Sharon Fellows is the recipient of the 2014-2015 Provost’s Award for Excellence in Teaching. She says, “Every year brings a new set of challenges in the freshman engineering program: keeping an open mind, creating safe learning environments, creating active learning strategies to guide a class through the many layers of knowledge it takes to successfully accomplish the learning and course objectives, stimulate and engage students, and design curriculum and projects that encompass the many skills students need to succeed, and to also be that person a student turns to when they need help.

Ms. Fellows has been in the Engineering Design Division since the school converted from a two year engineering school to a four year engineering school twenty-five years ago. She worked on the original design for the freshman engineering program and has taught the Engineering Communications component ever since. She has served as interim director as well as assistant director of the program. Ms. Fellows is the faculty adviser for the Society of Women Engineers; a position she values because of the opportunity to work with so many amazing young women. The position provides the opportunity to foster and build a supportive atmosphere that encourages women in engineering to excel and be their best.

Ms. Fellows has studied educational pedagogy for over thirty years and is well versed in the theory; she feels that the challenge is in the application and in the design of the curricula that engages students while meeting learning and course objectives, and fulfilling ABET requirements. Designing curriculum and programs is her passion, creating team based projects that have real life applications and incorporate the academic and success skills students must have to build a solid foundation for future success is the challenge. She believes that every “true” teacher knows that there is no right way or wrong way to learn; there are different strategies each uniquely suited to capturing a particular type of information and that insight must be at the forefront of every lesson plan. Her end goal is to get students to embrace the concept of lifelong learning with an understanding of how to approach problems, knowing with patience and persistence, an answer can be found. She believes that her greatest gift to her students is to lead them to believe that the responsibility for learning ultimately rests on individuals.

Ms. Fellows has written many articles on engineering education and has presented papers at major engineering conferences.