DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR
OSCAR G. BROCKETT

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for Ernest Winfield Walker, professor emeritus, theatre and dance, has filed with the secretary of the General Faculty the following report.

Sue Alexander Greninger
Secretary
The General Faculty

IN MEMORIAM
OSCAR G. BROCKETT

Theatre history scholar and University of Texas at Austin Professor Emeritus Oscar G. Brockett died on November 7, 2010, in Austin, Texas, at the age of eighty-seven due to complications following a massive stroke.

Brockett was a professor emeritus in The University of Texas at Austin’s Department of Theatre and Dance and was head of the doctoral program in theatre history from 1980-2006. He was presented the College of Fine Arts E. William Doty Award in 1998 to recognize him as an individual of distinction in his field who has demonstrated extraordinary interest in the college.

Brockett was considered by many to be the world’s foremost theatre historian. His book, *History of the Theatre*, is the top-ranked and highest-selling theatre history text of the 20th century. His most recent literary contribution, *Making the Scene: A History of Stage Design and Technology in Europe and the United States*, was published in 2010.

Following a rural upbringing on a Tennessee tobacco farm, Brockett earned his doctoral degree in theatre at Stanford University. He taught at Indiana University prior to joining The University of Texas at Austin in 1978 as dean of the College of Fine Arts. In 1980, he stepped down as dean to head the doctoral program in the Department of Theatre and Dance. He expanded the program from five students to thirty, and within nine years made it the number one theatre history program in the nation, according to *U.S. News and World Report* magazine.

“Say the name Oscar Brockett anywhere in the theatre world and everyone will instantly ascribe to him the title of the foremost historian of the theatre,” said Department of Theatre and Dance Chair Brant Pope. He went on to say,

Oscar Brockett quite literally invented the study of theatre history. Before his work, we studied the history of the drama, but Dr. Brockett was the first and foremost man of the theatre to write about the relationship between the drama and the production of those works on the stage.

As was every student of the theatre in my generation, I was introduced to my chosen field by studying the works of Oscar Brockett. How incredibly fortunate I am that this man, who so shaped my understanding of what being a theatre artists means, was also my friend. As I write this, his greatest book, *Century of Innovation*, sits on my desk. At this moment when we grieve his loss, it gives great comfort to think how many future students of the theatre will encounter Oscar Brockett in the ideas, and images, and imagination he poured into his work.

A recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and Fulbright Award, Brockett was a Fellow of the American Theatre at the Kennedy Center and was awarded multiple Career Achievement Awards from groups like the Association for Theatre in Higher Education, the Texas Educational Theatre Association, and the U.S. Institute for Theatre Technology. In honor of his exceptional contributions to The University of Texas at Austin, the Oscar G. Brockett Theatre Production Support Endowment in the Department of Theatre and Dance has been established.
Further information is available through the College of Fine Arts.

This memorial resolution was prepared by Leslie Lyon, director of public affairs, in the College of Fine Arts and reviewed on behalf of the Department of Theatre and Dance by Amanda Flores, public affairs specialist. It was approved by Donald Hale, vice president for public affairs.

Distributed to the dean of the College of Fine Arts, the executive vice president and provost, and the president on January 31, 2011. This resolution is posted under “Memorials” at: http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/.