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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Cal Poly Names 2006-2007 Distinguished Teachers

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly has named two professors from the college of Liberal Arts and one from the college of Science and Mathematics to receive this year's highest teaching award.

Associate Professor William Fitzhenry of the English Department, Professor Donald Ryujin of the Psychology and Child Development Department, and Associate Professor Elena Levine Keeling of the Biological Sciences Department are all recipients of the 2006-2007 Distinguished Teaching Award.

All three are noted for providing stimulating, challenging, and entertaining courses and for helping students both in the classroom and beyond.

Fitzhenry came to Cal Poly in 1997. His primary fields of study are Medieval and Renaissance Literature. He received his bachelor's degree from State University of New York in 1984; His M.A. from the University of Colorado in 1991; and his Ph.D. from Duke University in 1997. He joined the Cal Poly faculty in 1997.

Nominating Students' comments about him include:

- "Dr. Fitzhenry is always energetic and high spirited. He makes learning really fun and entertaining. I think he is the most important teacher of my student career thus far."
- "Dr. Fitzhenry provided beautiful, cohesive class discussions of complex material that invited participation from students."
- "Because of his style of teaching he has inspired me to become a better reader and writer."
- "His teaching skills are clear and concise. He makes literature come alive."

Ryujin came to Cal Poly in 1989. He received his bachelor's degree from Stanford in 1968 and his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in 1983. His interests include prejudice as it relates to sex and race, achievement/intrinsic motivation, relationships, race and sex biases in psychology, especially as it relates to psychotherapy. He previously taught social psychology as an associate professor at DePauw University in Greencastle, IN.

Comments from nominating students included:

- "He challenges us to use our brain and view inside the box and outside of it."
- "Don has changed my perspective on life and the way humans work. He allows us to value ourselves and to build our self esteem."
- "I was inspired and I watched other students be inspired by his dedication and compassion. He made lectures real; he brought the classroom to life with just the right amount of humor and humility. I can honestly say he was the best teacher I ever had at Cal Poly."

Keeling joined the faculty at Cal Poly in 1996. She earned her bachelor's degree in Molecular Biophysics & Biochemistry from Yale University in 1989 and her Ph.D. in Biochemistry from UC San Francisco in 1996. Her research interests are the molecular and cellular biology of monarch butterflies; development biology, especially cell interactions in development; and biology education.

Nominating students made these comments about Keeling:

- "Dr. Keeling doesn't just lecture to her class; she makes us interact with the material and each other."
- "She answers innumerable questions with patience and intelligence which make you want to learn more."
- "She learns almost every student's name that attends her class or visits her office."
- "Dr. Keeling inspired me to love biology. She made me want to know more about all of science."

The three 2006-2007 Distinguished Teachers will be recognized at the General Session of Cal Poly's Fall Conference, Monday, Sept. 10. The distinguished teachers are nominated by students and alumni of the university. Cal Poly has named 135 distinguished professors since the awards program began in 1964.

For more information on the awards and previous winners, go to the Cal Poly Academic Senate Distinguished Teaching Web page at <http://www.calpoly.edu/~acadsen/dta.html>.

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