



ALANA GRIFFITH

Dr. Alana Griffith, Lecturer in Sociology, Department of Government, Sociology, Social Work and Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences, is an outstanding citizen and a proud product of The UWI. Dr. Griffith attended and graduated from the UWI St. Augustine, Mona and Cave Hill Campuses.

In 2004, she began tutoring at The UWI Cave Hill in Sociology and would later lecture part-time at Cave Hill while working as a Research Officer in the Prime Minister's Office, Government of Barbados. She joined the Faculty as a full-time member later in 2005 and was awarded the Best Female Lecturer in the Faculty of Social Sciences for academic year 2005/2006 by the Social Sciences Society. She left the UWI to pursue a PhD at the University of Kent (UK) in 2008. Upon completion of her PhD in 2011, she took up a post at Kent as an Assistant Lecturer. As a true regionalist, she returned to the UWI in 2012.

Dr. Griffith has made an important contribution to Teaching and Learning at Cave Hill. She has taught no less than nine (9) courses covering most of the major areas in sociology with course enrolments sometimes reaching 400 students. Specifically, realising that there was no course dedicated to social stratification, Dr. Griffith designed the course SOCI3037 - Social Dimensions of Inequality and Marginalisation.

In the last five years, Dr. Griffith has played a key role in anchoring the teaching in the discipline of Sociology. One of the distinctive features of Dr. Griffith's teaching is the herculean effort she has made to apply the techniques acquired in UWI's Certificate in University Teaching and Learning Course (CUTL) to the classroom setting. She has sought to innovate by blending and flipping her classroom. To enhance her students' performance, she experiments with several pedagogies and engages in classroom action research. Her teaching scores are among the highest in her Department and the Faculty of Social Sciences, with averages as high as 4.79/5 and response rates as high as 81% in some years.

Dr. Griffith's creativity in experimenting with different approaches to pique and maintain student interest is often on display. One clear example of this has been her use of posters to facilitate learning in the course "Drugs and Society" as a concrete application of "active

learning” techniques. Not only have students learned the content of the course but the additional step has been taken to display the students’ posters in various locations around campus. These posters have also been donated for public education and service to the Substance Abuse Foundation and others.

Another highlight of Dr. Griffith’s outstanding contribution to teaching is in the area of curriculum development. She has always demonstrated a holistic appreciation of the contemporary developments in the discipline of sociology and as a result, has always played a key role in shaping the Department’s curriculum development in Sociology in response to external challenges. A recent example of such efforts may help to underscore her contribution. The first was in the period 2014/15, when, as result of a shift in funding policy for Barbadian students by the Government of Barbados, and confronted with the reality of a drop in student numbers, she authored a paper for presentation to the Faculty Board proposing curriculum changes in Sociology to maintain core offerings but with flexibility in the delivery of electives without compromising quality and the basic requirements for a degree in Sociology

Dr. Griffith has been able to deliver innovative and high-quality teaching while still publishing within her discipline and actively contributing to university and public life. Along with discipline specific research and scholarly publications, she engages in classroom action research. Quite significantly, Dr. Griffith has succeeded in publishing in the area of teaching, based on her reflective experiences of the educational tools and practices with which she has experimented in the classroom, especially ‘flipping’ her classes. Her teaching innovation seen in the article “*The Feasibility of Flipping: An Exploratory Analysis of the Flipped Class in Caribbean Sociology*”, published in the *Journal of Effective Teaching* in 2017), is a clear example, not only of her commitment to teaching, and her genuine love for the knowledge of and experimentation with teaching techniques, but indeed is a loud testimony of her putting into practice the principle that academics should seize every opportunity to publish about their teaching experiences as an additional contribution to knowledge. Her teaching and research have been recognised at various levels. In June 2018 Dr. Griffith received a UWI Guild of Students/CETL Award for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning and more recently, along with Dr. Damian Cohall, the 2018/2019 Campus Award for Best Applied Research.

Dr. Alana Griffith is an active staff member of The UWI and the wider academic community. For example, she is a Member of several Cave Hill campus committees and international associations among them the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Social Policy Association. Her national and regional public service includes being a CARICOM Commissioner on Marijuana and Member of the Barbados National Assistance Board. Beyond the academy, Dr. Griffith is very well-rounded. She recently won a NIFCA Bronze medal in the Culinary Arts to add to her 2 Gold, 5 Silver and 1 Bronze medals also in the Culinary Arts.