

Julian Francis Sherwood Foster  
1926-2002

**Professor of Political Science, Emeritus**

B.A., M.A., New College, Oxford; Ph.D. UCLA  
California State University, Fullerton From 1963 to 1989  
Birth: July 27, 1926; Death: July 22, 2002

Julian Foster, professor emeritus of Political Science at Cal State Fullerton died in July of 2002 at age 75. The son of prominent Britons who were active in the art world, he was the product of British public schools and Oxford (New College) where he graduated with honors. He came to CSUF in 1963, the same year that he received his Ph.D. from UCLA. He was an excellent teacher and published scholar, but his most important contributions were in the area of university governance

He was twice chair of the Political Science department and three times chair of the Academic Senate, or Faculty Council as it was known in those days. He also served on the system-wide Academic Senate. He was a forceful spokesperson for shared governance and for the role of the faculty in helping to develop university policy.

Probably no one did more to shape Cal State Fullerton than Julian. He left his stamp on many of the policy documents of the university and on the structure and procedures of the Senate. Extremely knowledgeable about the operations of the university -- in the earlier less-structured days when that was possible -- he uncovered several potentially scandalous situations, and prevented others. He never feared to "speak truth to power" and Power often did not appreciate it.

Leaders who could get past the fact that he could be troublesome found that he consistently put the interests of the university first and was a helpful ally in finding solutions to the challenges that faced the university. He was a consensus builder, seeking not to push his agenda so much as to find common ground that all could stand upon.

Always active in university and civic life, he was a citizen in the truest sense of the word, although never an American citizen. He cared about the world he lived in and sought to make it better. Both idealist and pragmatist, he was willing to try to improve the world small piece by small piece. He was a consummate strategist, always thinking up new ways to achieve a goal. His leaned to the left politically and was never above tweaking those solidly ensconced on the right. Intrigued by a piece of 1960s right-wing drivel called "None Dare Call It Treason," he wrote a detailed rejoinder impishly titled "None Dare Call it Reason."

He was an intense competitor especially at bridge and racquetball. At one point he arranged a racquetball match with a much younger, considerably more arrogant and seemingly more athletic football coach with whom he had sparred many time over the costs of the football program. Few people looked less athletic than Julian, but he was

surprisingly fast and graceful and he greatly enjoyed beating the very surprised coach. He was often underestimated, but not by those who knew him well.

He was a friend and mentor to me and many other younger faculty members, encouraging us to get involved in university governance. He believed strongly in the university community and guided many to become university leaders. His influence will long be felt through those he mentored.

His interests were wide ranging: travel, language, ideas, mystery novels, hiking, England, and politics. He was clever, bright, witty, and always the rationalist: he did not let one get away with sloppy thinking. I was always learning from him.

On one occasion a colleague from another campus mentioned that a mutual acquaintance, an influential university leader, said that he did not care for me because I was “too much like Julian.” It was one of the most rewarding compliments that I have ever received.

Submitted by  
J. Vincent Buck  
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