Sacred Heart University

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Kristin Rainville, an associate professor at Sacred Heart University, will be the new director of the Center for Excellence and Innovation in Teaching (CEIT) starting in the fall. Through the Center, Rainville aims to provide support and resources that enhance teaching and learning by building on the faculty's experience and expertise—an important element of the University’s strategic goals and attention to data-driven, continuous improvement.

“We are excited to have Kristin in this role,” said Rupendra Paliwal, provost and vice president for academic affairs. “She has a great deal of knowledge and experience in the field of education and will offer her expertise and forward-looking ideas to the faculty and our students.”

Rainville is a tenured member of the Isabelle Farrington College of Education faculty, where she teaches curriculum and pedagogy, literacy and instructional leadership. In her new role, she has been tasked with building on the Center’s existing initiatives and expanding the University's reputation for excellent teaching.

“There are several initiatives taking place on campus that I will be looking to develop,” Rainville said. “Examples include our open-educational resources program (an initiative that aims to bring more free or low-cost textbooks to classes), our desire to increase the number of blended-hybrid or entirely online courses and our mission to learn more about how non-face-to-face teaching and learning programs can best engage our students with the course content we provide.”

Through CEIT, Rainville hopes to make an impact on Sacred Heart professors and students. She plans to make faculty fellowships a more integral part of the Center and is looking to turn CEIT into a national and even international presence.

Rainville wants to highlight innovative practices and make stronger connections across the University’s expanding campus.
“I think it’s a gift to be able to go into someone else’s classroom, or for somebody to come into my classroom and to give me some ideas, feedback or ways in which I can engage students in a different manner that I hadn’t thought of,” Rainville said. “Teaching can be really isolating. You’re just doing your thing; you’re thinking that you are on the same page as other people. But then I talk to a colleague who’s tried out a new strategy, and I immediately become excited to try it out myself in my own classroom with my students.”

Prior to teaching at Sacred Heart, Rainville was department chair and assistant professor in the Department of Literacy at Manhattanville College, as well as an instructor at Teachers College, Columbia University. She was a coordinator for the New Jersey Department of Education’s Office of Early Literacy and had experience as a literacy coach in New Jersey. Her experiences teaching elementary-school students in Stamford inspired her to pursue a career working with teachers and professors directly.

Rainville attended Saint Bonaventure University for her undergraduate studies, where she obtained a degree in elementary education. She earned her master’s degree in remedial reading and language arts at the University of Bridgeport, a certificate of advanced study in special education from Fairfield University and her educational doctorate in curriculum and teaching from Columbia University.