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## Political Science Professor Recognized For His Passion and Scholarship with Top Teaching Award

Winthrop University

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# Political Science Professor Recognized For His Passion and Scholarship with Top Teaching Award

## Quick Facts

- President Dan Mahony will present Adolphus Belk Jr. with the 2015 James Pinckney Kinard and Lee Wicker Kinard Award for Excellence in Teaching during the 11 a.m. graduation ceremony at the Winthrop Coliseum.
- Belk joined the Winthrop faculty in 2003 as an assistant professor of political science. He was promoted to associate professor in 2009 and then to professor in 2014.



*Adolphus Belk Jr. and one of his fall 2015 classes*

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA - Winthrop University will honor **Political Science Professor Adolphus Belk Jr.** with its top teaching award at the **Dec. 19 Commencement ceremony** in recognition of his dedication to his students and his commitment to his field of study.

**President Dan Mahony** will present Belk with the **2015 James Pinckney Kinard and Lee Wicker Kinard Award for Excellence in Teaching** during the 11 a.m. ceremony at the **Winthrop Coliseum**. "Dr. Belk is an excellent example of a rigorous, innovative, and thoughtful teacher

who draws students in and challenges them to perform at their best," said Mahony. "His mentorship of students within and outside of his teaching areas also is notable and speaks to his desire to see all students succeed at Winthrop."

The **Kinard Award** is given annually to a faculty member who has demonstrated a dedication to teaching and is highly regarded on campus by faculty and students. Established by the Kinard family, it honors **former Winthrop President James P. Kinard and his wife, Lee Wicker Kinard**.

"Dr. Belk is an attentive and effective educator who never ceases to reflect on his approach to student learning and development," said **Provost Debra Boyd**. "He is a demanding, well-organized, and inspiring faculty member who has contributed greatly to making the Winthrop experience such a positive experience for our students."

Belk joined the Winthrop faculty in 2003 as an assistant professor of political science. He was promoted to associate professor in 2009 and then to professor in 2014. He accepted the appointment as director of the African American Studies Program in 2008 and has made it a thriving minor. A year later, he received **Winthrop's Outstanding Junior Professor Award**.

Belk teaches courses on American government, black politics, public policy, and race and ethnic politics in the United States. "He is a role model across the campus, the state, the region and the country for his dedication, maturity and leadership," said his department chair, **Jennifer Disney**. Another colleague noted that Belk supports, advises, interrogates, cheerleads, admonishes, mentors and cajoles students as needed and encourages them to establish connections with other faculty

members.

In addition to advising several student groups, he is very active with the **American Civil Liberties Union of South Carolina** and the **National Conference of Black Political Scientists**, among other groups.

Belk's research has concentrated on the prison-industrial complex and the politics of mass incarceration. His work has been published in *The Journal of Race and Policy* and by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, one of the nation's premier public policy institutions and the only one whose work focuses squarely on matters of particular interest to African Americans and people of color. Belk has studied the implications of the 2008 presidential election on race, racism and policy in America and continues to research the role of race in our country. He participated in the recent 50th anniversary of the "**Jail No Bail**" strategy by the **Friendship Nine** in Rock Hill, and its role in the civil rights movement.

A native of Brooklyn, New York, Belk completed his master's degree and Ph.D. in government and politics at the University of Maryland. His undergraduate degree in African American studies is from Syracuse University.

For more information, contact **Judy Longshaw**, news and media services manager, at 803/323-2404 or e-mail her at [longshawj@winthrop.edu](mailto:longshawj@winthrop.edu).

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