



Citation of

Michael Elmes

for the

**Board of Trustees Chair's
2022 Exemplary Faculty Award**

The 2022 Board of Trustees Chair's Exemplary Faculty Award is presented to a special colleague whose creative, conscientious, and deeply human approach to research and teaching and whose longstanding commitment through service to WPI mark him as a true exemplar of WPI's highest aspirations and most important qualities.

Professor Michael Elmes, Professor of Organizational Behavior and Change in The Business School at WPI, is known to his students as thoughtful, engaging, and profound—whether by encouraging their honest reflections on their moral values or by facilitating lively classroom experiments to reveal and understand group dynamics. Former students credit him with helping them make principled decisions after starting their own careers, and with instilling in them an ethical framework that endures.

With over 4,000 citations, Professor Elmes's scholarship on narrative and the social construction of knowledge has been widely influential both in theory and in practice with lasting impact. From his classic 1997 paper on using narrative to understand the construction of strategy in organizations, to his many research projects that seek to understand and interpret human and organizational behaviors, Professor Elmes' work is relevant to such serious global challenges as climate change, hunger, and economic inequality.

A dedicated contributor to campus life through his extensive involvement on faculty governance committees, faculty task forces, search committees, and curriculum committees, Professor Elmes has devoted not only time but deep thought to the purpose of his service—to support WPI and its Business School with developing globally responsible leaders and to use education to make communities around the world more aware, ethical, capable, and kind.

Professor Elmes is an exemplar of the WPI faculty, precisely because his professional activities cannot be neatly separated from one another. His integrative and boundary-spanning approach to scholarship, teaching, and service is most clearly illustrated in his 17-year involvement with New Zealand, beginning with his 2005 Fulbright work studying narratives about genetic engineering

research and deepening when he co-founded WPI's Wellington, New Zealand Project Center in 2011.

In his 12 years as Director, the Wellington Project Center has shaped Professor Elmes as he has shaped it, bringing his focus on social justice to the global problems associated with food supply and food insecurity, the modern phenomena of social innovation and entrepreneurship, the challenges of addressing climate change and conservation, and, most recently, the concerns of New Zealand's Māori natives.

The Executive Director of Fulbright New Zealand has described Professor Elmes as one of their most successful Fulbright Scholars for maximizing the opportunities of the award, using it for its greatest purpose, and demonstrating for others what a Fulbright scholar should be: daring and creative in their academic endeavors, engaging and embracing of the broadest aspects of the award, and serving as a global ambassador of the US to increase vital understandings between nations.

For his devotion to all the activities that define the role of a faculty member, for his actions to advance social justice and social innovation, and for his ability to integrate his activities and actions to support and strengthen the others, and for a career of near-perfect balance, WPI is proud to recognize Professor Michael Elmes as the recipient of the 2022 Board of Trustees Chair's Exemplary Faculty Award.

2022 Selection Committee

Mark W. Richman (SOF, Chair)

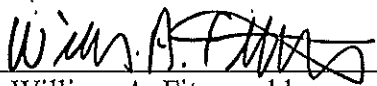
Kristen Billiar (BME)


Kimberly Huang (B.S., '25)

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John Sullivan (MME)

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