

2008 Board of Trustees' Award for Outstanding Academic Advising

Professor Kristen Billiar

Advisors play an important role in the lives of their students. Their guidance and dedication have an impact on their students' education, college experiences, and future career choices. WPI is fortunate to have so many well-qualified and dedicated advisors. This dedication is crucial in dealing with the challenges that students face during their time at WPI, specifically in adjusting schedules around projects and prerequisites. From new students entering WPI, to seniors planning their futures after graduation, advisors offer an invaluable service to the student body. Each year we recognize one outstanding academic advisor who has gone above and beyond the expectations of their students. This year, Professor Kristen Billiar has been selected for his remarkable commitment to his students.



Professor Billiar has shown great diligence in his role as an academic advisor. He advises not only students in the Biomedical Engineering department, but also a large number of first-year students in the Insight program. His advisees commented on how he makes time for all of his advisees, not only on academic advising day but whenever a student needs advice. It was also noted that he always responds to all student inquiries. In looking to serve his advisees better, he has created a number of online advising resources for students that have been adopted by many other faculty members in the Biomedical Engineering department.

Beyond simply providing advice on classes, Professor Billiar takes a particular interest in making sure his advisees are prepared for the future. He provides help on searching for jobs, internships and research, but he even goes above and beyond that. He wants to make sure that his advisees are engaged in all aspects of being a responsible member of the community. One advisee noted that during election time, he contacted all of his advisees to remind them to get absentee ballots in the primary election. It is this extra dedication in helping students excel that has made Professor Billiar a popular advisor in his department. Despite advising upwards of 46 undergraduate advisees, he is still an outstanding mentor to all of them. His advisees credit his advising as playing a significant role in their success both at WPI and in their early careers, which speaks to his exceptional work in the WPI community as a mentor for students.

It is with great honor that we present the Outstanding Academic Advising Award of 2008 to Professor Kristen Billiar.