

The Office of Public Relations

English Professor Receives UNC Charlotte's Top Teaching Award

### **McGavran honored at Bank of America Founder's Hall Ceremony**

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – September 29, 2006 – Described by one of his colleagues as “the kind of teacher a student never forgets,” James McGavran was selected Friday night as the 2006 recipient of the highest teaching honor bestowed by UNC Charlotte – the Bank of America Award for Teaching Excellence.

McGavran, an English professor at UNC Charlotte for more than 30 years, was chosen from a prestigious list of finalists.

Also nominated this year for their commitment to excellence in teaching were:

- Beth Bjerregaard, associate professor of criminal justice.
- Yogendra P. Kakad, a professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering.
- W. Scott Terry, a professor in the Department of Psychology.
- Karen Wood, a professor in the Department of Reading and Elementary Education.

The five honorees were lauded during the evening ceremony and gala attended by hundreds of UNC Charlotte faculty members and their guests, Friday Sept. 29, at Founder's Hall in the Bank of America Corporate Center.

“The Bank of America Award for Teaching Excellence goes to the heart of what UNC Charlotte represents \_ the very best in teaching our students,” said Chancellor Philip Dubois. “I congratulate all of the finalists this year for their recognition as outstanding faculty members, and applaud Jim McGavran for his distinction of being awarded this honor.”

All of the honorees drew praise from their students and peers at UNC Charlotte.

A former student and later colleague wrote, “Jim McGavran is the kind of teacher a student never forgets. He is the kind of colleague that a new teacher yearns for – someone who listens well, advises wisely, and nurtures always.”

In his own words, McGavran focused on the quality of the students he has taught over the years –not himself.

“It all, always, all ways comes back to the students,” he wrote. “Brilliant, imaginative, talented undergraduate and graduate students surround us at UNC Charlotte. Some already shine; others are diamonds in the rough. The most important thing I can do is to get them to see just how grand their potential is, how great their expectations – and mine.”

An English professor at UNC Charlotte since 1973, McGavran specializes in teaching and researching the English Romantic period of literature. He was a finalist for this award in 1995 and was named “English Graduate Faculty Member of the Year 2005-2006” by UNC Charlotte’s English Graduate Students Association.

McGavran has taught numerous courses including first-year composition, approaches to literature, the Romantic era and modern British fiction. He also has taught special topics courses at the graduate level, several interdisciplinary courses and has served on multiple advisory committees.

Known for his desire to engage his students’ interest, McGavran creatively keeps his courses relevant. He once arranged for students to tour North Carolina’s Outer Banks with a famed nature writer and also set up field trips to Charlotte parks while teaching a course titled “The Idea of Nature.”

McGavran earned his undergraduate degree from the College of Wooster, his master’s degree from Columbia University and a doctorate from UNC Chapel Hill.

#### About UNC Charlotte

A doctoral/research intensive university, UNC Charlotte is the fourth largest of the 16 institutions within the University of North Carolina system and the largest institution of higher education in the Charlotte region. The university comprises seven professional colleges and currently offers 17 doctoral programs, 59 master’s degree programs and 85 programs leading to bachelor’s degrees. Enrollment approaches 21,000 students and includes more than 4,400 graduate students.