

## DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR  
RONALD C. BOUNOUS**

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for Ronald C. Buonous, professor emeritus, social work, has filed with the secretary of the General Faculty the following report.



Hillary Hart, Secretary  
General Faculty and Faculty Council

**IN MEMORIAM  
RONALD C. BOUNOUS**

Dr. Ronald C. Bounous, a former faculty member at The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work, died June 25, 2015 at the age of eighty.

After being welcomed into the world by the Bounous Family in Provo, Utah, May 22, 1935, his family returned to Hardin, Montana. Growing up near the Crow Reservation, Ron had classmates and friendships with people of many ethnic roots. His connection to the earth and nature started at an early age; he roamed free with his friends all over the reservation and later worked surveying for the Holly Sugar Company and digging graves at Custer Battlefield. He accompanied his parents and brother, Gary, on numerous fly fishing trips in the mountains. His maternal grandfather, an engineer and inventor, introduced Ron to many activities, taking him to pan for gold and teaching him to meditate at a young age. Ron deeply appreciated the effects this rich mix of experiences would have on his life.

When he met Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, a Tibetan Buddhist master, in the late '70s, it was a natural, familiar, and immediate connection. Ron served as a director of the now Austin Shambhala Center teaching many beginning and advanced classes in that tradition and serving as a role model and meditation teacher to many students. Throughout his life he remained close to many Buddhist friends and practitioners, both in Austin and around the world.

Ron attended the University of Minnesota and after getting his masters in social work, enlisted in the air force, serving as an officer and as one of the first social workers in that branch of service. He became a father at that time to his first daughter, Dianne, and son, David. After leaving the service, he returned to the University of Minnesota to earn his Ph.D. in Social Work, and began teaching in social work at The Ohio State University. In Columbus, he coordinated the doctoral program and later, in San Juan, had major responsibility for the Ohio State doctoral program at the University of Puerto Rico. After moving to Austin to teach at The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work, his daughter, Lisa, was born.

Ron joined the UT School of Social Work in 1971 and retired in 2005. A colleague, Michael Lauderdale, remembers that then Dean Jack Otis hired Ron to become the director of the newly created Ph.D. program. Ron was active in teaching at the Austin campus and traveled to teach at the satellite MSSW program in El Paso, Texas. From 1993 to 1999, Ron was the director of the Master's in Science in Social Work (MSSW) program. His responsibilities included curriculum development and oversight for admissions and advising. Although teaching was one of his primary loves, he also maintained a psychotherapy practice, infusing his real life experience into the classroom.

Another colleague, Jane Kretzschmar, fondly remembers Ron as follows:

Ron was named the Director of the MSSW Program shortly before I was named the Director of the Field Education Program. As such, we worked together on a daily basis. I remember Ron as kind and funny, always bringing calmness to the work. He was a great resource for any students interested in utilizing their MSSW to serve as a social worker in the military. Ron was able to help those students see the importance of blending social work values with service as a military officer.

A former student and current faculty member, Robin Smith, had this to say about Ron:

I attended the Master of Social Work Program at UT from 1990-1992. Ron Bounous was one of my best professors. I actually met Ron in the late 1980s prior to starting graduate school at a weekend Buddhist meditation training at the Austin Shambhala Center. I remember Ron being friendly and humorous with me, a clueless kid trying to find her spiritual way. However, when I met him again as my professor, I realized Ron was also humble. Nothing about his manner at the retreat suggested he had been practicing Buddhist meditation for a while, or that he was probably the most highly educated person there. Later, I would see Ron at the grocery store and we would exchange hellos. Ron was a good man above all else, and I will always remember him with a twinkle of amusement in his eye.

Ron's family shares that he created a life in which diversity, open-heartedness, empathy and kindness were continually expressed. Predeceased by his parents, brother Gary (Sharlyn), and beloved daughter Dianne Kemble (Mark), Ron is survived by his wife Sue, daughter Lisa Brophy (John), son David (Johanna, grandson Lionel, and granddaughter Francisca), and granddaughters Joelle Kemble and Sarah Brophy. Ron contributed much to the UT School of Social Work and is remembered fondly by faculty colleagues and former students.

This memorial resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Jane A. Kretzschmar (chair), Calvin L. Streeter, and Cynthia G. S. Franklin.

Distributed to the dean of School of Social Work on May 27, 2016, and posted under "Memorial Resolutions" at <https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/facultycouncil/Wiki+Home>.