

Dr Debra Langan

Criminology

Dr. Debra Langan is an Associate professor of Criminology who has made significant contributions to her department, as well as the broader institution through her collegiality, guidance, mentorship, and strong work ethic.

Throughout her tenure at WLU, she has made important and impactful research contributions particularly in the field of policing. She was one of the first scholars in Canada to take seriously women in policing, particularly the work of police women who are mothers. She has also explored how the organizational and occupational cultures of policing both facilitate and impede the recruitment, retention and promotion of women in policing. This work has brought to light an array of structural and cultural barriers women face 'fitting in' within the occupational culture of policing. While her work has made important theoretical and substantial contributions, as evidenced by her publications in international top-tier journals such as *Gender and Society*; *Feminist Criminology*, *Policing & Society*, and *Women in the Criminal Justice System*, it has also informed evidence-based policy and practice. In 2019, she co-organized and hosted a two-day conference at Laurier that brought together 100 leaders from Canadian police services and 16 scholars of women police from Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada. This meeting led to the creation of an Opportunities for Change document that shares evidence-informed initiatives that have helped to enhance the recruitment, retention and promotion of women in policing across Canada. Further this workshop, along with her other contributions, led the Ontario Provincial Police to ask her to host a one-day training workshop at Laurier for the OPP, and to provide invited presentations at both the Ontario Association Chiefs of Police and Canadian Association Chiefs of Police Equity, Diversity and Inclusion conferences. Her work has had significant media coverage through articles in *The Toronto Star* and *Hamilton Spectator*; two CBC (Ottawa and Kitchener-Waterloo) radio interviews; a CTV (CP24) televised interview; and an online blog (*Gender & Society*). Debra's passion for her work has been clearly illustrated through her engagement with the media as she has used these opportunities to foreground the voices of women police and furthered the research efforts to bring about positive changes for women within policing organizations in Canada.

One of Debra's greatest strengths and contributions has been her mentorship to students and faculty members. Her approach to mentorship is guided by the principles of collaboration, deep learning, reflection, engagement, and caring. Debra has always provided students with hands on research experience, and wherever possible, has integrated community-engaged teaching and research into her pedagogy. She was instrumental in shaping the criminology students' association and helped create the criminology student association annual conference. Her mentorship has empowered countless students and colleagues, guiding them with a generosity of spirit that has shaped their careers and lives.

In 2008, her exceptional teaching and mentorship was recognized with a University-Wide Teaching Award for Full Time Faculty at York University.

In conclusion, Dr. Langan's legacy at Wilfrid Laurier University is one of significant impact and lasting change. Her groundbreaking research in policing, particularly regarding women in the field, has reshaped both academic perspectives and practical policies, leaving a trail of meaningful contributions that extend well beyond the walls of the classroom. As she embarks on this well-deserved retirement, we celebrate not only her impressive body of work but also the compassion, dedication, and intellect that have defined her time at Laurier. Dr. Langan's influence will continue to resonate in the work of those she collaborated with and mentored and the ongoing efforts to improve equity and inclusivity within policing.

Submitted by: Dr Carrie Sanders

Dr. Edmund Pries

Global Studies

Dr. Edmund Pries came to his academic career at Laurier more than a decade after completing his PhD, and brought with him a unique blend of knowledge and experience earned in other sectors of society. He started in 2006 as a contract faculty member at the Brantford campus, and in 2008 shifted to contract teaching in Global Studies, on the Waterloo Campus. After four more years as a CTF, he moved into a Limited Term Appointment for another four years. During this time his teaching was focussed on peace and conflict studies, but by the end of the LTA he had begun teaching in two new areas: Social Entrepreneurship and Community Engagement. It was here that Dr. Pries drew on experience from outside the academy, especially his years as a business owner and social entrepreneur. His rich relationships in the community provided avenues of experiential learning for so many of his students. In 2016, Dr. Pries was hired in a tenure-track Professional Teaching Position, attaining Associate rank in 2019 and Full Professor in 2024.

