

2010 Romeo L. Moruzzi Young Faculty Award for Innovation in Undergraduate Education Recipients

Constance Clark

This year WPI is pleased to present the Romeo Moruzzi Young Faculty Award to Professor Constance Clark of the Humanities and Arts Department, for her cumulative innovations to our undergraduate curriculum in the history of science and technology.

Transforming history from a fact-based, print-bound discipline to an experiential encounter with cultural and material forces, Clark has been praised for her ability to harness the scientific imagination within the space of the humanities classroom, where she encourages students to understand technological developments as matters "of values and ideas as well as nuts and bolts." In particular, her popular course on cars and car culture led students to explore the influences of automobiles on American culture, the environment, and the design of cities and suburbs.



Professor Clark's pedagogical approach is also characterized by active discovery, quite unusual in the field of history. As an assignment in the cars course, her students investigate how they will run a number of important errands without use of a car. For her course on the *History of Evolutionary Thought*, Professor Clark is developing a modified laboratory setting with fossil and osteological specimens, recreating a "naturalist's cabinet" that would have been typical in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Her vision is for students to engage in the kinds of hands-on practices and classification exercises used by scientists at the time.

For her innovations in the teaching of history, and for continuing Romeo Moruzzi's mission to help engineers and scientists think critically about the connections between technology and society, we are proud to present the 2010 Moruzzi Young Faculty Award for Innovation in Undergraduate Education to Professor Constance Clark.