

2006 Board of Trustees' Award for Outstanding Teaching Recipient

Professor Jeanine Plummer

Jeanine Plummer is a Professor who really seems to live for teaching!! Numerous students, alumni, and colleagues were so strongly influenced by their interactions with her that they nominated her for the Trustee's Teaching Award. Students were especially moved by Professor Plummer, regarding her as a truly outstanding teacher who comes to school to teach, to bring light, and to interact with them with a genuine love and respect. Her classes and projects are scored by students at high levels rarely encountered at any university. Displaying a sincere thoughtfulness for each individual, she encourages participation from students without making them feel put on the spot, and has an uncanny knack for



developing personal connections with them. Several students noted that no professor cares more for their success; yet Professor Plummer handles even the most frustrating individuals with patience and grace. Academically astute, she presents information far beyond mere facts. She is enthusiastic to the point that the students also get excited about the subject. Her lectures are full of highly relevant information, and through her enthusiastic, clear, and direct method of teaching, her students are able to synthesize difficult material. In addition to her ability to present information simply and lucidly, she challenges her students to go far beyond their current level of thinking. "Not to quit, not to quit until you understand" are words that reverberate among the students and alumni letters. One student wrote at the end of her four years here, that "no teacher inspired me as much as Dr. Plummer."

Praise for Professor Plummer's teaching does not come only from current students and alumni, but endorsements of her teaching come from all constituencies: undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, academic advisees, and project advisees. A colleague wrote, "During my two decades at WPI, I have rarely encountered a better candidate for the Trustees Teaching Award than Dr. Plummer, an unforgettable source of light among WPI faculty." Another noted "She is doing teaching, she is not preaching teaching." Still another indicated "she is by far the most inspirational teacher I have been associated with in my 23 years of teaching."

But Professor Plummer does far more than just teach. She is extremely accessible outside the classroom, and the students genuinely trust her to guide their careers. One graduate student noted: “when I first entered WPI, I found myself overwhelmed with demands and stress, convincing myself I did not belong at WPI, but Professor Plummer’s support kept me motivated, and taught me to trust my own ability.” Professor Plummer is a teacher who builds character, with an uncanny knack for always being able to conduct herself as a teacher, professional, advisor, and friend during any situation. Several nominators noted her leadership roles with the STRIVE and GEMS programs, teaching young women in our summer programs; yet many nominators noted she is also an excellent role model for both men and women.

Professor Plummer belongs to a very special category of teachers who are never forgotten by their students, remembered not only for their effective teaching, but for their demonstration of how to be a decent human being. As a colleague wrote, “I have often wondered what kind of qualifications are needed for this prestigious Trustee’s Teaching Award, and after having observed Professor Plummer, now I know.” Dr. Plummer truly epitomizes the spirit of WPI, and we are delighted to present her with this award for Outstanding Teaching.