

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Everett Zimmerman, Distinguished UCSB Professor and Former Provost, Dies at 66

Everett Zimmerman, a distinguished scholar and longtime member of the UC Santa Barbara faculty who served in important campus leadership positions, died in Santa Barbara on Monday, September 22. He recently had been diagnosed with brain cancer. A resident of Santa Barbara, he was 66.

A highly regarded expert on 18th -century British literature, Zimmerman was the author of three books and many articles. Known for his integrity and wry humor, he was a dedicated teacher who was greatly admired by his students and his colleagues.

"This is a great loss to our campus community," said UCSB Chancellor Henry T. Yang. "Everett embodied the ideals of the university. His integrity and high standards were exemplary, and his scholarly accomplishments helped enhance the reputation of our campus. He also made important contributions to UCSB's development through his leadership in a variety of roles over more than three decades, especially as Provost. We will miss him dearly."

Zimmerman's wife, Muriel, who survives him, is a senior lecturer at UCSB and a former director of the campus's Writing Program. The couple met while in graduate school at Temple University in Philadelphia.

Zimmerman earned his undergraduate degree at Bob Jones University in Greenville, S.C., and his master's and doctorate at Temple. After teaching at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, for three years, he joined the UCSB faculty in 1969 as an assistant professor of English and rose through the faculty ranks, becoming a full professor in 1980.

His service as an administrator included two years as Acting Provost and two as Provost of the College of Letters and Science, which enrolls 90 percent of all undergraduates at UCSB. His other administrative posts included dean of undergraduate affairs and chair of the English Department. He also served on numerous departmental and university committees, including the Committee on Educational Policy and Planning and the Executive Committee of the College of Letters and Science, which he chaired.

"He was an important scholar, a great teacher, and one of the wisest administrators this campus has ever known," said Mark Rose, associate vice chancellor for academic personnel. "His contributions to UCSB have been enormous."

Zimmerman was an authority on the work of Jane Austen, Daniel Defoe, and Jonathan Swift. He was the author of the books *Defoe and the Novel*, published by the University of California Press; and *Swift's Narrative Satires: Author and Authority*, and *The Boundaries of Fiction: History and the Novel in the British 18th Century*, both published by Cornell University Press.

He was awarded grants by the National Endowment for the Humanities, and was the recipient of a prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship in 1989-90.

A native of Reamstown in rural Pennsylvania, Zimmerman grew up in a Mennonite farming family and began working in the fields and with the animals at age 10. Late in his life he could still recall the names of all the horses the family had owned. Early on, he developed a love of learning and literature, and of music. After cleaning the cow stalls on Saturdays, he would tune his radio to the Texaco broadcasts of the Metropolitan Opera in New York. He was an accomplished trumpet player and considered a career in music before he took a college course in American literature that changed the direction of his life's work.

David Marshall, Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts, said: "Everett Zimmerman was a perceptive and original scholar, and a true teacher in everything he said and did. His wisdom as an administrator was matched only by his common sense."

According to H. Porter Abbott, a professor of English, Zimmerman's "commitment to the university's educational mission was of a piece with his ready determination to tell the truth as he saw it. He was a man at one and the same time passionate in his beliefs, clear in his thinking, and supremely gifted in his fine, ironic wit."

Another close colleague, Christina Nelson, a longtime office manager of the English Department, said: "Everett provided support and encouragement to countless career staff in the English Department, on campus committees and during his tenure as provost. His legacy will continue through the staff he mentored as well as through colleagues, students, and friends."

In addition to his wife, Zimmerman is survived by his son Andrew, an assistant professor of history at George Washington University, and Andrew's wife, Johanna Bockman; his son Daniel, a musician in Santa Barbara, and Daniel's wife, Kim Stanley Zimmerman, and their daughter, Lily.

His other survivors include three brothers: Paul, of Reinholds, Pa.; Clair, of Stevens, Pa.; and John, of Salisbury, Md.

A memorial observance will be held on the UCSB campus in late October.

The family suggests that donations in memory of Everett Zimmerman may be made to Visiting Nurse and Hospice Care of Santa Barbara.

Related Links

[E. Zimmerman's Web Site](#)

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.