

**Profile of
Kirthi Premadasa
Associate Professor, Mathematics, University of Wisconsin–Baraboo/Sauk County
University of Wisconsin Colleges
2018 Regents Teaching Excellence Individual Award Recipient**

Highlights from nomination materials:

- PhD, Purdue University (Algebraic Topology); Master of Science, Purdue University (Pure Mathematics); and Bachelor of Science (1st Class Honors in Mathematics), University of Colombo, Sri Lanka.
- Research explores both applied mathematics and mathematics pedagogy; collaborates with colleagues in disciplines that are mathematics-reliant; provides leadership in applied learning and undergraduate research; as an example, the article “The Soda Can Optimization Problem” – about how to make the most cost-effective soda can – was written collaboratively with UW-Baraboo/Sauk County students.
- Contributes to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) and created one of the very few SOTL websites dedicated to mathematics at a national level; played a primary role in organizing and moderating a panel discussion on SOTL in mathematics for the wider Wisconsin mathematics community at the Mathematical Association of America’s Wisconsin Chapter meeting (2010).
- Implements his teaching philosophy in class through a wide range of research-guided interventions.
- Worked with department chair Kavita Bhatia to design a new pathway for developmental mathematics with the support of a UW System Growth Agenda Grant; the new pathway is in its third year with positive results.
- Designed and taught a project-based business algebra course using UW-Extension’s competency-based model.
- Increases student motivation by using realistic word problems and employs course roadmaps, which help students organize their learning process.
- Engages millennial students by giving them a voice in tackling challenging mathematical problems (for example, by using social media and cell phone clickers) and showing them the connection between mathematics and other disciplines.
- Select awards/honors: Fulbright Specialist in Math Education (2017 for three-year term); Arthur M. Kaplan Award for excellence in service and teaching (2016); Teacher Appreciation Award (PTK Chapter, 2016); Alliant Energy Underkofler Excellence in Teaching Award (2013); UW Colleges Chancellor Award for Teaching Excellence (2012).

In Kirthi Premadasa’s own words:

- “During the last decade, I have made efforts beyond [the] curricular to enhance learning to change the lives of my students. As I continue along this path of research-based teaching, I take great satisfaction and joy from the outcomes and the change I foster in students.”

In the words of colleagues:

- “Prof. Premadasa’s work in the classroom and his research on the pedagogy of mathematics combine to create a learning environment in which his students thrive....Prof. Premadasa’s teaching goes beyond mathematics, developing students’ critical thinking and analytical skills.” —*Charles E. Clark, Regional Executive Officer & Dean, UW Colleges - Southwest*
- “Kirthi Premadasa is one of the best teachers that I have ever had the pleasure of getting to know. Not only is he superb with students in the classroom, he continues his teaching every minute of the day by tirelessly helping department members stay current on the newest technologies and teaching methods that directly result in us becoming better teachers.” —*Brian M. Murphy, Associate Professor of Mathematics, UW Colleges*