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Before joining Virginia Tech's faculty, Teaster served as director and chairperson of the Graduate Center for Gerontology/Department of Gerontology as well as the director of doctoral studies and associate dean for research for College of Public Health at the University of Kentucky.

She established the Kentucky Justice Center for Elders and Vulnerable Adults and the Kentucky Guardianship Association and was its first president. **She has served as the secretary general of the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse since 2014.**

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Teaster is a fellow of the Gerontological Society of America and the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education. She has served as both board member and president of the National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse.

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Her areas of scholarship include the mistreatment of elders and vulnerable adults, public and private guardianship, end-of-life issues and decision-making, ethical treatment of vulnerable adults, human rights issues for vulnerable adults, public policy and public affairs, public health ethics, and quality of life. She is the coauthor or coeditor of several books and more than 100 peer-reviewed articles, reports, and book chapters.