As he moved into tenure-stream, Dr. Pries added to his Laurier affiliations. He gained a cross appointment to the Department of Religion and Culture, and formalized roles within the Social Entrepreneurship and the Community Engagement Options—both of which he had helped create. For several years, Dr. Pries headed up the Campus, City, Community Innovation Labs (C3IL), which acted as a focal point for several intersecting experiential learning programming in the Faculty of Arts. Later, as funding cuts, faculty departures, and

COVID-19 led to the winding down of this experiential learning hub, Dr. Pries turned his energies to graduate teaching and mentorship. He finished up his Laurier career as Graduate Program Coordinator for the MA in Global Justice, Religion and Culture. He also became supervisor or committee member for several PhD students in the Laurier-UW joint program in Religious Studies and in the Balsillie School of International Affairs.

Even as he threw himself completely into innovation and excellence in teaching, Dr. Pries also made major contributions as a scholar. His research spanned a breadth of distinct areas, including historical research on oaths, both religious and military; scholarship in the field of peace and conflict; and publications focussed on university pedagogy. His scholarly contributions also included significant service. He spent five years on the Executive Committee of the North American Peace and Justice Studies Association, including as Co-Chair. In 2015, together with several colleagues at Laurier and University of Waterloo, Dr. Pries co-founded the Peace and Conflict Studies Association of Canada.

Dr. Pries' devotion to teaching, research, and service has been reflected in his positive and enduring impact on students and colleagues alike. This impact has been recognized in numerous awards, including both Laurier and OCUFA Awards for Teaching Excellence, a Laurier Teaching Fellow appointment, and the 2023 Howard Zinn Lifetime Achievement Award, from the Peace and Justice Studies Association.

Submitted by: Alex Latta

Dr. Leonard Friesen
Department of History

Dr. Leonard Friesen has been a cornerstone of Wilfrid Laurier University's Department of History for over a quarter century, shaping generations of students and scholars with his expertise in Russian and European history. A tenured full professor and a dedicated member of the graduate faculty, Dr. Friesen joined Laurier in 1994 and steadily rose through the academic ranks, serving not only as an inspiring educator but also as a mentor and advisor. His courses—from sweeping surveys of twentieth-century Europe to focused seminars on Russian revolutionary history and Stalinism—have left a lasting intellectual imprint on the Laurier community. Beyond the classroom, he was known for his engaging mentorship, particularly through his long-standing role as Faculty Mentor for the W. Garfield Weston Scholars from 2002 to 2018.

Dr. Friesen's scholarly achievements are equally distinguished. With an academic output including three sole-authored and two edited books, several peer-reviewed articles appearing in international journals, he brought recognition to Laurier's History Department. His recent books, *Transcendent Love: Dostoevsky and the Search for a Global Ethic* (Notre Dame Press, 2016) and *Mennonites in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union: Through Much Tribulation* (University of Toronto Press, 2022) underscore his remarkable interdisciplinary reach. He championed global engagement through his leadership in study tours and his role as the Director of the Faculty of Arts Internationalization Initiative, and was a pioneer in the establishment of Laurier's Global Studies program. These accomplishments reflected his well-known love of travel and international experiences. His commitment to service, teaching excellence, and community engagement was recognized through multiple university merit awards and the prestigious Hoffman-Little Award. Dr. Friesen has been a visible, community-engaged figure, teaching Third Age courses and serving his field in many ways: as a former vice-president of the Canadian Association of Slavists and president of the Canadian Consortium of University Programs in International Development Studies, among others.

As Dr. Friesen retires, the university community celebrates his profound contributions and lasting legacy with deep appreciation and admiration.

Submitted by: David Smith

Dr. David Monod
Department of History

Dr. David Monod has been an esteemed member of the Wilfrid Laurier University community since 1988, dedicating over 35 years to the institution as a scholar, educator, and academic leader. A distinguished historian of American modern culture and mass entertainment, Dr. Monod's prolific body of work spans four acclaimed books and numerous influential articles in leading academic journals. His most recent books, *Vaudeville and the Making of Modern Entertainment, 1890-1925* (UNC Press, 2020) and *The Soul of Pleasure: Sentiment and Sensation in Nineteenth-Century American Mass Entertainment* (Cornell UP, 2016) earned national and international recognition, including multiple shortlisting for prestigious book awards. His research was consistently supported

by competitive grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, affirming the depth and impact of his scholarship.

