

## Advising Philosophy - Wendy A. Dustman, Ph.D.

### Classroom Meets Real-World

Advising undergraduate students has been one of my most rewarding experiences as a faculty member. My role is not simply to facilitate learning of key subject material, but also to acquaint my students with the possibilities that await them in their chosen field. This entails guiding my advisees through the maze of required and elective courses based on their particular strengths and interests so that they can develop the best 'toolbox' of skills possible to take into their career.

### Keys to Advising: Listening, Enthusiasm and Caring

There are several keys to developing a strong relationship with advisees. I feel that striving to provide these key elements to each student who walks through my door will enable me to be the best resource I can possibly be and ensure the fulfillment of my students' potential.

- *Listening* carefully to my advisees helps me understand their concerns, dreams and motivations, which facilitates my helping them in finding classes, internships, and other experiences that can benefit them in their chosen careers.
- *Enthusiasm* is an infectious motivator. Meeting with my advisees and keeping up with their successes (e.g. their MCAT scores, their summer internship at Johns Hopkins Medical School, their experience at Camp Kudzu where they worked with diabetic children) is an investment in keeping them enthused about themselves and their education. Seeing my students become enthusiastic about their careers, experiences and opportunities refreshes my own enthusiasm.
- Showing a *caring* attitude. In this large University setting, I fear that too often, our students feel like we know them by only their 810 numbers, and not as the real people they are. It's important to me to provide my advisees with an additional sense of support. Many are far from home and family, and being involved with many campus activities or having economic restraints, have the infrequent chance for a visit home where that sense of family support can be re-invigorating.