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Burke Earns 2021 Alumni Association Teaching Award

University of Minnesota Morris Associate Professor of Communication, Media, and Rhetoric Barbara Burke has earned the 2021 UMN Morris Alumni Association Teaching Award. Burke stands out for her individualized attention and willingness to help students figure out how to do what they want to do in college and beyond.

“I believe strongly in the importance of being an advisor, mentor, and teacher and am delighted to be recognized for my work with students,” says Burke. “I am humbled and honored to be among such great teachers.”

According to nominators, Burke’s “nearly limitless willingness to give of her time in order to provide her many students and advisees, both formal and informal, with the particular instruction and guidance that they need and want” sets her apart. Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Dean Janet Schrunk Ericksen agrees.

“The combination of flexibility, generosity, and scholarly engagement evident in Barbara’s career exemplifies the very best liberal arts college teaching,” Ericksen says. “She has had a lasting and positive impact on a wide array of students.”

That lasting and positive impact, says Burke, is the goal of the work: it’s her objective because it’s what helps students to become well-rounded individuals ready to take on the world.

“Throughout my career my goals have been to create opportunities for students to be purposeful and reflective learners, and to make their University of Minnesota Morris education into a transformative experience,” says Burke. “In my teaching I strive to foster intellectual flexibility, creative problem-solving, and critical thinking skills, by applying a variety of class experiences—including lecture, discussion leadership, demonstration, writing assignments, media productions and project evaluations—to give my students opportunities to explore, create and build their own knowledge of the world.”

EDUCATION AND EXPERTISE

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. Her areas of expertise include the creation and dissemination of mass media, and media content and audiences. She is a recipient of the University of Minnesota John Tate Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Advising.

ABOUT THE UMMAA TEACHING AWARD

The University of Minnesota Morris Alumni Association established the UMMAA Teaching Award in 1997 to honor individual faculty members for outstanding contributions to undergraduate education. Learn more at alumni.morris.umn.edu.