

PROFESSORSYOULOVE

Dr. Ghiaciuc inspires creativity

Helping students reach their potential

BY CHARLOTTE CLAFLIN ('08)

I have many people to thank for their support and encouragement during my Madison Experience. I graduated in May 2008, and one professor really stood out during my undergraduate career.

One of the first courses I took at JMU was Critical Reading and Writing with Dr. Susan Ghiaciuc. This course and the professor really left an impression on me. Dr. Ghiaciuc presented material in creative and challenging ways that allowed students to easily express themselves through writing. I was able to analyze material from several perspectives, and by the end of that course I enjoyed doing so because Dr. Ghiaciuc allowed me to think freely. I couldn't have asked for a better first-year experience at Madison.

The following semester I decided to take Dr. Ghiaciuc's justice studies course. Again, I was able to learn the material thoroughly because of Dr. Ghiaciuc's method of interacting with her students. She allows students to put themselves into their work as well as the atmosphere in her classroom — both of which inspire imagination. Instead of dictating what she wanted for our assignments, she gave us guidance but encouraged us to write about our own interests. That freedom made me a better writer; it made me be more creative. Not only did Dr. Ghiaciuc help me in the classroom, she also offered amazing guidance when I began applying to



graduate schools. She was more than willing to help me throughout the process by offering advice and at times just listening.

Dr. Ghiaciuc's support and encouragement during my senior year was invaluable.

Like many seniors, I experienced anxiety and worried about my next step after Madison. Dr. Ghiaciuc was always available when I needed advice or someone to talk to. My hesitations about life after graduation were soon put to rest as she helped me realize my opportunities and potential. I am forever grateful for her support. Because of her innovative courses and her willingness to help, I continually recommended Dr. Ghiaciuc to my fellow students.

She truly made a difference during my time at JMU. While I have moved on, I know that she is someone I will always keep in touch with, and I am confident that our relationship will remain strong. Like many other students, I believe Dr. Ghiaciuc is an irreplaceable part of the Madison Experience.

Charlotte Claflin ('08) says that writing professor Susan Ghiaciuc inspires creativity and "made a difference in my time at JMU."

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About the Professor *Susan R. Ghiaciuc, a writing professor in the School of Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication, joined the JMU faculty in 2003. Her scholarly work continues to focus on the ways rhetoric, law and literacy shape individual and collective identity. In 2009 she participated in the National Endowment for the Humanities' five-week institute "The Rule of Law: Legal Studies and the Liberal Arts." Ghiaciuc earned a Ph.D. from the University of Louisville and an M.F.A. in creative writing from the University of Texas at El Paso.*

About the Author *A psychology major and biology minor, Charlotte Claflin ('08) is currently a student in the master's program in child development at the University of Stirling (Scotland). Before entering the graduate program, she worked at a Florida school for children with autism. "After I earn my master's degree, I want to work and serve children with autism," says Claflin. "Next year, I plan on staying either in the United Kingdom or somewhere else in Europe with my boyfriend, also a JMU graduate."*