



JOHN LOPPNOW: The chemist's latest experiment is a new, multi-disciplinary science course taught by profs from eight different disciplines

The 3M Awards: our best teachers

These 10 professors are leading the way, challenging their students—and putting teaching back at the centre of the university

BY NICHOLAS KÖHLER, SUSAN MOHAMMAD AND RACHEL MENDES • Baljit Singh, a professor of anatomy at the University of Saskatchewan's Western College of Veterinary Medicine, laughs about it now—but during his first year as a veterinary student, he *failed* the very course he now teaches. "I always tell my students," says Singh. "I use it as a very inspirational example. I say, 'Look, this is what happened to me in my first year. And I ended up teaching anatomy.'"

Singh, the one-time academic bungler, has since gone on to receive numerous academic distinctions, and is one of 10 professors

named this year to the 3M National Teaching Fellowship. The award was established 24 years ago by 3M Canada in collaboration with the Society of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. *Maclean's* has been the award's media partner since 2006.

These new fellows join an elite club that now includes 238 professors. To win, it's not enough to be merely a great teacher. "We're looking for personalities, for people who are authentic, who are passionate—and Baljit is a great example," says program coordinator Arshad Ahmad, a Concordia University business professor and a 3M fellow himself.

Singh attributes his pedagogic success to the teachers in his own life. "They have built a fire in my mind," says Singh. "This is the power of a teacher—once you are hooked up with an outstanding teacher, half the battles are won."

The 3M National Teaching Fellowship rewards great teaching, and the teaching leadership required to share innovations with the broader educational community. Fellows are regularly brought together to exchange ideas, making the club an incubator for new teaching techniques. In June, they will gather in Fredericton; in November, this year's inductees will attend a retreat at the Fairmont Le Château Montebello in Quebec. "We bring these people together to get to know each other as teachers and learn from each other," says Ahmad. "There they are using their cur-

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THIS YEAR'S BEST

IN 1986, to recognize the importance of university teaching, the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and 3M Canada created the 3M Teaching Fellowships. Up to 10 university faculty members are recognized each year for their exceptional contributions to teaching and learning. Since 2006, *Maclean's* has proudly been the program's media sponsor.



This year's 3M Teaching Fellows, from left to right: David Barnett, Department of Drama, University of Alberta; Nick Bontis, DeGroote School of Business, McMaster University; Ken Cramer, Department of Psychology, University of Windsor; Carolyn Eyles, School of Geography and Earth Sciences, McMaster University

