DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR WILLIAM S. LIVINGSTON

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for William S. Livingston, professor emeritus, government, has filed with the secretary of the General Faculty the following report.

IN MEMORIAM
WILLIAM S. LIVINGSTON

William S. Livingston was a force and fixture at The University of Texas for fifty-eight years. So long was his tenure that he represented quite distinct things to various whole generations of alumni, faculty, and administrators. The more advanced generations remembered him as a brilliant young professor of British politics who arrived on campus in 1949 as a Yale doctoral candidate.

Dr. Livingston was born July 1, 1920, in Ironton, Ohio, and earned the Bronze Star and Purple Heart as a field artillery officer in Europe during World War II. He earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in 1943 from Ohio State University before getting his Ph.D. from Yale in 1950.

Those attending UT Austin in the mid-1950s and later remembered his ascent through the administrative ranks: assistant dean of the graduate school (1954-58), chair of the government department (1966-69) and also its graduate adviser (1958-67), chairman of the Comparative Studies Program (1978-79), and for six years, chairman of the University’s Faculty Senate.

He received a Ford Foundation Faculty Fellowship for 1952-53 and a Guggenheim Fellowship for 1959-60 for research in England. The UT Students’ Association honored him with a “Teaching Excellence Award” in 1959. During the period of his most active scholarship, Dr. Livingston was president of the Southern Political Science Association and of the Southwestern Social Science Association. He served twice on the Council of the American Political Science Association and for four years was editor-in-chief of the Journal of Politics. He was the author or editor of half a dozen books and some twenty-five articles on federalism, democracy, and education. He served as visiting lecturer in political science at Yale University in 1955-56, and as visiting professor at Duke in 1960-61. In 1982, he was named to the Jo Anne Christian Professorship in British Studies and in 1980-82 was president of Pi Sigma Alpha, the national Political Science Honor Society.

In the late 1960s, he chaired the committee that formed UT Austin’s Lyndon Baines Johnson School of Public Affairs. He served as vice chancellor of academic programs for the UT System (1969-70) and then, returning to the Austin campus, as vice president and dean of graduate studies for what would be his longest service in any one administrative role (1979-95). He was actively involved in the development of the James A. Michener Center for Writers, the Normandy Scholars Program, the Edward A. Clark Center for Australian and New Zealand Studies, the Faculty Seminar on British Studies, and the Graduate Assembly, the representative body of the graduate faculty.

Students of the 1990s would remember a lovable vice president whose sonorous baritone became the voice of TEX, the telephone registration system, and whose sign-off “Goodbye … and good luck,” became his famous trademark around campus, even if the Edward R. Murrow reference was almost certainly lost on the young registrants. In 1992, he served as acting president between the presidencies of William Cunningham and Robert Berdahl. In 1993-94, the University conducted a fund-raising campaign to endow a program of “Livingston
Fellowships in Graduate Studies,” headed by former Regent Wales Madden of Amarillo. The success of the campaign has made possible the annual award of several graduate fellowships, beginning in 1995. In 1992, the College of Liberal Arts conferred on him the Pro Bene Meritis Award. In 1994, the Parents’ Association gave him its “Award of Distinction,” and in 1995, the Ex-Students’ Association designated him as a “University Distinguished Educator.” In 2001, the alumni association bestowed upon him its Distinguished Service Award, only the second time the award had been given.

In 1995, he transitioned to part-time employment with an assignment as senior vice president. But those who might have thought this was a quasi-retirement were wrong: he still donned coat and tie and reported to his office on the fourth floor of the Flawn Academic Center every day, teaching small bands of entering freshmen and pinch hitting for the president at various functions virtually until the day in 2007 when, at age eighty-seven, he retired from his beloved University. In his final act before retirement, Dr. Livingston donated the more than thousand books that had lined his office walls to the University.

Dr. Livingston died on August 15, 2013, at age ninety-three, survived by his wife of seventy years, Lana, and two sons, Stephen and David.

At his memorial service at the University’s LBJ Auditorium on September 4, 2013, a service attended by nearly a thousand former colleagues and students, UT Austin President Bill Powers remarked,

Bill Livingston was to The University of Texas what Barton Springs is to the City of Austin: a never-ending source of refreshment and enjoyment, the essence of what is unique and best about our community, a fixture of our landscape, the time before which none of us can remember, and a treasure we cannot picture our community without. Few besides him have given their lives so completely to the University, and none have better embodied its ideals.

For roughly the last half of the University’s history, he served and guided the institution in ways that can never be fully measured. But, like you, what I will miss most is his personality: I will miss his booming voice and mischievous smile, the way he grabbed your arm while talking to you, his famous eloquence and his humor and his integrity.

Bill, thank you for your lifetime of service and for your example. And though you no longer need luck, I would be remiss if I didn’t say it too: goodbye, and good luck.

This memorial resolution was prepared by Avrel Seale, Office of the President.

Distributed to the dean of the College of Liberal Arts on October 4, 2013, and posted under “Memorials” at http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/.