



## Iota Sigma Pi

National Honor Society for Women in Chemistry

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Iota Sigma Pi Gives 2022 Centennial Award to Dr. Sandra Helquist of Loyola University Chicago**

*Iota Sigma Pi, the National Organization for Women in Chemistry, has selected Dr. Sandra Helquist, Senior Lecturer, Loyola University Chicago, to receive the 2022 Centennial Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching. Dr. Helquist obtained her B.A. in Chemistry and Mathematics from Carleton College and PhD in Organic Chemistry from Stanford University. She is currently a Senior Lecturer at Loyola University Chicago. She has been invited to participate in the organization's Triennial Convention in 2023.*



Dr. Helquist is an accomplished and passionate educator with over 16 years of experience of teaching both General and Organic Chemistry courses. She approaches her work innovatively and creatively, always striving to improve more and more aspects of undergraduate chemistry teaching. Dr. Helquist attends a variety of workshops and conferences, consults with educators from other local Universities, and then incorporates the new methodology in her classes.

Her expertise is highly valued. She is a member of several Faculty Learning Communities (FLC) and serves on Undergraduate Curriculum Committee in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry. She has been a repeated invited speaker at Loyola's Focus on Teaching and Learning Conference. She is currently appointed as the Undergraduate Program Director and is overseeing a major reform of the first two years of the Department's chemistry curriculum. She has also introduced a new mastery-based, specification grading system in her courses which is considered a promising alternative to the traditional point-based grading and has shown significant benefit to students and professors alike. Dr. Helquist has also worked with the Pre-Health Professions programs for the past 12 years, including several years as a member of the Advisory Committee, the Pre-Health Award Committee, and the Early Assurance Program Committee.

Dr. Helquist's students feel she cares deeply not only that they receive highest level education but also for their personal wellbeing. The letters of support describe how she spends countless extra office and meeting hours not only with her current students but even with the former ones, designs individual exercises to ensure each student grasped what they needed to, sits down for personalized discussion on how to improve performance in her classes, and even brings food to exams and explains benefits of sufficient sleep. All that undoubtedly creates compassionate, nurturing environment for the students to strive.

One of her nominating letters from faculty states "Sandy is the single most important and influential member of the department with regards to the undergraduate curriculum and is essential in transforming how we achieve our education mission".

*The Centennial award is given for excellence in teaching chemistry, biochemistry, or a chemistry-related field by a women scientist whose primary duties are teaching undergraduates. This is awarded annually.*

**IOTA SIGMA PI** is the National Honor Society for Women in Chemistry. Its major objectives are to promote interest in chemistry among women students, to foster mutual advancement in academic, business, and social life; and to stimulate personal accomplishment in chemical fields. IOTA SIGMA PI serves to promote the advancement of women in chemistry by granting recognition to women who have demonstrated superior scholastic achievement and high professional competence by election into IOTA SIGMA PI. [www.iotasigmapi.info](http://www.iotasigmapi.info)

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