

For immediate release — Monday, October 19, 2020

Chemistry & biochemistry researcher Dr. Ute Kothe named a U of L Board of Governors Teaching Chair

With an approach based in the belief that an effective teacher facilitates understanding and the well-being, learning and development of students, Dr. Ute Kothe has been named a University of Lethbridge Board of Governors Teaching Chair.

An educator who teaches at all levels, from first-year undergraduate through post-doctoral supervision, Kothe eyes every opportunity to enable learning, pioneering community science outreach activities that spur the imagination and passion for new knowledge amongst the young and old alike.



Kothe, a professor in the Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry, is a member of the College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists of the Royal Society of Canada and a founding member of the Alberta RNA Research and Training Institute (ARRTI). Born and raised in Germany, she studied at the University of Regensburg, the Ruhr-University Bochum and the University of Witten/Herdecke where she obtained an MSc equivalent and PhD degree in biochemistry. She has been at the U of L since 2006.

Lauded as innovative and adaptable, Kothe continually seeks methods to enhance her teaching so she may achieve the best outcome for her students. Active learning is at the heart of her approach, introducing new concepts and skills through techniques that engage students. She creates an environment where she is less an active teacher giving information, and more of a facilitator helping students gain a deeper understanding of material they were encouraged to initially explore on their own and in peer settings.

Kothe encourages an open dialogue with her students, providing a classroom framework that encourages participation at every turn. She frequently halts lectures to ensure students are understanding concepts and creates a safe space based on mutual respect.

As a staunch proponent of science outreach, Kothe has led community activities for more than a decade. She initiated the Let's Talk Science program at the University, a group that engages more than 4,000 children and youth annually, including the massively popular Spooky Science Halloween event.

Kothe continues to actively hone her craft and regularly engages with the University's Teaching Centre. She has served as a teaching fellow and facilitated and presented at numerous teaching workshops and symposiums. She seeks the advice and support of her colleagues and often has faculty members from other disciplines visit her classroom to offer critical analysis.

Whether teaching a first-year class or supervising a PhD candidate, Kothe nurtures the teacher-student relationship. Her enthusiasm and willingness to make science fun accelerates learning and she is a strong proponent of immersing students in research opportunities as quickly as possible. As a Board of Governors Teaching Chair, she will look to enhance graduate student supervision, thereby strengthening mentorship quality and capacity on campus and enabling further student success.

Photos attached: Dr. Ute Kothe illustrates course content to a student; Dr. Ute Kothe portrait.

-- 30 --

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