Throughout his career, Dr. Monod demonstrated a deep commitment to teaching and mentorship. He developed and offered a wide array of undergraduate and graduate courses in American history, cultural studies, and international relations, while also supervising numerous theses and graduate fields. His contributions to graduate education extended beyond the classroom, including his foundational directorship of the Tri-University Graduate Program in History. His ability to combine rigorous historical analysis with engaging narratives left a lasting impression on generations of students, many of whom have gone on to successful academic and professional careers. Colleagues within the Department of History and Ancient Studies praise Dr. Monod as a wise mentor and creative thinker.

Dr. Monod also played a vital leadership roles in university governance and faculty leadership. He served in multiple administrative roles, including as chair of the Department of History as well as the Department of Sociology, Associate Dean of Arts, and President of the Wilfrid Laurier University Faculty Association. A highly visible member of the community dedicated to the institution's well-being, Dr. Monod served on Senate AND the Board of Governors. As president of WLUFA, Dr. Monod navigated the Association and its membership through an unprecedented period of turbulence. Throughout, Dr. Monod was an unwavering advocate for members, negotiating with the university over issues of profound importance to their well-being and work conditions. Perhaps none of these accomplishments will be as enduring as Dr. Monod's leadership in the reform of the Laurier pension plans. As WLUFA president, Dr. Monod was instrumental in the negotiations to join the University Pension Plan, working tirelessly to secure the long-term financial security of members' pensions.

As he enters retirement, the Laurier community honours Dr. Monod's exemplary contributions, his distinguished scholarship, and his steadfast leadership with deep gratitude and admiration.

Submitted by: David Smith

Tao Zeng

Accounting – Lazaridis School of Business & Economics

With heartfelt appreciation and warm wishes, we celebrate the retirement of our wonderful colleague and friend, Tao Zeng. A proud Ph.D. graduate of Queen's University, Tao has been a dedicated faculty member in the accounting area of the Lazaridis School of Business & Economics for 27 years, making a lasting impact through her passion for teaching, research, and mentorship.

For nearly two decades, Tao has made the long commute from downtown Toronto to the Waterloo campus. She did this not only to teach her classes but also to fulfill a variety of professional commitments. This kind of dedication speaks volumes about her love for her students and her commitment to Laurier. No matter how long the journey, she always arrived with energy, enthusiasm, and a genuine eagerness to share her knowledge. Over the years, Tao has inspired generations of students with her expertise in taxation, thoughtful guidance, and unwavering support. Her extensive research has made significant contributions to the field. Beyond that, she has been a trusted mentor to her colleagues and PhD students, always ready with insightful advice, a guiding hand, or simply a kind word.

Outside of academics, Tao is known for her warmth, collaborative spirit, and the genuine friendships she has built over the years. Whether offering insights in research seminars, contributing to committee work, bringing colleagues together through research projects, or simply being there with a kind word and a listening ear, her kindness and generosity have made our school a better place.

As she steps into this exciting new chapter of her life, we know she will bring the same energy and enthusiasm to whatever comes next. After years of commuting, we hope that she enjoys traveling purely for fun in the future. Whether she is exploring new places, pursuing hobbies she has always wanted to nurture, or spending cherished time with her family, especially her son, we wish her a retirement filled with happiness, adventure, and fulfillment.

Submitted by: Flora Niu

Steffen Ziss
Department of Economics

Steffen retires after 22 years at Laurier, having come to us after completing his PhD at Queen's and spending some time at Trent University and the University of Sydney. He served as Director of the MA in Business Economics (2006-9), University Senator (2009-15), Member of the Board of Governors (2013-15) and Chair of the Economics Department (2009-18).

Steffen's defining feature as a member of the faculty is his strong belief in contributing to the public good. For nine years as Department Chair – one of our longest serving Chairs – the department benefited from his skill in listening and his ability to represent all view points on an issue, distilling majority views and dissenting opinions. He was also meticulous in his attention to detail, structure and organization. We still silently thank Steffen at every PTAC meeting where the spreadsheet he initiated still helps to make sure the process is consistent and fair but also less onerous than it otherwise might have been. Anyone who spent time in his office discussing plans for teaching load will fondly recall that at the heart of all this excellence in organization and process were his legendary colour coded spreadsheets.

