

## NEWS RELEASE

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## Professor receives national award for research on gender stereotypes in heterosexual relationships

*Maier's dissertation explores ways therapists can help couples build supportive relationships*

[Story Link](#)

### Photos attached

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Month Day, Year](#)

Menomonie, Wis. – University of Wisconsin-Stout Assistant Professor Candice Maier recently received an award for her dissertation on how gender stereotypes can affect intimate relationships.

The [National Council on Family Relations](#) recognized Maier as the 2021 recipient of the [Jessie Bernard Outstanding Contribution to Feminist Scholarship Paper](#) for her research “Examining Gender in Heterosexual Couple Relationships Utilizing the Biobehavioral Family Model: Implications for Couple Therapy.”

Maier, the clinic director for UW-Stout’s [master’s in marriage and family therapy](#), was recognized recently at an awards ceremony during the 2021 NCFR annual conference.

Her feminist-informed study sought to add to the existing literature on gender, health and heterosexual romantic relationships with the hope of providing insight to those who practice couple therapy, she said.

Maier is a licensed clinical therapist and has her Ph.D. in couple and family therapy from University of Iowa. She co-wrote her dissertation with her master’s and doctoral program advisers, Christi McGeorge, of North Dakota State University; and Armeda Wojciak, of University of Minnesota.

“The findings of this study suggest it is important for clinicians to consider the ways in which (cis)gender ideology and stereotypes affect a couple’s relationship and health and how attending to

gendered power issues is a key aspect to helping couples build mutually supportive intimate relationships,” Maier said.

“As a lifelong feminist and licensed couple/marriage and family therapist, this topic has been a longstanding passion of mine, both professionally and personally,” she added.

### **Intersections of identities**

Maier received the award for her excellence in research and contribution to feminist family scholarship. The award is presented in memory of Bernard, a pioneer in the field of feminist family studies, who examined the influence of sexism on women’s experiences in marriage, parenting and society.

It means a lot to Maier to receive the award and be recognized, along with her mentors. “It adds to an existing body of literature of amazing scholars who have been writing about gender, intersectionality and relationships from a feminist perspective for decades,” she said.

Intersectionality, Maier explained, was a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1999. It recognizes the overlapping of social identities and systems of oppression.

“Intersectional feminism is an important part of the feminist movement,” she said. “We cannot talk about gender without emphasizing race, class, sexual orientation, gender identity and ability status amid the intersections of identities that women experience.”

Maier encourages MFT students, faculty and professionals to research topics they’re passionate about and submit their findings for scholarly publication.

“Believe in your work as an important mission in what you do,” she said. “Many of us faculty have received rejections in our careers. It’s important to continue the drive and motivation, even if you think it won’t go anywhere. Someone needs to hear it.”

NCFR is a nonprofit organization whose members support all families through research, teaching, practice and advocacy. NCFR has a membership of nearly 3,000 family researchers, practitioners and educators.

NCFR’s family therapy section, of which Maier serves as the student and new professionals representative officer, unites members who share interests, goals and purposes in marital and family therapy.

UW-Stout’s [counseling, rehabilitation and human services department](#) offers five master’s programs and three bachelor’s degrees, including the [human development and family studies program](#), which has been reviewed by NCFR. It offers coursework covering the content required for the Certified Family Life Educator designation.

*UW-Stout is [Wisconsin’s Polytechnic University](#), with a focus on applied learning, collaboration with business and industry, and career outcomes.*

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### **Photos**

Assistant Professor Candice Maier was recently awarded the Jessie Bernard Outstanding Contribution to Feminist Scholarship Paper for her research.

Students in the marriage and family therapy program demonstrate a therapy session in the dedicated spaces in the Vocational Rehabilitation building.

Link to <https://www.uwstout.edu/about-us/news-center/human-development-and-family-studies-students-build-awareness-about-importance-helping-professions>