John Korsmo, Human Services Professor and recipient of the 2021 WWU Excellence in Teaching Award

Western honors one faculty each year with this award. Criteria include:

- Inspirational/Transformational and value of learning for career/life decisions/etc.
- Vision, purpose, and intentionality for teaching
- Engagement beyond class, mentoring student (students, other faculty, etc.)
- Innovative pedagogy, continual development
- Overall awesomeness

Dr. John Korsmo is a Professor of Human Services, and Chair of the Health and Community Studies Department. His scholarship relates to human ecology - particularly related to youth and family efforts to deal with and depart from cycles of poverty. His dedication to supporting low income and first-generation students has been central to his work at Western. His teaching is inspired by more than two decades of practice in the human services sector – primarily working with children, youth, and families experiencing poverty, systemic racism, and marginalization.

John's relational practice in the classroom supports sense of belonging and connection, which enhances his ability to work with students on critically understanding complex systems and emotionally-laden topics such as personal identity, systemic oppression, racism, and inequities. With a PhD in Urban Education and a MS in Educational Psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, John has developed numerous case studies, curricular materials and simulations that are used by thousands of educators and practitioners around the country and globally. His scholarship has been published in dozens of journals and professional publications as well as books and periodicals, and more.

John's motivation comes from his own experiences in poverty and as a 1st-gen college graduate, and is sustained through his family, friends, community partners, and students.

From https://president.wwu.edu/excellence-teaching-award