FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cal Poly Selects Three Distinguished Teachers for Annual Award

Three Cal Poly professors, all cited for their passion for teaching and learning, have been selected to receive the university's highest teaching honor.

The winners of the 2001-2002 Distinguished Teaching Awards are Kevin Clark, a member of the English Department faculty since 1988, Alyson McLamore, a Music Department faculty member since 1991, and Mark Zohns, who has taught in the BioResource and Agricultural Engineering Department since 1986. They will be recognized at Spring Commencement ceremonies June 15.

The three teachers were all credited with going out of their way to help students, serving as role models professionally and personally, and being well prepared for their classes.

Clark is known for teaching his classes in a circle to maximize interaction and make sure every student participates during every class. Students who nominated him and committee members who observed him said, "His deep love of poetry and literature are palpable through his untamed enthusiasm, which is contagious. He first establishes an atmosphere of trust and joviality before jumping into the lesson. Well-planned discussions force students to look beyond the surface of a poem and 'go deeper' - a favorite phrase of his. Through the nurturing, prodding, and ever-challenging hand of this outstanding teacher, students come to care deeply for the power of words, appreciate the craftsmanship of poems, and love the voice of the poet. Outside the classroom his sincere concern for the success of every student is evident in the line of students that forms outside his door during office hours. His caring and approachable personality is the first invitation for students to stop by during office hours. He is willing to do whatever it takes to help a student."

Clark is an award-winning poet whose book of poems "In the Evening of
No Warning" was recently published by New Issues Press. He is the senior professor of poetry writing in Cal Poly's English Department. He teaches modern and contemporary American literature, the modern novel, modern world literature, creative writing and composition. Clark earned a bachelor's in English from the University of Florida and a master's and doctorate in English from UC Davis. He lives in San Luis Obispo.

McLamore was cited for being "extremely organized and well prepared with videos, audio tapes, overheads, musical instruments, live performances and candy treats for students." Nominees and committee members said, "Her lectures are easy to follow and interesting. She is a fountain of information and always approachable. She is constantly challenging students and never settles for less than their individual best. She instills a passion for learning that takes education to a new level. Although students find her classes the most difficult, they are most thankful that they took them. She inspires students to reach high standards, and they celebrate their accomplishments. She is always available to assist students and is committed to their success."

McLamore has been assistant director for the Tournament of Roses Honor Band since 1982. She teaches courses in music history, music education, musicianship and performance. She earned a bachelor's degree, a master's degree and a doctorate -- all in music and all from UCLA. McLamore lives in Arroyo Grande.

"Zohns has a knack for making students feel good about themselves and their major," said nominators and committee members. He was also credited with "accepting nothing but the best from himself in his work and in his life." Additional remarks included, "His high-quality attitude is infectious. He makes lectures and labs interesting by telling stories of real-life examples and by utilizing his unlimited energy and sense of humor. His teaching style is organized, with extensive board-written notes, demonstrations and student interaction. He has a talent for making complex concepts understandable and fun to figure out. Students see him as genuinely interested in their progress. They remember the barbecues he hosts and the long hours he is willing to spend to explain whatever a student needs to know. Anyone who has studied with him knows that there are two ways to do things: the right way and again. He makes a positive and dramatic impression on the lives he touches."

Zohns has earned numerous awards during his tenure at Cal Poly, including the College of Agriculture's 2001 Dole Faculty Award. He was named the College of Agriculture Student Club Advisor of the Year in 1991, 1993, 1995 and 2002. He teaches courses in agricultural mechanics, CAD (computer-aided design) for agricultural engineering, equipment engineering, advanced mechanics in agriculture and dynamics for engineering technology. He earned a bachelor's degree in agricultural engineering from Cal Poly, a master's in engineering and a doctorate in engineering from UC Davis. Zohns is a San Luis Obispo resident.
Students and alumni of the university nominate the distinguished teachers. Cal Poly has named 120 distinguished professors since the awards program began in 1964.

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(NOTE TO EDITORS: For electronic images of this year's Distinguished Teachers, please contact Jo Ann Lloyd at 756-1511 or jlloyd@calpoly.edu.)