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Mizzou Professor Wins Boyer Award

Newton D'Souza, an associate professor of architectural studies, has become the third University of Missouri faculty member in the last four years to win the Ernest L. Boyer International Award for Excellence in Teaching.

The prestigious Boyer Award, which was handed out at last week's International Conference on College Teaching and Learning (ICCTL) in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., identifies an outstanding faculty member who expanded the boundaries of teaching, learning and technology in higher education. The award comes with a \$5,000 cash honorarium.

"I feel I was just doing my day-to-day work, like every other faculty at MU, trying to give the best learning experience we can to our students," D'Souza said. "This award is a bonus."

D'Souza claims not to be a technology person, but instead someone who likes to work with technology.

"Technology is a double-edged sword," D'Souza said. "It can be disruptive, but it also can be transformative."

D'Souza uses multi-screen technology to connect with students both in the classroom and online. He first used multi-screen technology with Blackboard Collaborate and now uses Google Hangout to recreate a real discussion merging both online and onsite classrooms.

With individual webcams on each computer, each student is able to see everyone in class. D'Souza also replaced the use of a chalkboard with a tablet to display his notes on the computer screen.

D'Souza challenges his students to communicate and think critically in order to foster more interaction between online and onsite students. According to D'Souza, knowing when and why to use technology is critical.

"Not all technology will be useful for all we do," he said. "We need to constantly improvise, adapt and keep our eyes open."

D'Souza's interest in using technology expands outside the classroom and into his research. He is currently exploring the use of [Virtual Reality Learning Environment](#) and how the interfaces of technology affect learning. His goal is to discover how different learners interact with technology according to their natural learning style. He is also researching the impact of new media on the creative process.

"There will be disappointments and successes," D'Souza says. "That is the nature of technology. Instead of that big leap, we should focus on the small pieces that can be interwoven over time."

D'Souza was also presented with the Award for Innovative Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Technology at the ICCTL.

Past winners of the Boyer Award include MU Associate Professor of Literacy Studies Elizabeth Baker (2011) and Associate Professor of Biological Sciences Bethany Stone (2012). Baker and Stone also claimed the Award for Innovative Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Technology. Last year, Kerri McBee-Black, an instructor in the department of textile and apparel management, earned that recognition at the annual ICCTL.

“As evident by the success with these awards, Mizzou has gained a reputation for the innovative ways our faculty are using technology to enhance teaching and learning,” said Jim Spain, vice provost for undergraduate studies. “Along with resources such as ET@MO (Educational Technologies at Missouri), our faculty continue to develop new and creative strategies to advance their teaching.”

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