McQuarrie earns 2022 University of Minnesota Morris Alumni
Association Teaching Award

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University of Minnesota Morris Associate Professor of Mathematics Barry McQuarrie has earned the 2022 UMN Morris Alumni Association Teaching Award. McQuarrie was cited as a student-centered, engaging, inspiring instructor and adviser who has had a lasting positive impact on a wide array of students of diverse backgrounds, experience, interests, and affinity for mathematics.

“I believe that to be an effective teacher I must be able to engage with each student in the classroom, as an advisor, and with research and enrichment opportunities that the student sees as compelling,” McQuarrie said. “I also believe it is critical to have an understanding of the broader issues students face, and to look for systemic barriers our institution may have that can be removed to better meet student needs.”

Acting Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Dean Peh Ng writes, “Barry’s willingness to meet students/advisees where they are, to help students meet their own goals, to collaborate with his students on undergraduate research, and to create an environment that is conducive to learning for all students exemplifies the very best liberal arts college teaching.”
McQuarrie’s enthusiasm was noted by former students, who wrote in support of his nomination: “I distinctly remember how his excitement and passion for early-morning calculus took me by surprise. After a few weeks, I realized that his consistent, room-filling energy is not a product of the early-semester boost many of us have a couple times a year, but rather the foundation of energetic engagement he lays for every lecture, advising meeting, and office hour visit.” Another commented, “I have had many other professors in my university career that have wowed me, but Barry stands out as one that has truly dedicated himself to the wellbeing of the university and all who walk its halls.”

In addition to teaching responsibilities, McQuarrie serves as Lead Academic Adviser responsible for overseeing the academic advising program. Director of the UMN Morris Student Success Center Jessica Porwell noted that in less than a year in that role, he has made a number of substantial and impactful contributions to the academic advising program and is championing ways to improve advising across campus.

McQuarrie’s math colleague, Chris Atkins, wrote: “Barry has created a wealth of materials for students that take into account not just the mathematical content they need to learn, but also their broader academic development … , including fully typeset lecture notes and practice problems with solutions, and a series of short videos where he solves example problems.”

McQuarrie states, “One of the most gratifying aspects of my work is when I hear that a former math-hesitant student goes on to further math courses after taking my class, or even pursues a math major! However, that competes for top spot with seeing a student find their path and get excited about their undergraduate studies—my former advisees are now successful graduate students in math or other STEM fields, high school teachers, Studio Art majors, Biology majors, or studying architecture at another institution. We all win when a student finds, and succeeds, in their passions.”

EDUCATION AND EXPERTISE
McQuarrie holds a PhD from University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MS from University of Waterloo, and a BA from University of Winnipeg. He joined the faculty at UMN Morris in 2000 and teaches everything from basic to linear algebra, calculus, differential equations and numerical methods with applications in mathematical modeling.

ABOUT THE UMMAA TEACHING AWARD
Thanks to the generosity of the UMN Morris Alumni Association, the Morris campus annually recognizes its outstanding professors through this award, created by the alumni in 1994. This honor was bestowed for the first time in the spring of 1997 to honor individual University of Minnesota, Morris faculty members for their outstanding contributions to undergraduate education. Learn more at alumni.morris.umn.edu.