

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

JENNIFER WILLIAMS BROWN

Since 2005, Professor of Music Jennifer Williams Brown has served Grinnell College with great distinction, working to teach and mentor both music majors and students who simply want to learn more about the art and history of music. She was recently diagnosed with ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis), and this spring — with the support of her family, close friends, and colleagues — she has taken medical leave from the College. She will now be invested with Senior Faculty Status.

Professor Brown is recognized as a specialist in the history and performance of Baroque music, particularly 17th-century Italian opera. But in many ways, she is the epitome of a “Renaissance woman,” whose teaching interests and talents range from music history to musical performance, and from classical ballet to historical forms of dance.

Prior to arriving at Grinnell, she taught at the Eastman School of Music, the University of Rochester, and Louisiana State University, where she directed the Collegium Musicum for seven years. At Grinnell, Professor Brown has taught music history and directed the Collegium Musicum, a vocal and instrumental ensemble that uses the College’s excellent collection of early instruments. Each year, she directed the ensemble in something staged, such as scenes from an opera. She has been active as a musicological consultant and coach for both student and professional opera companies nationally, including Simpson College Opera and Haymarket Opera.

Her popular introductory course offerings for non-majors include a Music and Society in Paris tutorial, Venice tutorial, and Broadway Musical Theatre, while music majors have benefited from her academic classes, such as Baroque Improvisation, and Music in Europe and the Americas. She also has given harpsichord lessons.

Professor Brown’s research has focused on decoding clues in 17th-century manuscripts and printed sources, then making the results accessible to current performers, students, and scholars through the use of modern editions. She won the top prize for editions from her professional organization. Her research has been awarded grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Delmas Foundation, and she was selected as Grinnell’s 2013 Frank and Roberta Furbush Faculty Scholar.

Professor Brown also is a specialist in historical dance from the Renaissance and Baroque periods. She trained in classical ballet at the National Academy of Dance and studied Baroque dance in Boston. She has directed dances for several historical theatre productions, including 2007’s *The Beggar’s Opera*, which she co-directed with Professor John Rommereim.

Please join Grinnell College in this very special recognition of Jennifer Williams Brown for her many contributions as a teacher, mentor, and colleague; thanking her for her distinguished service to the Grinnell community; and all that she has made possible for so many through the legacy of her work and presence.