REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR
SHIRLEY LASCH MENAKER

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for Shirley Lasch Menaker, associate professor, educational psychology, has filed with the secretary of the General Faculty the following report.

Sue Alexander Greninger, Secretary
The General Faculty

IN MEMORIAM
SHIRLEY LASCH MENAKER

Shirley Lasch Menaker died at her home in Charlottesville, Virginia, on December 24, 2004, after a long and valiant battle with kidney cancer. Valiant and vibrant describe Shirley personally and professionally during her twelve years at The University of Texas at Austin and at the institutions of higher learning she served after leaving UT in May 1979.

Shirley was born in Jersey City, New Jersey, in 1935 and attended high school at Woodrow Wilson High in Chevy Chase, Maryland. She received her B.A. degree from Swarthmore College with high honors in English literature, art history, and French and earned a Ph.D. in clinical psychology at Boston University. She joined the faculty of educational psychology at The University of Texas at Austin in 1967 as one of three women in a large department. Promoted to associate professor in 1970, and later to professor, Shirley played an active role in the counseling psychology program and the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education associated with the department at that time. Shirley was one of the leading researchers at the center and instrumental in the development of assessment measures that became classics in the field.

In September 1975, she was appointed associate dean of the Graduate School, an appointment that turned out to be quite influential in her academic career. In 1979 she moved to the University of Oregon and soon became dean of the Graduate School. In 1987 Shirley moved to the University of Virginia as associate provost for academic support and classroom management, a position she held until shortly before her death. Her duties and responsibilities included supervision of the offices that support the University’s academic mission, such as the registrar’s, the Women’s Center, the University Art Museum, the University Press, Summer Session, and the Upward Bound program. She also was the university’s liaison to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, working on matters such as space utilization, new degree programs, and annual reviews.

Shirley self-identified as a feminist and was a leader in creating an academic climate that was welcoming and supportive to women and men. A major research focus during her years at UT focused on the psychology of women and precursors of achievement in women and environmental effects influencing their career paths. She knew from her own life and her research that, in academia, being a woman was often not taken seriously, and that this situation needed to change. Her interest and commitment in this area continued throughout her professional career at the University of Oregon and the University of Virginia. In 2002 Shirley was awarded the prestigious Elizabeth Zintl Leadership Award from the University of Virginia. This leadership award annually recognizes women working at University of Virginia whose high degree of professionalism, creativity, and commitment mirror the extraordinary service that the late Elizabeth Zintl gave to the University as the president’s chief of staff until her death in 1997. Colleagues who nominated Shirley for the award commented on her being an inspiration and mentor to many individuals, especially women, and a role model par excellence in successfully integrating one’s professional and family life.

Shirley was tireless, tenacious, amazingly articulate, and always fair. Colleagues at UT affectionately remember Shirley for her verve, her clear logic, her keen grasp of facts and figures, her fun loving nature, her deeply felt human compassion and grace, and her ability to embrace and live life fully. She is missed.
Her husband, Michael Menaker; daughter, Ellen Briones, spouse Jon, and three children, all of whom live in Charlottesville, Virginia; and son, Nicholas, of Menlo Park, California, survive Shirley.

This memorial resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Lucia Albino Gilbert (chair), Edmund T. Emmer, and Toni Falbo.

Distributed to the dean of the College of Education, the executive vice president and provost, and the president on May 19, 2006. Copies are available on request from the Office of the General Faculty, WMB 2.102, F9500. This resolution is posted under "Memorials" at: http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/.