

Peru State Honors Professor

Peru, Nebraska- Peru State College Criminal Justice Professor, Dr. Kelly Asmussen, was named the institutions 2016 Teacher Excellence Award winner. Asmussen was honored during the college's commencement on May 7 on the historic campus of a thousand oaks.

President Dan Hanson said, "Dr. Asmussen has served an incredible role in Peru State College's academic development during his twenty-two years of service. His efforts to found the Criminal Justice major and its associated programs have culminated in hundreds of graduates including more than thirty graduates this spring."

"Dr. Asmussen's teaching excellence will leave a lasting legacy at Peru State College and in the law enforcement and corrections offices of this state and region."

Asmussen said, "I am particularly honored to receive the Teaching Excellence Award as a culmination of my teaching career at Peru State College. For the past twenty-plus years, I have been richly rewarded watching the careers of many students at all levels of the Criminal Justice System excel through research, community service, and unique educational engagement opportunities."

"I would start my entire career over again and repeat the process; I loved the challenges and the successes I was able to achieve."

Asmussen joined the Peru State faculty in 1994 and teaches criminal justice in the Peru State College School of Professional Studies. Before beginning with Peru State College, he pursued his Ph.D. at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln and worked for fourteen years in the maximum security unit at the Nebraska State Penitentiary.

Shortly after joining the faculty, Asmussen was instrumental in establishing Peru State's criminal justice program. He also arranged the Provisional Alcohol Drug Addiction Counseling (PLADC) program allowing criminal justice and psychology majors to attain provisional certification to treat persons with alcohol and other addictions.

Asmussen developed, coordinated and supervised six international study tours to Australia, Costa Rica, and England for over 150 students from Peru State and other colleges. Students traveled and lived in these countries while comparing the host country's criminal justice system to the U.S. system.

Dr. Asmussen also established the Inside-Out course, "Searching for Justice." The course engages 15 "outside" college students and 15 "inside" persons in a classroom at the Tecumseh State Correctional Institution, a maximum-security prison. The course examines the intersection of class, race, gender, crime and status relating to the search for social justice. Students report the experience was transformative and "the class has been their best educational experience in college." Asmussen has collected data for five years regarding the changing attitudes of participating students. He has presented his research at a professional conference and a paper has been submitted for publication.

Asmussen teaches a capstone course about societal problems where students are taught the skills to write and submit grant proposals to funding agencies. Five proposals have been granted including \$37,000 from FEMA for new firefighting gear and \$40,000 for a therapy garden in Auburn.

Asmussen has published research articles about high school weapon possession; college student fear; victimization; reactions to violence; instruction and assessment strategies in criminalistics; and a "how to" guide to develop an international study tour. His seminal published article on campus

violence continues to be a standard reference in the top research textbooks today.

In addition to his published research, Asmussen has served as a peer reviewer for over twenty textbooks. He has also evaluated the training academy curriculums for corrections and police in seven states; consulted with school districts regarding school safety issues; and helped multiple southeast Nebraska agencies review procedures and achieve grant funding.

Asmussen coordinated and facilitated the Nebraska Court of Appeals holding oral arguments at Peru State College twice in the past four years. Peru State was the first college campus to host the court.

Dr. Asmussen is a member of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, the American Society of Criminology, and the Midwest Criminal Justice Association. He frequently attends and presents at their annual conferences.

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