



Citation of
Professor Jeanine LM Skorinko
for the
2023 Board of Trustees' Award for
Outstanding Research and Creative Scholarship

Professor Jeanine Skorinko is a world-renowned social psychologist conducting cutting-edge research with significant societal implications. Professor Skorinko's research focuses on prejudice, culture, and perspective-taking, primarily through the lens of the social tuning model. Professor Skorinko's research interests and multi-method approach have led to many partnerships, including interdisciplinary collaborations at WPI and beyond WPI. Her research has also led to several ground-breaking discoveries, advancing the social tuning model in novel and important ways. Her work on when and why social tuning occurs has shed light on how prejudiced views spread. And even though she started this work almost two decades ago, it is as timely as ever. In one of her studies, after participants viewed a female target who was holding either a water bottle or a beer bottle, Skorinko measured how much they dehumanized the female target and how sexually available they found her to be. This work has gained wide attention and was featured in several media outlets, including *The New York Times*.

Professor Skorinko was the first to find that affiliative motivation—the desire to get along with others—predicts social tuning. Since her early works, Professor Skorinko has established herself as a leader in this area, authoring a paper on this topic in the prestigious *Current Opinion in Psychology* journal. She was also among the first to examine social tuning cross-culturally, finding that collectivists engage in social tuning more than individualists, likely because they want to maintain social harmony and avoid rejection. She is examining whether this model holds in other countries such as Hong Kong, Costa Rica, and South Korea. Finally, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Disabled Person's Protection Commission and Massachusetts Advocates Standing Strong, Professor Skorinko conducted focus groups and interviews with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) to learn more about their technology use, their knowledge of abuse, and their reactions to different learning activities designed by individuals with I/DD to help others with I/DD learn about and recognize abuse. This work has garnered attention in the human computing world and won Honorable Mention for Best Paper in 2020.

Professor Skorinko is highly sought after for her expertise. She has given the Presidential Address at The New England Psychological Association, 13 invited talks, 32 conference talks, and numerous poster presentations, routinely chairing symposia and panels, and providing expert testimony in legal cases. Her work is also highly cited, with more than 10,000 citations in Google Scholar.

It is also impossible to overlook Professor Skorinko's impact on our University. To mention just a few of her institutional footprints: She created the first human participants research lab in the history of WPI and developed the infrastructure to conduct human participant experiments at WPI when no one else was engaged in this work. She worked closely with WPI's Institutional Review Board (which was not yet a fully functioning IRB at the time) to determine how she could conduct her work and get ethical review and approval. Professor Skorinko created the Social Science Participant Pool where faculty could recruit participants for their research and students taking psychological science courses could participate in studies in exchange for course credit. Professor Skorinko does not limit this resource to psychology faculty or students; rather, it is available for anyone on campus engaging in human participants research. It is an invaluable resource to our campus.

Professor Skorinko's dedication to excellence extends beyond her research endeavors, as she has also cultivated an environment of collaboration, mentorship, and intellectual curiosity here at WPI. As a staunch advocate for diversity and inclusion within the scientific community, Professor Skorinko has emerged as a role model for aspiring researchers and academics. Thus, it is our great honor to recognize Professor Jeanine Skorinko in acknowledgment of her remarkable scholarly achievements, her unwavering dedication to academic excellence, and her commitment to making a meaningful impact on society.

2023 Committee

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