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### **Interest Statement**

I would like to be considered for the Summer 2007 Weather & Society Integrated Studies (WAS\*IS) workshop. This workshop will be an exciting opportunity for me as a junior faculty member to establish relationships with others who do research on the social aspects of meteorology and also with those who create and communicate weather information.

One way I would like to integrate social science and meteorology is through a better understanding of the relationship people develop with television weathercasters, and the impact this relationship has on viewer trust and behavior. The television weathercaster talks to thousands, or even millions of viewers on a daily basis, yet little is known about the way people relate to the television weathercaster and why or even if they choose to listen to him or her. I began to study this relationship with my doctoral dissertation, and hope to further this research while an assistant professor here at Mississippi State University. Also, since television has been shown to be an essential source of science and weather information for the public, I am interested in better understanding how that information is used in the context of the viewer's other daily relationships. This understanding is necessary when one's goal is to use weather information to enact change whether that means by encouraging people to get ready for a hurricane or to alter their lifestyles to lessen the impact on the environment.

If selected for the workshop, I believe I have a somewhat unique perspective to both offer to and benefit from this workshop. My research combines communications theory with hazards perception and risk. Relevant projects are listed on my resume. I've also had the opportunity to help train students in the art of weathercasting, teaching them such topics as how to tell a weather story, and how to use their personality to share weather information with the public. I hope you will offer me the opportunity to participate in the present and future of weather and society research through the WAS\*IS workshop.