L.R. Hesler Award

CHANCELLOR'S HONORS

The L.R. Hesler Award is named for the long-time head of the botany department who also served as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Hesler's students, colleagues, and friends established this memorial award to recognize outstanding teaching and service to the university.



This year's award goes to JEFF KOVAC, chemistry professor at the university for the past 32 years. Previously, Kovac has been honored with the College of Arts and Sciences Senior Faculty Teaching Award and the college's Advising Service Award, as well as the Chancellor's Citation for Excellence in Teaching and the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Advising. Kovac teaches "Honors General Chemistry," which is one of the most challenging first-year courses at UT; but students flock to his class, because they know he is willing to spend the time and energy to help them succeed. His dedication to his students does not stop in the classroom. He serves as director of undergraduate studies in the Department of Chemistry—a role in which he works to make the department a "student-friendly" environment. Additionally, he has been a mainstay with the Phi Beta Kappa honor society for the past 25 years, continuously serving on the member selection committee, and since 1999, serving as chapter president. On top of this, he has served as director of the Tennessee Governor's School for Science and Engineering since 1994.