education courses and graduate seminars to field courses and community venues such as the Anthropology Forum. She has also introduced students to the prehistoric and historic archaeology of the Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve.

Martinez teaches the archaeological field methods class. “Nette has used these field classes to advance our knowledge of local prehistory as well as train the next generation of California archeologists,” said William Loker, dean of Undergraduate Education. “She is especially careful to place a strong emphasis on archaeological ethics and is highly sensitive to local Native American concerns in her work.”

Martinez routinely includes students in research, which allows them to present papers at professional conferences and gather experience. In addition, she has sponsored students for the Graduate Equity Fellowship, the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences Symposia, the statewide CSU Research Competition, the Cassanova pre-doctoral program, and numerous internships at the Northeast Information Center.

“I still feel the same motivation and interest in anthropology that I felt when I was a student, and hopefully that comes through when I teach,” said Martinez.

Former student Annette DeBrotherton wrote, “She knows when to push us and when to listen. She always strikes a perfect balance of mentor, friend, and superior educator.”
Jan O’Donnell
Outstanding Faculty Service 2006/2007

Jan O’Donnell, a professor in the School of Social Work since 1974, was selected for this award that acknowledges her many contributions to the School of Social Work, the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, the University, the community, and her profession.

O’Donnell has served as professor, advisor, faculty mentor, committee chair, Bachelor’s of Social Work director, Master’s of Social Work director, and department chair/director of the School of Social Work. She has taught nearly every course in the undergraduate program and led the school through four accreditation cycles for the BSW program and through candidacy and accreditation for the MSW program.

O’Donnell received the Federal Title IV-E Child Welfare Education grants for the BSW and MSW programs that fund stipends for students committed to working in public child welfare, and the State of California Mental Health Education grant that funds educational stipends for MSW students whose goal is to work in public mental health services. She also mentored junior faculty in their grant writing efforts that resulted in resources for program development and student stipends in geriatric social work. These programs will provide social work professionals who are better prepared to serve citizens of our region and our state.

A believer in strong university/community relationships, O’Donnell worked continuously and collaboratively with social service agencies throughout the region to strengthen the BSW program and to establish the MSW program. She gathered information, worked with community and campus leaders, researched data, and wrote the accreditation documents. She continues to recruit new agencies, instructors, and students for these programs.

James O’Bannon
Outstanding Faculty Service 2007/2008

James O’Bannon, Construction Management, was selected for his leadership, his excellence as a professor, and his outstanding record of philanthropy within his profession and the community.

In 2007, O’Bannon traveled with students, faculty, and staff from the College of Engineering, Computer Science, and Construction Management to New Orleans to assist citizens in rebuilding their homes. O’Bannon’s contribution to that trip was described by then dean of the college, Ken Derucher: “Dr. O’Bannon took 55 students, most of whom knew little of the construction trades, and taught them most aspects of construction related to rehabilitation of housing. With Professor O’Bannon’s mentoring, this was a genuine service-learning experience, one that will forever remain in the hearts of students.”

Attorney Leo Battle, who accompanied the group to New Orleans, said, “While in New Orleans, Jim, out of his own pocket, expended several hundred dollars to purchase additional building materials. Without his guidance, I know the accomplishments made during that week in New Orleans would have been far less.”

O’Bannon’s other charitable projects include rebuilding and repairing computers for a middle school in Oakland and developing a plan, with Professor Tracy Butts, English, and Charles Carter, Student Affairs, to help motivate and recognize African American students.

O’Bannon was a founder and board member of the Boys and Girls Club, a board member and project supervisor for Habitat for Humanity, a member of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship Committee, and a founder and co-sponsor of Dream Keepers.

Former student Coleman W. Jones, now a project engineer with Rudolph & Sletten Inc., said, “Dr. O’Bannon has united people in such a way that the bonds created can never be broken or forgotten. I am extremely thankful to have met and been influenced by a person so hard working and willing to help others.”
María R. González, Foreign Languages and Literatures, has served as the academic coordinator for the Spanish Program and as the academic advisor for students in Spanish since coming to CSU, Chico in 1993. González received a PhD in Spanish from UC Irvine in 1991. She has published a book and poetry in numerous anthologies. González was instrumental in the integration of technology into the teaching of languages when she helped create the Multimedia Language Center in 1998–2000.

She has been an advisor for MEChA, and she founded the Spanish Club, Sociedad Estudiantil de Literatura, Arte y Cultura. She also founded the cyber journal El Garabato, to publish the poetry, essays, and short stories of students in the Spanish program.

González regularly participates in Preview Day, Freshman Day, and Career Fair. With the Spanish club students, she helps bring speakers to campus. This contact with students enables her to help them in making career goals associated with Spanish.

“She is an undeniable role model for Chicano, Latino, and all students,” said colleague Patricia Black. “Once they realize how well informed she is and how genuinely interested she is in student concerns, they seek her out again and again. Many of her students have gone on to PhD programs, subsequent to her recommendation, in programs of national renown.”

Spanish student Beth Carmichael said of González: “She inspires students to challenge themselves to gain a more intense, fulfilling education. Had I not had the opportunity to meet Dr. González, perhaps I would not have fallen in love with the Hispanic culture and the Spanish language.”

González is working on a book that deals with Mexican women writers of Jewish origin, an unexplored topic in Mexican Literature.

Roger Guthrie, Recreation and Parks Management, was chosen for his commitment to advising students, his devotion to student success, and his contributions to developing a department-wide advising system.

Guthrie coordinates two options within Recreation and Parks Management: Community and Commercial Recreation, and Special Events and Tourism. He advises over 100 students each year, and he helps students find internships to fulfill their academic requirements.

Students cite Guthrie’s commitment and enthusiasm for their success. “While Roger was always a teacher, he was also a mentor, an expert, a student, a friend, a coach, a role-model, a supporter, a fan . . . and an inspiration,” said Caitlin Dutro, a 2007 graduate from Recreation and Parks Management.

“Roger’s commitment to good advising extends beyond his own advising sessions,” said colleague Laura McLachlin. “Roger developed a system for advising students that has become the standard for all departmental advisors. He created electronic advising forms for each pattern within each option for recreation majors.”

McLachlin also praised Guthrie’s professional networking. “He maintains connections with former students and professionals. He shares the current state of the industry, including issues, trends, and competencies, with students. This guidance allows students to enter the field with state-of-the-art skills and sets our students apart from other recreation departments.”

“Being selected as the University Outstanding Academic Advisor means my mentors, both alive and dead, are still making a difference,” said Guthrie. “I teach, I advise, I do research, and I do service. The tools I use to perform these key functions are a direct reflection of the influence of my mentors. It is my good fortune to have received the very human touch of their tutorage.”