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Communications and Marketing
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The award honors excellence in undergraduate education across the University of Minnesota

Dr. Jennifer Rothchild, Professor of Sociology and Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies, is the UMN Morris recipient of the 2022 Horace T. Morse - University of Minnesota Alumni Association Award for Outstanding Contributions to Undergraduate Education. The award honors faculty who excel in teaching, research, creative activities, advising, academic program development and educational leadership.

According to her nomination dossier, “Dr. Rothchild’s impact as a public sociologist, scholar, teacher, advisor, and mentor has been transformative” in the lives of her former students, her scholarly colleagues and her community partners. "She is a fearless educator and a devoted advisor who exemplifies the teaching mission of a liberal arts education and of the UMN Morris."

“I strive to build relationships with all my students and draw out their strengths,” said Rothchild. “My students and advisees at Morris embody a diversity of life experiences and contexts—Indigenous and Native American students, non-binary students, first-generation students, students from farming communities, and students from urban centers—that create rewarding and powerful pedagogical exchanges.”

Rothchild earned a bachelor of arts in zoology from Miami University of Ohio, a master of arts in sociology from Georgia State University, and a doctorate in sociology from American University. With others, she redesigned UMN Morris’s Women’s Studies Program to the Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies Program and chairs its Equity and Diversity Committee. She has led directed studies, which have produced co-authored publications with students, and has conducted domestic and international field research in children’s homes, nonprofit organizations, and schools. She trains students in community-based research in areas such as social inequalities and health with a focus on policy changes at the community and national level.

“I remind my students that our learning is a privilege that comes with responsibility,” Rothchild wrote. “By thoughtfully exercising privilege and responsibility, hope can emerge. Hope that we can make a difference. I regularly challenge my students to think about what it is in their lives that would spur them to work for social change.”

As a Horace T. Morse Award recipient, Rothchild will be named to the Academy of Distinguished Teachers. Academy members provide important leadership to the University community as mentors, advisers, and spokespersons for the University’s teaching mission.