

DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR
JAMES ALFRED HITT**

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for Professor Emeritus James Alfred Hitt, Department of Classics, 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
JAMES ALFRED HITT**

James Alfred Hitt, Associate Professor Emeritus of Classics at The University of Texas at Austin, passed away in Austin, Texas, on May 11, 2016, after a lengthy illness. His extensive career at UT Austin spanned thirty-eight years in a variety of functions, many of them in service to students. He was a man rich in academic and human qualities who made a quiet but considerable contribution to the Department of Classics, its outreach, and the student divisions of the colleges in which he served.

Jim was born on September 3, 1927, in Dallas. After graduating from high school, he served in the U.S. Army from March 1946 to September 1947 and was honorably discharged as Staff Sergeant. He then enrolled at Southern Methodist University, graduating in 1950 with Highest Honors and a Phi Beta Kappa key; reflecting his early versatility and breadth of interests, he majored in English and French with minors in Latin, Greek, and Comparative Literature. Accepted into the graduate program in Classics at Princeton, he received his Ph.D. in 1954 while he was teaching as an Instructor at the University of Pennsylvania. Later that year, he returned to his native Texas and became an Instructor in UT Austin's Department of Classics. In 1959, he was promoted to Assistant Professor with tenure and to Associate Professor in 1975. He retired in 1992 with the status of Emeritus.

Jim had wide-ranging scholarly interests and, throughout his career, he presented papers at numerous scholarly meetings, many dealing with Aristotle and Greek tragedy. His teaching was excellent and he built up the beginning Greek program at UT Austin to one of the largest in the nation at the time. In 1964, the quality of his teaching was duly recognized with an Award for Teaching Excellence from the College Arts and Sciences. Because of qualities that sometimes are hard to find in academe—patience, listening, a good sense of humor, common sense, and unselfishness—he was soon conscripted by the Student Division of the College of Arts and Sciences, first as Counselor and Senior Adviser, then as Assistant Dean, 1966-70. Thereafter, he served as Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs, 1970-77, in the Division of General and Comparative Studies, which he also headed as Acting Dean from September 1977 to January 1979. He was unfailingly courteous, professional, and, at the same time, firm in his convictions and what he felt were the best interests of a program and the University. In 1979, he returned to the Department of Classics full time and was an effective Vice Chair until his retirement, helping his superiors immeasurably at a time of considerable challenges. His good judgment provided much appreciated stability. That stability also was a hallmark of his family life. In 1953, he married his wife Mary Katherine, who predeceased him, and they had three children.

Jim was also committed to the intellectual and creative life. We preach to our students to be life-long learners—Jim exemplified what that means. He was an accomplished pianist, wrote musical compositions, translated Greek and Italian comedies, studied Chinese, and was active in the Greek Orthodox Church and the C. G. Jung Society of Austin. That orientation also informed his view of the role of classics: he engaged especially with regional organizations, helped to sustain the Department's good relations with high school teachers, and also served as Secretary of the Austin Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa for several years.

In his letter notifying the Department Chair of his retirement, Jim wrote: "The long association with The University of Texas at Austin has been altogether pleasant and personally satisfying." We can heartily attest that this sentiment was totally mutual.

This memorial resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Karl Galinsky (chair), David Armstrong, and Michael Gagarin.

Distributed to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts on August 16, 2017, and posted under "Memorial Resolutions" at <https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/facultycouncil/Wiki+Home>.