Steffen's commitment to ensuring transparency and fair processes showed most clearly when he led a drive to develop and get department support for a set of tenure guidelines – and he did that despite opposition from both the University and WLUFA. Those guidelines have been one of the main factors that junior faculty have highlighted as contributing to a positive climate in the Economics Department. It took the University almost a decade to recognize the role of such standards in ensuring fair treatment of under-represented faculty, and make a move to institute them university wide, vindicating Steffen's judgement. Logan McLeod, who took over as Chair after Steffen, said "He left big shoes to fill for the next chair. Given his meticulous documentation and availability to mentor resulted in a smooth transition which benefitted the department. At the time, Dean Kelly's advice to our new chair was: "Be like Steffen.""

As an instructor, Steffen cared about his students and helping them to learn things that they can use in their life after university. He played a key role in developing economics courses for business students, particularly in the MBA, as well as undergraduate and MABE microeconomic theory and industrial organization courses. Bill Morrison says: "In the MBA program we often teamed up on course and program design ideas. I know that students very much appreciated the time and effort Steffen put into making the application of economic analysis relevant to real world problems." Tracy Snoddon notes that "as colleagues and office neighbours, we talked "teaching" a lot together over the years. He was the first to acknowledge when his teaching strategies were not working as effectively as he liked. He redesigned his approach in almost every class he taught in order to engage students with the material more effectively and was genuinely excited about doing this. ... his enjoyment and excitement about teaching increased over time, and even in his years

post-Chair, he never ran out of steam at the end of the term (something I aspire to but have failed at for 30 years)."

The attitude of keeping at it and running full steam until the end was also evident in his research, with a publication in 2025 in *The Manchester School*. His long-standing research agenda focused on the role of mergers and managerial compensation in oligopolistic markets – for instance, examining whether or not mergers are a vehicle to increase innovation. As a fellow applied micro theorist, Bill Morrison said "Steffen has always been willing to let me bend his ears about research ideas and problems, and I have often benefited from his considered and insightful comments." Through these conversations and in many other ways, Steffen worked to bring out the best in his colleagues.

Outside of work, a telling measure of Steffen's character is apparent on the soccer field, where he is an accomplished player. During 'Profball' or intermural games, Steffen would often defer from making a tackle if the result could bring physical injury to another player, even if it meant backing off and providing that player with more of a competitive advantage than they deserved.

Steffen is unselfish and willing to help out where he can, regardless of personal gain. An all-round good guy, he will be missed in the department, the School and the University.

We wish him the best as he transitions to devoting more time to the projects he already has underway in his new home in Nova Scotia, including running a B&B, helping organize plays and grandchildren.

Tracy Snoddon, Bill Morrison, Logan McLeod and Christine Neill, on behalf of the Department of Economics

Dr Tanis MacDonald
English and Film Studies

Dr. Tanis MacDonald joined the Department of English and Film Studies in 2006, received tenure in 2010, and was promoted to full Professor in 2019. In that time, she has compiled a remarkable record of research—both scholarly and creative—while also accruing numerous academic honours, shaping the lives of countless students, and contributing to the social and intellectual climate of our department, faculty, and university. She has published a total of 7 books in the fields of literary criticism, social commentary, life writing, and creative writing; she has edited or co-edited 9 books, many of which celebrate Canadian women writers; she has written numerous book chapters and articles for eminent

national and international presses; and, no less significant, she has published more than 160 individual poems in top-tier creative writing journals. Add to this her numerous public talks, workshops, writing programs, and literary festivals, and you have an image of a scholar at the forefront of her chosen areas of research and creative endeavour.

Tanis has also been a diligent and productive administrator, having for many years chaired the Edna Staebler Writer in Residence committee which has been so instrumental in bringing notable literary talents to our campus and thereby (hopefully!) kickstarting a number of writing careers among our aspiring students. At the departmental level, the range of Tanis's contributions is no less impressive. She has served as our Graduate Coordinator (twice), as Acting Chair, and sat on the Department Advisory Committee, the English Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, the Promotion and Liaison Committee, the Chris Heard Memorial Prize and the English Students Association Writing Contest committees.

She has, in short, been a terrific colleague and mentor to many. Certainly, her students can attest to the profoundly invigorating impact she has had on the Creative Writing culture on our campus over the last two decades. For this vital work she was honoured with the Robert Kroetsch Teaching Award (2017) and the Faculty of Arts Teaching Scholar Award (2018)—two more feathers in a cap full of them!

Submitted by: Markus Poetzsch