

2005 Board of Trustees' Award for Outstanding Academic Advising

Professor Jeanine D. Plummer

Throughout a person's education, many decisions-both professional and personal, crucial and casual-must be made. Fortunately, as a student at WPI, many advisors along the way offer their expertise and assistance to students. These advisors are extremely important. With WPI's project intensive program, fast-paced 7 week courses, and the great degree of liberty students have in choosing classes, academic advisors are critical in helping students adjust to and progress through their new stage in life. The advisors' assistance is particularly vital to incoming first-year students in order to acclimate them to WPI's unique system, but the advisors are also greatly needed by upperclassmen as they help them stay on track. The contribution and influence of all advisors at WPI can never be overestimated, for every advisor offers an invaluable service to the student body. Each year, we attempt to select and recognize one outstanding academic advisor for his or her invaluable contributions and service based on student nominations.



Even as a relatively new member of the WPI community, Professor Jeanine Plummer has made a significant and tremendously positive impact on her students and advisees. It is apparent from the information provided in the student nominations that she attends to each advisee in an equal capacity. Moreover, this capacity transcends the academic boundaries by being available to her students to discuss personal matters as well. Her responses are also prompt, which, as many students here at WPI recognize, is a highly valued practice of professors. As one advisee notes, "Whenever I have asked for her help she has always answered quickly and thoroughly." Her nominations for this award also pointed out her constantly trying to expand the breadth of her assistance. She makes a habit of introducing her students to other professors in order to make the student more comfortable asking those professors for help in the classes they teach.

As was previously mentioned, a common thread in Professor Plummer's nominations is her availability to discuss issues outside the realm of academics. Virtually every student has had an experience with an issue at home or in his/her personal life while at WPI and is familiar with how these issues typically impact one's ability to study and stay on task. Who better to understand the influence of personal issues on academic studies than an academic advisor? One student's comments state, "She has been sensitive to my personal life by always asking how things are going other than my classes and understanding my preferences for project partners." Another student comments, "Professor Plummer has helped me when I was struggling with testing and

emotional problems." It is clear that Professor Plummer has a true desire to field any concern a student may have, whether it is academic in nature or not. In the words of one of her advisees, "She has always gone out of her way to contact other people on campus to help assist me with concerns that I have."

It is with great honor that we present the Outstanding Academic Advising Award of 2005 to Professor Jeanine Plummer. Just as her students have shown immense appreciation for her assistance and for making them feel comfortable, we show our appreciation to Professor Plummer by presenting her this award. Perhaps it is stated best in the succinct comments of one of her students, "Professor Plummer is a reliable and irreplaceable resource."