

Dr. Ronda Knox

Dr. Ronda Knox is a professor and department chair of the Communication Studies Department at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. She earned her Ph.D. in Organizational Communication from Kent State University in 1996 and was hired at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse in the fall of 1996. She has been teaching in the Communication Studies Department with a focus on instructional and organizational communication. Ronda has received several teaching and service awards throughout her 10 year career at UW-La Crosse. In addition to her service to the university, she has published a number of articles about teaching in the college classroom.

As a college professor, Ronda considers every interaction with students as an opportunity to lead by example. Ronda serves as a role model for her students, who are predominantly female, in many ways. As the only full professor in her department and as the department chair, Ronda serves as a role model for women showing them how dedication to a career can break the glass ceiling. Ronda encourages women in and out of the classroom to be independent and think critically. Ronda is an approachable, sincere, and motivating teacher. Her mentoring techniques include always having a positive attitude, giving her students priority, and being honest all situations.

Current research shows that a woman makes 73 cents to every dollar a man earns (Sax, 2005). One reason for this is that women do not ask for higher salaries when they are offered positions and males do. Ronda teaches an interviewing course and always communicates the importance of salary negotiation for women. She also gives women the tools necessary when they are asked illegal questions. Women are typically asked more about their families and living situations (which is illegal) than males in interviews. Ronda provides women specific language to use when these situations arise. Ronda is known for her organization, respect for diversity, and diplomacy.

Ronda has served on many university committees during her 10 years at UW-L. Last year she received the "Recognition of Excellence" award in service from the College of Liberal Studies. She is currently the department chair and a member of the faculty senate executive committee. In both of these positions, she was elected by her peers. Ronda has also served as the chair of many search committees on campus, not only in her department but also in the College Dean's Office. UW-L has benefited from Ronda's expertise in interviewing as well as organizational communication. Under the leadership of Ronda as chair of the College's Public Relations committee, the committee created brochures, web pages, recruitment videos, newsletters, and introduced town hall meetings to benefit the College of Liberal Studies. As a teacher, Ronda has integrated many service-learning projects in her classes. In her Professional Communication course, one of the speech assignments is to persuade the class to donate money to a non-profit organization. Ronda collects one dollar from every student and donates her own money to make a \$30 donation to a non-profit organization. Not only does one non-profit organization get a donation, but students learn about 20 other non-profit organizations within the community as well as a lesson about philanthropy. Ronda encourages her students to volunteer and make a difference in the La Crosse and surrounding communities.

In sum, Dr. Ronda Knox leads by example. She knows she is a role model to her female students and try to make ever interaction a positive one, either professionally or personally. Her colleagues value her fairness and equality in work-related situations. She has been nominated and elected to numerous leadership positions within her organization. Her lessons on philanthropy have reached over a thousand students since she has been a faculty member at UW-L. Ronda practices what she teaches and is an effective communicator and leader.