

Dr. Amy Aldridge Sanford
Extended Biography

Dr. Amy Aldridge Sanford is a department chair, graduate director, and a tenured assistant professor of Communication Studies. She has developed a reputation as a person who is passionate, respected, and someone who gets things done.

At the age of 33, Dr. Sanford became the youngest chair at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, OK. The year before, she was asked by the Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs to serve as her assistant while the university searched for a permanent VPAA.

Dr. Sanford has taken on some challenging tasks. She chaired the General Education Task Force that successfully overhauled the university's common curriculum—a job that hadn't been tackled in 20 years. She chaired the Centennial Lectureship Committee that had gone through two chairs before her. Under her leadership, the committee presented Elizabeth Eckford from the Little Rock Nine and the Miami Hurricane's Head Coach Larry Coker.

Dr. Sanford recognized there was a lack of female mentorship on her campus, so she started a book club focusing on women and leadership. Wilma Mankiller supplied the reading list, and Gloria Steinem met with the book club during its final meeting. Dr. Sanford followed up the book club by spearheading a campus-wide curriculum change to incorporate an interdisciplinary minor in Women's and Gender Studies. She also started a Herstory Club to create a space for ongoing consciousness raising about women and girls.

Dr. Sanford serves on the executive board for the Central States Communication Association and Oklahoma Women in Higher Education. She is a past state president for the Oklahoma Speech and Theatre Communication Association and of the Tahlequah Branch of the American Association of University Women.

Dr. Sanford was named an Achiever Under 40 by *The Journal Record*, a daVinci Fellow by The DaVinci Institute, and the Outstanding College Communication Educator by the Oklahoma Speech and Theatre Communication Association. During NSU's Centennial year, Dr. Sanford was named an Inaugural Centurion, along with Country Superstar Carrie Underwood and Oklahoma Attorney General Drew Edmondson.

Dr. Sanford has given dozens of invited lectures on many topics, including diversity, professional communication, popular culture, empowerment, critical thinking, teaching and learning, leadership, and gender equity. She has been published in many journals, including *Communication Studies*, *Health Communication*, *Southern Communication Journal*, and *Communication Teacher*.

Dr. Sanford is a 1st generation college student and a 4th generation Oklahoman. She received a BA in Communication Education and an MEd in School Administration from Northeastern State University and her MA and PhD in Communication Studies from The University of Iowa.

Updated August 12, 2011