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WAYNE A. JESSWEIN: CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF A LEADER

WHEN WAYNE A. JESSWEIN JOINED THE UMD ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT as an assistant professor 44 years ago, his goal was to become a full professor and excel at research and service.

As he retires this spring as associate dean of the Labovitz School of Business and Economics (LSBE), it is clear the University leader has far surpassed his initial expectations.

"The School has been unusually blessed to have had Wayne as our associate dean," said LSBE Dean Kjell R. Knudsen. "He has contributed tremendously to LSBE over the years, and his retirement will be a great loss for the School."

AN UNMATCHED INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY

Jesswein was promoted to associate professor in 1972 and to full professor in 1981. He served five terms as chair of the economics department and has led the School as associate dean since 2001.

Maureen O'Brien, head of the LSBE Department of Economics, has known Jesswein for 30 years. She describes him as "a no-nonsense guy who is more interested in

getting things done than sitting around and talking about the process.”

“Wayne is one of the most pragmatic, honest, and ethical individuals I know. Many of the policies and procedures we have in place both at LSBE and UMD are because of Wayne’s leadership,” said O’Brien. “His institutional memory will be hard to replace.”

AN INCLUSIVE LEADER

Jesswein guided the School with a flat-model leadership structure. His philosophy was that everyone is vital to ensuring the School’s success.

LSBE Director of Administration Carolyn Zanko says Jesswein’s inclusive leadership style has given her confidence and generated a high level of respect among faculty, staff, and students.

“I and the rest of the staff have appreciated his support for staff and students’ roles as a part of our administrative structure,” said Zanko. “It was never just about faculty, just about students, or just about staff—it was working together as a team. He always made sure everyone’s voices were heard.”

LEAVING LIFELONG IMPRESSIONS

In addition to working with faculty and staff, Jesswein says one of the most rewarding parts of his career has been teaching students. According to his co-workers, the rewards are reciprocated.

“Wayne definitely has had a positive impact on students,” said Tracey Bolen, director of LSBE Student Affairs. “He would demand excellence from his students, and his students would respond by putting forth the extra effort.”

James Danzl (B.A. ’75), a former student, said he feels lucky to have had Jesswein as an influence in his life.

Danzl said Jesswein’s teaching style and philosophy inspired students to not take shortcuts or be satisfied until they fully understood concepts. “Wayne insisted we do all the research, digging, and questioning necessary to fully understand a theory or idea. Being able to recite a theory was never enough; understanding it was the goal.”

AN ACTIVE RETIREMENT

As for retirement, Jesswein and his wife, Addie, are moving to St. Petersburg, Fla., where their youngest daughter lives. Jesswein plans to continue his passion for growing roses and stay active with volunteer work.

“I don’t want to just wither away. I’m the kind of person who needs a schedule, even if it means just planning recreation,” he said.

Though his presence will be missed, O’Brien says she hopes the School can build on everything it has learned from Jesswein and continue his model of humble leadership.

WAYNE A. JESSWEIN’S CAREER AT A GLANCE

- Served 23 years as head of the economics department, 11 years as associate dean
- Published more than 50 works (a book, journal articles, proceedings, and monographs)
- Received numerous University awards, including the UMD Student Association Outstanding Faculty Award in 1979 and the UMD School of Business and Economics Service Award in 2001
- Was a member of UMD’s Accreditation and Self-Study Steering Committee
- Co-authored the proposal that led to the creation of the School of Business and Economics in 1975
- Served on planning committees for the School’s expansions, including the state-of-the-art building that opened in fall 2008
- Held the positions of president and first grievance officer for the University Education Association (UEA)
- Member of the UMD Council for Advancement of Student Learning since 2008

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— Dean Kjell R. Knudsen