

2001 Board of Trustees' Award for Outstanding Teaching Recipient

Professor Stephen N. Jasperson

Professor Stephen Jasperson has devoted himself to the goal of educating WPI students in the field of physics, an area of fundamental importance to a large number of students and several academic programs. Many students and alumni recognize Professor Jasperson as a key contributor to the quality of their first-year experience and to their overall success at WPI. Always treating students with respect, Professor Jasperson promotes learning in many different settings --- lecture halls, classrooms, laboratories, as well as one-on-one conferences and project meetings.



Nominations commonly describe Professor Jasperson as a skilled instructor, who loves physics and is committed to communicating that enthusiasm. Students and colleagues alike have remarked upon his careful preparation for each class, his well-organized and clear lectures, and his effective use of examples and humor to convey complex theories in comprehensible terms. Professor Jasperson manages to "always come to class with a new metaphor;" or as one nominator put it very succinctly, "He's pumped about physics." Professor Jasperson challenges students to extend their capabilities and goes out of his way to support them when they do so -- his door is always open. Students feel that he takes personal responsibility for their successes and failures.

Testimonials to Professor Jasperson's dedication abound. One member of his Quantum Mechanics I course reported, "Early in the course Professor Jasperson arranged to meet with the students 3 at a time outside of class so he could make sure we understood the background material we would need for the course. This took up hours of his time but he wanted to make sure we were all prepared for the course, and to help us if we were not."

His colleagues in the Physics Department laud Professor Jasperson's teaching skills. A faculty nominator wrote, "Professor Jasperson's commitment to the students is extraordinary. He demands a lot of the students and his students respond. I have also seen him try unique techniques such as giving individual oral exams to each student in his quantum mechanics course." Another colleague says, "He is a superb classroom teacher. He always teaches from fundamental principles. His demonstrations and illustrations are cleverly devised to reveal in practical terms the consequences of those principles. I have regularly stolen his ideas in my own teaching."

Professor Jasperson's commitment to the WPI community extends beyond teaching and project advising. He has arranged meetings with undergraduate students in the Physics Department to discuss graduate school, and he has served as the Head of the Physics Department. Professor Jasperson is currently Secretary of the Faculty, indicating he is well respected by faculty members across the campus.

For his tireless dedication to the lives and learning of his students and to the WPI community, for his excellence in teaching, for his concern for his students' success, we proudly present the 2001 Board of Trustees Award for Outstanding Teaching to Professor Stephen Jasperson.