

## DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR  
CALVIN PATTON BLAIR**

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for Professor Emeritus Calvin Patton Blair, McCombs School of Business, has filed with the secretary of the General Faculty the following report.



Alan W. Friedman, Secretary  
General Faculty and Faculty Council  
The University of Texas at Austin

Arthur J. Thaman and Wilhelmina Doré Thaman Professor of English and Comparative Literature

**IN MEMORIAM  
CALVIN PATTON BLAIR**

Calvin Patton Blair, ninety-one, known to all as Pat, died peacefully on February 2, 2016, at his residence in Corpus Christi, surrounded by his family. He was born in Orange, Texas in 1924, the youngest child of Thomas David Blair and Mary Jane Patton Blair. He attended Ogden Elementary School, David Crockett Junior High, and Beaumont High School in Beaumont, Texas, making many lifelong friends – and meeting his future wife Eleanor Ruth Davis – among his schoolmates.

In 1943, Pat joined the Navy Seabees and served in the 76<sup>th</sup> CB Battalion, receiving an honorable discharge in March 1946. He married Eleanor of Beaumont in November 1946. Pat, the first in his family to go to college, attended The University of Texas, where he graduated Phi Beta Kappa as an undergraduate and later earned his Ph.D. in Economics. He went on to teach at The University of Texas at Austin for forty-five years as a professor of economics, trade, and international business, retiring from the business school as professor emeritus.

Pat Blair was an early scholar in the nascent field of International Business at the University. Today it is difficult to imagine business courses that do not have a strong international content, but when Pat started teaching international business that area was considered to be something exotic, and those who studied and taught in the area were often viewed as equally unusual. Pat “brought the world” to business students through his teaching of courses like “International Trade” and “Trade and Commercial Policies.” It would be decades before these courses would be considered essential for a comprehensive business education. UT’s School of Business was among the early adopters of internationally oriented courses in its curriculum, and Pat Blair was a major promoter and vehicle for their inclusion. He will be remembered as a pioneer of international business education at UT Austin.

Pat’s many service contributions to the Department of Marketing, the School of Business, and the University were included committee work, curriculum design, knowledge development and dissemination. Pat’s own research and teaching interests focused on Mexico, and he was widely respected for his knowledge of that country: its economy, its people, and its culture and society. His Spanish language ability was at the level of native fluency. He was able to bring “real” international knowledge into the classroom and present students and faculty colleagues with a genuinely international orientation. He carried out research, consulting work, academic publishing, and graduate school teaching in Spanish (in Mexico and Central America) with equal facility as in English. With his wife and daughters, he lived in Mexico and other countries for many summers and sometimes for periods of one to four years, passing on his gift of Spanish fluency to his immediate family. Indeed, his Spanish was so good that once when he was in Mexico meeting with University of Texas colleagues, he was criticized for meeting with “gringos.”

Pat was a wonderful mentor to young faculty members in the Department of Marketing and International Business. He was always available in his office on the seventh floor of the School of Business to discuss world

events, national politics (he was a true-blue dog Democrat), research on economic forces impacting Latin America, campus politics, or almost any other matter that was of interest and importance to young faculty members.

Pat was beloved by virtually all of his students. He was not only a gifted teacher; he also cared deeply about his students and followed their careers with interest. He was more than willing to meet with them and provide advice and counsel on issues ranging from future graduate school opportunities to career choice decisions.

Pat, who never met a stranger, was an animated story-teller, clever cartoonist, general enthusiast, and always cheerful and outgoing. He was fond of sailing, ice skating, ice dancing (which he took up in his 50s), Frisbee golf, and all manners of intellectual pursuits.

Dr. Blair is survived by his wife of sixty-nine years, Eleanor Ruth Davis Blair, presently of Corpus Christi, Texas; and daughters Bonnie O'Connor, Ph.D. and husband Malachi O'Connor, Ph.D. of Green Hill, Rhode Island; and Lisa Blair, M.D. and husband Erick Santos, M.D. and his grandson Daniel Santos of Corpus Christi, Texas.\*

\*Adopted in part from the Austin American Statesman, Obituary, February 7, 2016.

This Memorial Resolution was prepared by Professors William Cunningham (Chair), Linda Golden, and Robert A. Peterson.

Distributed to the Dean of the McCombs School of Business on July 13, 2017, and posted under "Memorial Resolutions" at <https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/facultycouncil/Wiki+Home>.