

Phillip Mason
SENCER Leadership Fellow

Biosketch

Dr. Phil Mason joined the School of Science and Mathematics at Fairmont State as a Professor of Biology and its Chair in 1998. He served in this capacity until 2003 when he became the Dean of the College of Science and Technology serving until being appointed Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies in August, 2005. Prior to coming to Fairmont State, he was the Chair of the Department of Biology at Elon University in North Carolina. Dr. Mason taught at Unity College in Maine, where he was the Chair of the Division of Environmental Studies, and was also on the faculty at Berry College in Georgia.

Dr. Mason has taught a wide variety of courses and most enjoys vertebrate biology courses including mammalogy, ornithology and ecology. He has extensive experience in travel-abroad field courses, having taught tropical ecology in Jamaica, Costa Rica and Belize. His research interests have focused on the physiological and morphological adaptations of birds, especially the American Woodcock

In the past five years, however, he has been drawn to the challenges presented by the development and teaching of non-majors science courses that have increased relevance to students' lives and enhance their scientific literacy and civic engagement. He has supported the efforts of a number of faculty members in the College of Science & Technology who are committed to creating new learner-centered science courses for the university's Liberal Studies Program SENCER principles (Science Education for New Civic Engagements and Responsibilities). Dr. Mason, with an interdisciplinary faculty team developed and taught a SENCER Learning Community, *Coal in the Heart of Appalachian Life*.

He has successful experience in grant writing with an emphasis on curriculum development, including awards from the National Science Foundation, NASA and two SENCER grants from the National Center for Science and Civic Engagement.

Dr. Mason received his Bachelor of Science degree in wildlife biology from the University of Massachusetts and earned his Master of Science in wildlife biology and his Ph.D. in vertebrate biology from Auburn University.

Phil lives in Morgantown with his wife Elaine, who is the Director of Rural Recruitment and Retention at the WVU Office of Rural Health at West Virginia University School of Medicine. They have one son Grover and three grandchildren, Kaylyne, Joey and Sophia.

Office: 224B Hardway Hall – **Telephone:** 304-367-4720

E-Mail: pmason@fairmontstate.edu

