

Citation for the University Distinguished Teaching Award, 2007

First Mathematics Professor since 1987 to receive the University's highest teaching award, fourth since 1965

Kenneth Golden

Professor of Mathematics

If a frog jumps half the distance to the end of a desk at progressively more frequent intervals, will the frog ever reach the end of the desk? Professor Kenneth Golden's signature introduction to calculus captures his efforts to make mathematics real and interesting. Since joining the University of Utah faculty in 1991, Golden has filled large auditoriums with waiting lists for his popular Calculus I-III classes. "He has the capacity to capture the pupils in such a way that their desire to learn is unquenchable," says one student. "Golden always puts on a one-man show when he lectures, and his infectious enthusiasm radiates throughout his audiences." Golden received his B.S. in mathematics and physics from Dartmouth College in 1980, and his M.S. and Ph.D. in mathematics from New York University in 1983 and 1984, respectively. Since 2002, he has been the coordinator for the Department of Mathematics' Research Experiences for Undergraduates program, directing research projects that led to more than a dozen published papers authored by University of Utah undergraduates. Since 2003, he has taken six of his undergraduate students on Antarctic trips to study sea ice, as well as other trips to the Geophysical Institute at the University of Alaska Fairbanks for laboratory and theoretical work. One research student commented: "By treating me more like a colleague than a student, Dr. Golden aided my research successes throughout my undergraduate career." As an advocate for undergraduate research, Golden aided the math department in securing a prestigious \$3 million Vertical Integration of Research and Education (VIGRE) grant to help departments promote research scholarship activities for undergraduates. The University of Utah was one of only five other institutions to receive the grant a second time. In addition, Golden is writing a calculus textbook with an emphasis on examples that illustrate the relevance of mathematics. The senior editor of the text says: "Ken's style of teaching reflects his passion and excitement for learning. When watching Ken teach, I get the feeling that he thinks calculus lies buried within each of his student's understanding and all he has to do is unlock it."