

**Profile of
Rex Hanger**
Professor of Geography, University of Wisconsin–Whitewater
2019 Regents Teaching Excellence Individual Award Recipient

Highlights from nomination materials:

- PhD, Paleontology & Integrative Biology, University of California, Berkeley; MS and BS, Geology, Texas A&M.
- Practitioner of multiple high-impact practices to support student success and a strong advocate in support of inclusive excellence goals, particularly gender equity in the natural sciences; constantly striving to find new and innovative ways to actively engage and challenge his students.
- Has mentored 51 undergraduate researchers, of which nearly 75% were female and two were McNair Scholars; 15 of these students went on to receive research internship awards, primarily in research museums; four of his students were awarded prestigious Smithsonian Institution Natural History Research Experiences (NHRE) internships – more than any other faculty member in the United States; mentor of a student who received the prestigious Goldwater Scholarship.
- Recognized for the work he does in the classroom and for the experiential, hands-on learning opportunities that he presents to his students through his field study, study abroad, and independent study courses.
- Affectionately known as the “Fossil Guy” for the many experiential learning field study trips he has led at least 14 times; these trips were developed by Dr. Hanger to take students to fossil-rich locations through the western region of the U.S.; has twice led large study abroad groups to Scotland, the birthplace of modern geology.
- At the forefront of creating online lab science courses for the university, another initiative that expands course options for students who are not able to participate in face-to-face lab courses.
- Created and donated fossil collections to the Smithsonian Institution and to the Museum of National and Cultural History at the University of Oregon.
- Associate Director for the Special Initiatives Program for Underrepresented Groups at the Wisconsin Space Grant Consortium since 2005; recently named Adjunct Curator of Geology for the Milwaukee Public Museum.
- Select awards/honors: UW-Whitewater College of Letters and Sciences Award for Excellence in Teaching (2018); UW-Whitewater W.P. Roseman Excellence in Teaching Award (2018); Outstanding Teacher recognition from the Panhellenic Council (three times); and the UW-Whitewater Mapworks recognition for the individual who most positively influenced the lives of first-year students (22 times).

In Rex Hanger’s own words:

- “I love to teach [General Education] courses just as much as my upper-level ones, because it is there that I can have the broadest impact, imparting a knowledge and love of the Earth to students from all majors going on to careers so varied that I can’t imagine them all.”

In the words of colleagues:

- “Professor Hanger is a phenomenal instructor! He is a dedicated and innovative teacher who consistently receives some of the highest student evaluations at UW-Whitewater....His teaching has had a positive impact on the lives of many UW-Whitewater students.”
—*Susan Elrod, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, UW-Whitewater*
- “[Dr. Hanger] has led countless field trips throughout the U.S. and has received a grant from the Wisconsin Space Grant Consortium to capture photos and videos to create virtual field trips for students to ‘visit’ important geologic sites remotely. Dr. Hanger designed this wonderful project, in part, to help physically challenged students to participate in field study and to experience the magic of geology under his guidance—an important testament to Dr. Hanger’s commitment to inclusivity.”
—*Margo Kleinfeld, Assoc. Prof. & Chair; Geography, Geology & Environmental Science; UW-Whitewater*