

## New professorships help undergraduate research grow

By Kim Weaver Spurr '88

Jane Danielewicz, a professor of English and comparative literature, is enthusiastic about the value of undergraduate research in guiding students “to be amazed and stunned by what they discover.”

The College of Arts and Sciences has recognized her dedication by naming her one of four inaugural Research and Undergraduate Education Term Professors in the four divisions of the College: fine arts, social and behavioral sciences, humanities, and natural sciences and mathematics.

A recommendation of the 2006 Quality Enhancement Plan, these professorships will enhance the culture of undergraduate research at UNC.

“When students come to college, it’s about developing an identity ... so finding out about research connects the students to their senses of curiosity and creativity,” said Danielewicz, the Richard Grant Hiskey Distinguished Term Professor in Research and Undergraduate Education. “You have an opportunity to help them claim a space within the university. We’re a research university, and students should be a part of this when they first walk onto this campus.”

Danielewicz is also a champion of engaging graduate students as mentors for undergraduate research. She works with

Graduate Research Consultants (GRCs) in her courses on autobiography and life-writing genres.

The Office for Undergraduate Research began the GRC program in 2003 to enable faculty to expand opportunities for undergraduate research in their classes. The graduate students work with the

instructor and the students on planning, carrying out and communicating their research. The program has continued to grow. In fall 2003, six GRCs served 214 undergraduates through three courses. In fall 2008, 50 GRCs worked with 1,644 undergraduates through 49 courses. The GRC courses are taught in all divisions of the College and at all levels.

Danielewicz first worked with GRC Risa Applegarth '09 in her honors seminar, “Reading and Writing Women’s Lives.” Since then, Danielewicz has collaborated with Applegarth several times and involved other GRCs about six times in her courses.

Applegarth, who recently graduated with a Ph.D. in English and is now an assistant professor at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, said she enjoyed helping to cultivate students’ sense of independent inquiry.

“Being a GRC gives you a chance to guide students as they’re in the process of becoming researchers,” she said. Applegarth also worked with GRCs in some of the classes she taught at UNC and developed

cross-disciplinary relationships with fellow graduate students.

Through a grant from the Spencer and Teagle Foundations, Danielewicz is the principal investigator on a project that will support the growth of writing, critical thinking and research in communication-intensive courses. GRCs will help with that process.

Danielewicz said her students continue to surprise and challenge her.

“I want to invite students into the life I lead here,” she said. “They find ways to do things you can’t imagine.” •



Jane Danielewicz

### NEW RESEARCH AND UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION TERM PROFESSORS:

*(All of the professorships are supported by The Margaret and Paul A. Johnston Fund. It was established in 1987 in the College of Arts and Sciences to honor retired faculty members. It is the largest endowed fund in the College.)*

- **Drew Coleman**, geology: Jarsolav Folda Distinguished Term Professor in Research and Undergraduate Education
- **Jane Danielewicz**, English and comparative literature: Richard Grant Hiskey Distinguished Term Professor in Research and Undergraduate Education
- **Donald M. Reid**, history: J. Alan Feduccia Distinguished Term Professor in Research and Undergraduate Education
- **elin o'Hara slavick**, art: Glen H. Elder, Jr. Distinguished Term Professor in Research and Undergraduate Education