

Remembering our Colleague, Herb Werner



Herbert D, Werner, Associate Professor Emeritus in Economics,

passed away on February 27, 2020 at the age of 87. Herb was a cherished member of the Department of Economics and remained close to the faculty, both emeritus and new, right up to the last picnic that he attended, in September 2019.

Herb received his undergraduate degree from Northwestern University in 1953 and his PhD in Economics from the University of California -Berkeley in 1964. In the middle of his PhD studies, he was drafted into the U.S. Army and served for two years with most of his time spent at Fort Eustis in Virginia. He then returned to Berkeley and completed his dissertation under the supervision of Walter Galenson. At Berkeley, Herb also worked in the Institute for Industrial Relations. He was one of the earliest members of the Department of Economics at UMSL when he joined in the late 1960s after holding a faculty position at Lewis and Clark College for five years.

His areas of interest included labor economics, particularly industrial and labor relations, and macroeconomics. He also had strong interests in urban economics and was a fellow of the Center for Metropolitan Studies. As a fellow, he wrote several research papers and reports for local municipal governments. He also published refereed journal articles including one with UMSL Econ colleague **Joseph P. McKenna**. After a long and successful teaching career at UMSL, Herb took early retirement starting in 1993, though he continued teaching throughout the 1990s. Thereafter, he remained actively engaged in the Department of Economics, stopping by to have lunch at the Nosh with colleagues and attending our events.



A photo of all three UMSL labor economists at the 2019 Picnic: **Marie Mora** (then Associate Provost and now Provost), **Anne Winkler**, and the late **Herb Werner**.

The Werner family has asked that donations in Herb Werner's name be made to the "Department of Economics" to fund a scholarship to be given in his name. (It will be given in 2021.)

Sadly, Herb's memorial service had to be postponed due to COVID. At our next in-person event, we will take a few minutes to remember Herb and what he meant to the Department.

After Herb's passing, **many alums** who chimed in spoke of Herb's dry wit... his unique sense of humor. It can be seen firsthand in the History of the Department of Economics that he penned in 2008. [Click to read the History.](#)

Faculty remembrances...

Bob Sorensen... It's hard to know where to start in relating things that Herb Werner has meant and done for me at UMSL. I want to focus on one.

I must admit when I first came to UMSL I was somewhat intimidated. I was young (25), had not yet finished my dissertation, and was entering a department that had just hired several senior scholars who were well published and known by lots of people in the profession. I just didn't know where I'd fit in. Then one day Herb pops his head into my office and announces in a somewhat brisk manner "Son it's time for lunch." In those days we didn't have food service on campus and so people would often leave campus for lunch. Much to my surprise the senior faculty took me in and thoroughly included me in their conversations and debates. Eventually we got food service on campus, but Herb saw to it that the idea of 'econ lunch' survived. As new people joined the faculty they were encouraged to come to lunch. It was a place where we could debate econ theory and policy and learn about new econometric techniques. Even to this day after my retirement, I can expect go any day find a few or lot economists at the econ lunch. *Thank you Herb Werner for this tradition.*

Finally just let me say that Herb was very popular among students. Even now when I meet new people and I tell them I was an econ professor at UMSL they always bring up fond memories of Herb. Why not? He cared for their welfare and had a great sense of humor.



Herb with colleagues **Bob Sorensen, Tracie Edwards, Mike Allison, Steve Scheid, Kathy & Tom Ireland, and Dave Rose** at the 2019 Picnic.

Anne Winkler ... Herb entrusted me with many (of his many) labor economics books. For those who don't know, my office in 301 Tower was Herb's office and I have always enjoyed that legacy. A favorite early memory about Herb is from when I first joined the department. Herb and I both taught at 5:30 p.m. and he suggested we have dinner beforehand. First he stopped by at 4:45 p.m., then 4:40 p.m., then 4:35, and so on... We maintained a special relationship for all the years thereafter.

Dave Rose ... I'd say Herb was a fixture at lunch, where his wit and wisdom drew an audience from many departments over the years. I'd also say that our department has benefitted from several strong leaders over the years, but it was Herb that was its soul and its conscience.