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Burke Earns Tate Advising Award

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Associate Professor of Communication, Media, and Rhetoric Barbara Burke is a 2020 recipient of the University of Minnesota John Tate Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Advising. Tate Awards recognize high-quality advising at the University of Minnesota.

Nominators say Burke "has taken every opportunity to develop and share her advising expertise and the programmatic reach of advising on the Morris campus, and she has changed student, staff, and faculty lives for the better in doing so."

Academic advising at UMN Morris is unique in that faculty—not staff—serve as advisers. Burke describes the model as a partnership, one she says benefits UMN Morris students.

“Many of my advisees are also students in my class, so I think about them when research and professional opportunities arise,” says Burke. “I’ve gotten to know these students as people, and I’ve become aware of their skills, which gives them an added benefit.”

Burke remembers being an undergrad who didn’t know all of the ins and outs of the college experience or degree requirements. Today she aims to “demystify” these for students.

“As an adviser, I commit myself to listening to the needs and interests of the student as well as exercising my responsibility to be knowledgeable about University policies,” she says.

When asked what advice she has for today’s undergraduate students, she encourages responsibility, ownership, and confidence in the face of new stressors and challenges.

“I’m seeing more and more students facing more and more life stresses relating to economics, mental health, and career permanence,” she says. “But I believe our graduates are going to be learning throughout the rest of their lives. They’ll know how to ask good questions. They’ll know how to take action in creative ways.”

About Burke
Burke holds a PhD from Purdue University, MAs from Purdue University and the University of Michigan, a BA from Purdue University, and a BS from Purdue University.

About the Tate Award
The John Tate Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Advising is named in honor of John Tate, Professor of Physics and first Dean of University College (1930-41). They call attention to the contribution academic advising makes to helping students formulate and achieve intellectual, career, and personal goals. Learn more at provost.umn.edu