

FACULTY PROFILE



Cynthia Rutz, Visiting Assistant Professor

Director, Teaching Resource Center

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Biography

Professor Rutz began teaching at Valparaiso University in 2002 after teaching in and being chair of a classics program for adults at the University of Chicago entitled The Basic Program of Liberal Education.

At VU, Professor Rutz values the warmth and collegiality of the faculty, students, and staff. She finds Valparaiso notable, she states, because the faculty do not see teaching as a distraction from their research interests. Rather, they have passion for it: they really care about their students and their learning.

Professor Rutz believes strongly in Socrates' dictum that the unexamined life is not worth living. That is why she tries to engage students in the fundamental human questions addressed by the great thinkers: so they, in turn, ask how they are to lead meaningful lives. A teacher of hers used to say that the best thing one can find in a text is a seeming contradiction, because this is where things really get interesting. Prof. Rutz expresses delight in finding new contradictions, and therefore new depths, in texts she has read or taught many times before.

At Valparaiso, Professor Rutz has taught Introduction to Literary Studies and the First-Year Core. She also the director of the university's Teaching Resource Center. She is finishing her dissertation on Shakespeare's *King*

Lear and its folktale analogues. She has also written a series of articles, "Shakespeare's Fairy Tales," which trace how Shakespeare's works take a well-known folktale and use it to both fulfill and frustrate the audience's expectations. One of her favorite literary texts is *Don Quixote*.

Outside of the university, Professor Rutz enjoys morning walks and swims with her dog Sam; trips to new places, whether Greece or an antique shop in a nearby town; good conversations with friends while lingering over delicious homemade dinners; and going to the movies (not just films).

Education

M.A. - University of Chicago, B.A.--St. John's College (Santa Fe, N.M.)