

DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL RESOLUTION COMMITTEE FOR
JAMES WILLIAM TANKARD JR.**

The special committee of the General Faculty to prepare a memorial resolution for James William Tankard Jr., professor, journalism, has filed with the secretary of the General Faculty the following report.

Sue Alexander Greninger, Secretary
The General Faculty

**IN MEMORIAM
JAMES WILLIAM TANKARD JR.**

James William Tankard Jr., professor emeritus in the School of Journalism at The University of Texas at Austin, was an intrepid traveler who combined intellectual avenues of exploration in the academy with artistic and geographic explorations in numerous other venues.

Jim was born in Newport News, Virginia, on June 20, 1941, and died in Austin, Texas, on August 12, 2005, a year after retiring from thirty-two years on the School of Journalism faculty. From 1989 until his retirement, Jim held the Jesse H. Jones Professorship in Journalism. Prior to coming to Texas in 1972, he was on the journalism faculties of Temple University and the University of Wisconsin - Madison.

During his years in the academy, Jim authored or co-authored six books and more than forty-five research articles and book chapters. His six books reflect the breadth of his interests and contributions: *How To Build Social Science Theories*, *Writing for Print and Digital Media*, *Mass Media in the Information Age*, *The Statistical Pioneers*, *Basic News Reporting*, and *Communication Theories: Origins, Methods, Uses*. The latter book, which was co-authored with his UT faculty colleague, Dr. Werner Severin, has an international reputation, is now in its 5th edition, and has been translated into six other languages. Jim also advanced the scholarship of our field as the editor of *Journalism Monographs* from 1988 to 1994.

The Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), the national association of journalism and mass communication scholars and media professionals to which Jim devoted much of his professional life, posthumously honored Jim as the 2006 recipient of the Eleanor Blum Distinguished Service to Research Award. This award, which was created in 1980 to recognize a person who has devoted a substantial part of his or her career to promoting research in mass communication, is so selective that it has only been given ten times during the past twenty-five years.

AEJMC's board of directors also established the James Tankard Book Award, an annual book competition, to honor Jim and recognize books published by AEJMC members. The first Tankard Book Award winner will be announced in 2007.

For his colleagues in the academy and for his family, the eulogy delivered by his widow explained that Jim "furnished the backrooms of our minds -- with ideas and memories and experiences that will be with us for the rest of our lives." This legacy was a gift recognized by a Texas Senate Resolution introduced by one of Jim's former students, Senator Judith Zaffirini.

Jim earned a B.S. in general science from Virginia Polytechnic Institute in 1963, an M.A. in journalism from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1965, and a Ph.D. in communication from Stanford University in 1970. He was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Kappa Tau Alpha honorary societies. In the interval between his graduate degrees, Jim worked for *The Associated Press* in Charlotte, North Carolina, and subsequently for *The Raleigh Times*.

Jim married Sara Elaine Fuller in 1973, and they are the parents of three daughters, Amy Elizabeth Tankard Hill, Jessica Hope Tankard, and Margaret Elaine Tankard. He is survived by his wife and daughters.

This memorial resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Maxwell McCombs, Paula Poindexter, and Rosental Alves.

Distributed to the dean of the College of Communication, the executive vice president and provost, and the president on March 31, 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/>.