The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for Byron F. Fullerton, associate professor, law, has filed with the secretary of the General Faculty the following report.

Sue Alexander Greninger, Secretary
General Faculty and Faculty Council

IN MEMORIAM
BYRON F. FULLERTON

Byron F. Fullerton, former associate dean of The University of Texas at Austin Law School, died in Austin on July 31, 2011, at the age of eighty-eight. He was a teacher, politician, practicing lawyer, and artist, as well as a law school administrator.

Fullerton was born in California, grew up in Kingsville, Texas, earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of Texas in 1946 and a master’s degree from the University of Colorado in 1950. He taught in several Texas high schools and retained a life-long interest in the civic education of young people. In 1956, he earned a law degree from the UT Austin Law School and was an assistant Texas attorney general and a lawyer in private practice in Austin until 1963, when he was asked by then-Dean W. Page Keeton to join the administration of the Law School.

His initial responsibility at the Law School was to create a Continuing Legal Education (CLE) program. CLE was in its infancy, as bar associations and law schools struggled to develop efficient and effective plans and programs. With the assistance of but a single staff member, Fullerton established a system that has become a model for other CLE programs. He pioneered the structure of close consultation with leaders of individual sections of the Texas Bar Association to concentrate on specific areas of the law in one- or two-day programs. One of the first programs Fullerton created, the UT Austin Mortgage Lending Institute, celebrates its forty-sixth annual edition with two-day sessions in both Dallas and Austin during the fall semester, 2012. Due largely to the foresight of Dean Fullerton, UT Austin now has one of the leading CLE programs in the United States sponsored by an academic institution.

Fullerton earned the respect and affection of hundreds of students during his time at the Law School. The Peregrinus, the Law School yearbook, was dedicated to him in 1967. The dedication stated, in part:

Dean Fullerton genuinely respects the law student and his integrity. He approaches every student as an individual…. Believing that most students are really doing their best, believing in their integrity when they profess it, he feels no embarrassment or shame in helping them. He sees no glory in prostrating students before him. Instead he sees the need to befriend and counsel them, to aid those who stumble when problems become too great.

Throughout his career, Fullerton was concerned about family violence and dysfunction. As a law student, he was working in the Legal Aid clinic when a young woman came in asking for help to give away her five-year-old child because she no longer wanted or loved him. Fullerton never forgot the incident, and one result of his concern was the creation of “The Byron Fullerton Fund for the Study and Prevention of Family Violence” under the auspices of the Law School Foundation. Co-chairs of the fund were two prominent friends of Fullerton and alumni of the Law School, Kay Bailey Hutchison ’67 and John L. Estes ’56.

In 1970, Fullerton took a leave of absence from the Law School to accept the Republican nomination for lieutenant governor of Texas. After losing the election, he returned to the Law School and assumed a wider
range of responsibilities, including alumni relations and staff administration. In 1981, he left UT and became dean of the law school at Texas Tech University, a position he held until his retirement in 1985.

In the early days of the UT Austin CLE program, in the course of obtaining illustrations for the cover of the brochure announcing each CLE program, Fullerton discovered that paintings by little-known regional artists could be had for less than the cost of commissioning a color photograph, so he began selecting original works. One of his early selections was a painting by Dalhart Windberg, now a renowned Texas painter, but then an unknown. Prints of some of the hundreds of paintings Fullerton selected now hang in law offices across the state, and original artwork on the cover remains a hallmark that makes UT Austin CLE brochures instantly identifiable.

Upon his retirement, Fullerton’s interest in art blossomed into a new career. He began painting impressionistic landscapes and soon developed an enthusiastic following. His work was shown in galleries in Santa Fe, Taos, Denver, and Austin, and he estimated he sold more than twelve hundred paintings.

Fullerton’s wife of fifty-eight years, Marilyn, died in 2004. He was also preceded in death by a son, Gray. He is survived by his son, Bruce, and his wife, Carol, of Austin; a brother, Ray Fullerton, of Georgetown, Texas; a sister, Martha Ann Spradling, of Gordon, Texas; Byron’s longtime companion, Arlene Fisher, of Austin; and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

This memorial resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors David Anderson (chair), Guy Wellborn, and Ernest Smith.

Distributed to the dean of the School of Law on November 29, 2012, and posted under “Memorials” at http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/.