IN MEMORIAM

ROBERT HAYES RYAN

Robert Hayes Ryan, a former University of Texas Assistant Professor with tenure, died unexpectedly on Monday, September 23, 1996, at the age of 69.

Professor Ryan, son of Genevieve and Max R. Ryan, was born on March 6, 1927, in Kansas City, Missouri. He came from a family with academic credentials. His mother was a mathematics teacher, his father an engineer, and one grandfather was a medical doctor, the other a pharmacist.

Because his father was an engineer and was involved in constructing and managing oil refineries, during Professor Ryan's childhood years he was well-traveled, having lived in Houston, Longview, Mt. Pleasant, Pampa, Odessa, and Dallas in Texas, Oswego and Coffeyville in Kansas, Tulsa in Oklahoma, and New York City.

He attended secondary schools in Longview and Highland Park, Texas, and at Lawrenceville Academy in New Jersey. Following graduation from high school he enrolled in Oberlin College in Ohio and transferred to The University of Texas at Austin, where he received a B.A. degree in English in 1950.

Almost immediately upon graduation from The University of Texas at Austin, he joined the Bureau of Business Research staff as a Research Associate IV. Later he was promoted to Research Associate V, the highest rank of Research Associate titles. During his tenure as a Research Associate with the Bureau from 1951-1976, he also became
Managing Editor of the *Texas Business Review* from 1952-1956, was a member of the *Review’s* Editorial Board from 1959-1972, and was its Editor from 1972-1976. From 1976-1977 he served as Consulting Editor. In 1972 he was appointed as Associate Director of the Bureau of Business Research. He also took a one year leave of absence to be employed by the Southwest Research Institute in San Antonio, Texas, from 1956-1957 as an Industrial Economist.

These positions became part-time beginning in 1954, when he was hired by the then-called Department of Business Services to be a Lecturer in Business Communications, teaching basic required Business Communications courses and an occasional class in Texas Resources. From 1954-1967 his rank changed from Lecturer to Special Instructor to Assistant Instructor, while the name of the Department changed to the Department of General Business. In 1968 he was appointed as an Instructor in Business Communications and granted tenure at that rank in 1970. In 1972 he was promoted to Assistant Professor with tenure, a rank he held until his retirement on January 15, 1992. During this period the name of the Department changed to the Department of Management Science and Information Systems.

Professor Ryan was an exceptional writer, an avid reader, enjoyed immensely classical music (a major contributor to station KMFA), was knowledgeable about artistic works, provided consulting services to both the public and private business sectors, made numerous radio and television business news commentaries, served as liaison for the Bureau of Business Research with state and federal government officials and agencies, was an expert witness primarily for savings and loan associations, gave speeches to various organizations, served on a number of University committees, and from 1951-1957, in addition to being Managing Editor of the *Texas Business Review*, did the editorial
supervision of the monthly *Texas Retail Trade and Construction in Texas* publications. Some of his many achievements are highlighted below.

One of his responsibilities at the Bureau of Business Research was the coordination of its publication and public information activities. During his tenure he had editorial supervision of about seventy books, monographs, and articles, and was author or coauthor in a number of these. These publications included numerous regional area studies, Texas economic data and indicators, and specific articles on particular types of Texas business and industry. He was also responsible for publications in other journals, proceedings, handbooks, and digests, including the *Handbook of Texas*, the *Texas Almanac*, and the *Grolier Encyclopedia*.

He also established a press release service through which several monthly economic and business news stories were distributed to wire services, newspapers, and magazines both in Texas and out of state. These releases often appeared in major daily Texas newspapers and were frequently reported and quoted in national periodicals such as the *New York Times, Washington Post, Newsweek, Time, U. S. News and World Report*, and a variety of business publications. He and John Stockton, who was the director of the Bureau of Business Research, are still remembered as developing a strong relationship with the Capitol Press Corps.

Some still remember his 1954 inauguration of radio and television news programming "Texas Business Review on the Air." It was initially a weekly radio interview program with prominent Texas businesspersons and scholars, transcribed and broadcasted on as many as seventy-six stations in Texas and the surrounding states. The first person he and his co-anchor, Anne Schuler, interviewed was the late Walter Prescott
Webb. He, in addition, was frequently scheduled later as a business news commentator on all four commercial network television stations in Austin, particularly in those days on KLRU-TV.

His consulting and expert witness activities were primarily associated with the banking and savings and loan industry, but he also did consulting work for many regional resource boards, chambers of commerce, insurance companies, retail and wholesale trade businesses, and health care service delivery systems. He was well-known for his extensive knowledge about the economics and demographics of all the two hundred fifty-four counties in Texas. He provided, through the Bureau of Business Research, advice and counsel to various state government agencies (such as the Governor’s Office, Texas Employment Commission, Tourist Development Agency, and Texas Highway Department), state legislative committees, and federal agencies (such as the Bureau of Census, Federal Reserve System, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and Federal Home Loan Bank System).

He served on numerous College and University committees during his tenure as a faculty member beginning in 1962. On some of these committees, such as the Business Administration Lower Division Advising Committee, which he chaired, and the University Publications Committee, his appointments were long-term, of seven and six years respectively. Even in retirement he remained active in the University community, editing the Retired Faculty - Staff Newsletter from 1992-1994.

His love of teaching was manifested in his student-teacher evaluations where reluctant students were required to become proficient in writing. The required course he primarily taught, BC 324, was not popular with most students until later in life, when they
learned its value. He was well-organized and had a knack of simplifying complex material. His dry wit, but insistence on excellence, is still remembered by many of his former students.

Professor Ryan was never fond of theoretical research, yet he was well-versed on numerous topics. He loved to do applied research and publications. He had the ability to organize a staggering amount of technical material in a concise and orderly fashion, which was reflected in his clarity of expression. Although somewhat reserved, he brought an outward dignity to a speech, a TV appearance, or an interview. What few knew, he also had a talent for speech writing. There were a number of public figures whose impressive speeches were in large part written by him.

His retirement letter on December 3, 1991, is typical of Bob Ryan. It is a four-sentence, two paragraph memo to the Chairman:

After long thought I have decided to retire from teaching as of January 15, 1992. I feel that it is in my best interest and that of the department that I leave, after forty-one years’ association with this college.

As you are aware, the work environment has changed rather radically, and I believe it is time that a new and more supple hand be given a turn at the job. I am grateful for past support and hope for the opportunity to be of some help in the future.
Professor Ryan was baptized and confirmed at the All Saints' Episcopal Church in Austin, and a requiem service was held in that church, Sunday, November 10, 1996. He is survived by his cousins, Eldridge Weaver of Santa Fe, New Mexico, Michael Weaver of The Woodlands, Texas, and Marc Weaver of Richmond, Virginia.

Peter T. Flawn, President ad interim
The University of Texas at Austin

H. Paul Kelley, Secretary
The General Faculty

This Memorial Resolution was prepared by a Special Committee consisting of Professors Gaylord A. Jentz (Chair), Stanley A. Arbingast, and William J. Lord, Jr.