

**Profile of
Carole G. Vopat
Professor of English and Women's Studies, University of Wisconsin-Parkside
2003 Regents Teaching Excellence Award Recipient**

Background and Experience (Selected)

- Thirty-three years as a faculty member at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside.
- Extensive, cutting-edge curriculum development in literature, including courses on Literature of the Holocaust; Asian-American Literature; Latina Literature; Gay and Lesbian Literature; Literature and Diversity: Women of Color; African-American Women Writers; Introduction to Women's Studies; Foremothers of the English Novel: Austen to Woolf; and others.
- Won numerous teaching awards at UW-Parkside, including the institution-wide Stella Gray Teaching Excellence Award in 2001 and 1992.
- Recipient of the Center for Educational and Cultural Advancement's Faculty Award for "Educational and Cultural Advancements" on behalf of minority students (1991).
- Teaches fiction writing, and is also an award-winning writer of fiction and poetry, a frequently published author, and a recipient of several grants to support her fiction writing from the Wisconsin Arts Board.
- Founding Director of the UW-Parkside Women's Studies Program (1972-1981), and has served as a member of the program's Steering Committee since 1982.
- Extensive participation in faculty governance and institution-wide committees such as Faculty Rights and Responsibilities, the Committee on Racial Awareness and Cultural Diversity, and others.
- Mentor of women faculty, both informally and formally, since 1974.

In Professor Vopat's own words:

- "When I arrived at college, it was as if a world which had been in black-and-white suddenly exploded into three-dimensional Technicolor. Through the study of literature and the lessons of literature, I became aware of the depth and diversity of experience; of a life beyond and beneath the surface and myself. Indeed, college was such a magic world for me that I arranged never to leave it. Which brings me to the subject of my 33 years at Parkside."
- "I want to give my students what was given to me: a world transformed through education and literature. I try to open their minds and hearts through literature so that they can enjoy all that life has to offer; so that they may transcend the lives they were given, and realize that they don't have to play the cards they were dealt: literature—education—can deal them a whole new hand."
- "I know that from time to time words like *better*, *truth*, *reality*, *depth*, go out of fashion; nonetheless, I believe that education betters us, and in a moral sense as well It is my philosophy to meet students wherever they are, walk alongside them, help them apprehend the insight, passion, and intellectual fervor that I learned in college, and that has continued to motivate me and sustain me; to feel the wisdom and solace of literature; to become better and to rise, however they themselves learn to define this; and ultimately to come to agree that the unexamined life is not worth living."

In the words of her students:

- “Previous courses in Shakespeare and advanced composition had sparked an interest in the study of English, but it was Carole’s class that set the fire ablaze. In every class, she professed her passion and knowledge of the subject; she challenged me to think beyond the narrow realities of my life and understanding, and she inspired me to model myself after her as a scholar, a teacher, and a human being. Her teaching in that course changed my life.”
 - Christine M. Tutlewski, UW-Parkside graduate and current Doctoral Student in English at UW-Milwaukee
- “The subject of the Holocaust is obviously very grim. How does one go about ‘teaching’ what is undoubtedly one of the most horrific occurrences in all of human history? Yet from the first class on it’s been clear that Professor Vopat has done an amazing amount of meditation and research on the subject, indeed has been living with and preparing for it for quite some time. She has such a strong command of what could be unwieldy material; her presentation of it is as clear and careful and hard-hitting as the subject demands. She has obviously absorbed it into her conscience and consciousness. At two hours and forty-five minutes, once a week, the class is hardly long enough. When I happen to glance up at the clock and see the end approaching, my heart sinks.”
 - Guy Crucianelli, UW-Parkside Student
- “I often feel like I’m glowing when I leave [Professor Vopas’s] class.”
 - Anonymous comment from a recent student evaluation.

In the words of her colleagues:

- “Almost by herself, [Professor Vopat] has given credence to the Department’s claim that it offers courses attuned to its diverse student body. And almost single-handedly, Carole has created student demand for what were once taboo or unpopular topics such as gay literature or the literature of the Holocaust.”
 - Walter Graffin, Chair of the English Department, UW-Parkside
- “Some of our best teachers have found a groove and stay with it; Professor Vopat has sought out new areas and new challenges. She has asked what needed to be taught and then equipped herself to teach it. In doing so, she has been a powerful force for good in our department and on our campus. Her teaching excellence is not just a matter of good classroom performance; it is a model of bravery and inclusiveness.”
 - Robert H. Canary, Professor of English, UW-Parkside
- “Dr. Vopat is a courageous, sensitive, generous teacher. She is an inspirational role model not only for students, but for teachers, like myself, who are navigating academe from the margins. She teaches me that the margin is not necessarily a marginal space.”
 - Fay Yokomizo Akindes, Associate Professor of Communication and mentee of Professor Vopas