



*Heather J. Peters, 2015–16 Distinguished Teacher  
Morse-Alumni Undergraduate Teaching Award*

Students in two majors—psychology and human services—have benefited enormously from initiatives begun by Heather J. Peters.

She is credited with redesigning the human services major nearly single-handedly (to cheers from students and faculty) and spearheaded the effort to consolidate all internships under one clinical supervisory umbrella. In psychology, she developed a research class to widen the range of opportunities for students.

From her, students learn to integrate what they learn with real life. For example, in her current research she works with Dakota community members to create cultural interventions to revitalize the Dakota language and lifeways and increase overall health and a sense of belonging in Dakota youth and families. Students in her psychopathology class worked with

Student Counseling and the Wellness Center to create UMM’s 2015 Mental Health Awareness Week.

Peters’s passion for multicultural sensitivity permeates her teaching, and she is renowned for her ability to help marginalized students realize their potential. Students in her classes have been deeply affected by topics or insights they had about themselves or the world.

“[Race was] a topic that was rarely discussed,” writes a former student. “It was extremely refreshing and self-validating that Dr. Peters included topics of white privilege, stereotype threat, the black experience and micro-aggressions into class discussions. She has a unique skill that invites even the shyest student to address their thoughts on race in class.”

Associate Professor  
Department of Psychology  
Division of Social Science  
University of Minnesota  
Morris

*“My passion is put into action by supporting educational dreams of students from marginalized backgrounds ... and through increasing all students’ understanding of their areas of marginalization and privilege.”*

