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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UNC Board of Governors Announces University-wide Awards for Teaching Excellence

CHAPEL HILL – The Board of Governors of the multi-campus University of North Carolina has selected 17 of its most outstanding faculty to receive the 17th Annual Awards for Excellence in Teaching. Each award winner will receive a commemorative bronze medallion and a $7,500 cash prize.

The 17 recipients, representing an array of academic disciplines, were nominated by special committees on their home campuses and selected by the Board of Governors Committee on Personnel and Tenure, chaired by Fred Mills of Raleigh. The awards will be presented by a Board of Governors member during the spring graduation ceremony on each campus.

Winners include Professor Myra L. Pennell, Department of History, Appalachian State University; Associate Professor John W. Howard, School of Communication, East Carolina University; Professor José S. Gil, Department of Language, Literature and Communication, Elizabeth City State University; Associate Professor Todd S. Frobish, interim chair, Department of Communication, Fayetteville State University; Associate Professor Robert L. Howard, Sr., Department of Economics and Finance, NC A&T State University; Professor Drew Williams, director of advising, Department of English and Mass Communication, NC Central University; and Professor Sarah Ash, coordinator of the nutrition undergraduate program, Department of Food, Bioprocessing, and Nutrition Sciences, NC State University.

Other winners are Professor Sophie Mills, chair, Department of Classics, UNC Asheville; Professor Dino S. Cervigni, Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, UNC-Chapel Hill; Associate Professor Jeffrey W. Price, Department of Music, UNC Charlotte; Associate Professor Patrick Lee Lucas, Department of Interior Architecture, UNC Greensboro; Associate Professor Joseph P. Lakatos, Department of Accounting and Information Technology, UNC Pembroke; Professor Frank J. Bongiorno,
jazz studies coordinator, Department of Music, UNC Wilmington; **Artist faculty/instructor Steven LaCosse, assistant dean of enrollment, School of Music, UNC School of the Arts;** Associate Professor Aaron K. Ball, Department of Engineering and Technology, Western Carolina University; Associate Professor Jill J. Harp, Department of Life Sciences, Winston-Salem State University; and John Kolena, instructor of science and physics, NC School of Science and Mathematics.

Established by the Board of Governors in 1994 to underscore the importance of teaching and to reward good teaching across the University, the awards are given annually to a tenured faculty member from each UNC campus. Winners must have taught at their present institutions at least seven years. No one may receive the award more than once.

Award citations and thumbnail photos for all 17 award recipients can be found at [http://www.northcarolina.edu/bog/teaching_awards/2011/index.html](http://www.northcarolina.edu/bog/teaching_awards/2011/index.html) on the University of North Carolina website.

The oldest public university in the nation, the University of North Carolina enrolls more than 220,000 students and encompasses all 16 of North Carolina’s public institutions that grant baccalaureate degrees, as well as the NC School of Science and Mathematics, the nation’s first public residential high school for academically gifted students. The UNC Center for Public Television, with its 12-station statewide broadcast network, the UNC Health Care System, and the NC Arboretum are also under the University umbrella.

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**Dr. Steven LaCosse**

UNC School of the Arts

The University of North Carolina School of the Arts' 2010-2011 nominee for the Excellence in Teaching Award is Dr. Steven LaCosse, faculty member and Assistant Dean in the School of Music. Dr. LaCosse joined the faculty at University of North Carolina School of the Arts in 1997, and he also serves as Managing Director of the A.J. Fletcher Opera Institute.

Dr. LaCosse states in his Teaching Philosophy/Artistic Statement that he understands his teaching responsibilities center on an obligation "to teach the whole artist." He pursues that goal by providing
students with the basic artistic skills they need to become accomplished artists, and by engaging in thorough and ongoing assessments tailored to each individual student. Dr. LaCosse emphasizes this need to challenge students to improve based upon continuing assessment, so that they ultimately understand what it is "to be good citizens of the artistic world." Dr. LaCosse believes strongly that all students should accomplish this goal; he helps do so by modeling this kind of citizenry to his students.

Reviews by students and peers reflect the energy that Dr. LaCosse brings to the classroom, and the enthusiasm that he fosters in students. A consistent theme is the manner in which Dr. LaCosse creates a "safe environment" in which students can make mistakes as they develop their artistic skills. He is praised for the manner in which he has concern for each individual artist with whom he works. Dr. LaCosse is well regarded as a stage director by students and peers at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and in the opera profession. He is also commended as a performer, noted by one reviewer who states that Dr. LaCosse's "artistry is excellent." Furthermore, Dr. LaCosse is praised for his "brilliant" work as an administrator, both in opera production and in his role as Assistant Dean.

Dr. LaCosse earned the BM in Voice at Indiana University (South Bend) in 1983, the MM in Voice at the University of North Texas in 1988, the MS in Opera Stage Direction at Indiana University in 1992, and the DM in Voice at Indiana University in 2008. He remains very active professionally in opera production at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, and with various opera companies and festivals throughout the United States.