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University Relations

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**Leslie Meek receives Tate Award for Advising**

*Summary:*

(April 1, 2005)-Leslie Meek says that her undergraduate education at the University of Minnesota, Morris has shaped the way she now advises her own students. Meek, an associate professor of psychology at UMM, is a recipient of this year's all University John Tate Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Advising.

The award, established in 1986-87 in honor of John Tate, professor of physics and first dean of University College, calls attention to the contributions advisers make in helping students formulate and achieve intellectual, career and personal goals.

"To a great extent, my goals as an adviser are the same goals that are achieved by an education in the liberal arts," said Meek. "Thus, my academic advising with individual students is focused on ensuring that their education gives them a broad understanding of the world and its diversity, so that they can become informed, concerned, involved citizens.

" In addition, my advising also focuses on non-academic issues that are concerned with living a healthy life in which career, leisure, family and other commitments are planned and balanced for maximum life satisfaction," said Meek. I believe that effective advising goes beyond academic issues, and that the best advisers address issues that affect the student's current and future life."

Meek advises 31 students that, in addition to a full classroom teaching schedule, related University activities, along with other professional activities, keeps her occupied. However, according to Meek, advising is an important role.

"Part of my role as an adviser is to communicate to students the multitude of experiences that are available to them as part of college life and to encourage them to participate in a wide variety of experiences," said Meek. "For example, I strongly urge all of my advisees to seriously consider spending at least one semester abroad, and I work actively to help them find appropriate programs and the funding to travel."

Meek also encourages "a broad education by telling students that they should become acquainted with as many of their professors as they can, so that they have interactions outside of class with professors from several disciplines. This allows students to experience different viewpoints about how the world works and allows them to develop their critical thinking skills as they analyze and consider each viewpoint.

"I think the best thing about a small, undergraduate college such as Morris is the ability for our students to be able to engage in informal, cross-disciplinary interactions with professors, in order to achieve a broad exposure to many differing points of view," said Meek.

A 1989 UMM graduate with a major in psychology and a biology minor, Meek is a past recipient of the University of Minnesota Horace T. Morse - Alumni Undergraduate Teaching Award. In 1998, she received the Walter D. Mink

Undergraduate Teacher Award from the Minnesota Psychological Association.

As a UMM student, she received the Paterson Award for Outstanding Psychology Undergraduate in Minnesota and was a Scholar of the College.

"In many ways," added Meek, "I feel that the most important jobs that I do are advising or advising-related, and that advising, much more than teaching or research, allows me to have the greatest impact on students' lives, whether individually or collectively."

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at [morris.umn.edu](http://morris.umn.edu) or call 888-866-3382.