

Ivan L. Richardson
1920-1996

VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMINISTRATION AND PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE,
EMERITUS

B.A., University of Illinois; M.A., Ph.D., Political Science, University of Iowa, August 9, 1950
California State University, Fullerton From September 1, 1964 To August 27, 1990
Birth: December 14, 1920; Death: January 7, 1996

Rick Richardson may have been born in Illinois, but he was the quintessential Californian to his friends. When he wasn't on the tennis court, he might be scouting out another obscure vineyard for that special wine just ripe for "laying away." He was fit and tan; he lived on the Back Bay in Newport Beach, near the ocean (of course); he was the head of a handsome family; he was California cool.

Professor of political science and public administration, chair of the department, and vice president for administration, Rick left an indelible mark during his 30-year association with CSUF. An expert on Brazilian government, he was sought as a consultant and contributed books, chapters and monographs to the scholarly literature on Brazil and American public administration. He was an ambassador for the university, testifying before the California legislature, founding the local chapter of the American Society for Public Administration, creating one of the first internship programs, directing training programs for local government personnel, and traveling world-wide in his scholarly and administrative roles.

Rick received his bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois, and his master's and doctorate from the University of Iowa. He joined the faculty at (then) Kansas State College in 1950 where he stayed until 1958, taking a leave in his last year at Kansas to be an analyst with the Kansas legislature. He moved to California in 1959 to act as public administration consultant to the Brazil Project at the University of Southern California. There, working with the School of Public Service, a training division for the federal government, Rick became advisor to the Brazilian School of Public Administration where he assisted universities in establishing public administration programs. He was to return to Brazil frequently as a consultant, and his experience led to other consulting assignments in Guatemala, Peru, Colombia and Mexico.

Rick was hired as professor of political science at CSUF in 1964, and two years later became chair of the department, a position he held for five years before becoming Vice President for Administration. He was the first head of the public administration program within the department and developed the curriculum for the master of public administration (MPA) degree. The program was particularly successful; it became one of the few "rostered" by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration, which became the accrediting agency for MPA programs a few years later. It has remained an accredited program ever since. Following his retirement from his administrative and teaching positions, Rick remained active on campus and in his personal life. He started his own financial consulting business where he assisted colleagues and others in financial retirement planning. He grew hundreds of orchids on his back porch, and brought gorgeous exotic stems for our desks on his frequent visits to campus. Together with other Emeriti, he helped organize the "IOU"--It's Our University--campaign that seeks to enroll staff, faculty and others in contributing funds to the university. He worked on the project until his death, of cancer, at the age of 75.

As chair, Rick guided the department through its years of initial growth. Though hardly a feminist (Rick was almost courtly to his female colleagues), Rick's hiring strategies culminated in a department that was the nation's leader in its employment of tenure-track women faculty. In a field well dominated by men, the CSUF political science department in the mid-70s had both the greatest percent and absolute number of women (seven out of 20) in the whole country. I was one of them. Rick interviewed me in 1966 at a hotel in New York where the American Political Science Association was having its annual meeting. I'd seen a listing in the employment folders at the convention and called his hotel room to set up an appointment. He said he'd meet me at the elevator, which seemed reasonable. We'd never met, but how many people could there be at the elevator? I was nervous, naturally, and I know I sounded it on the phone. When I stepped out of the elevator, there was Rick: tieless, dress shirt with collar unbuttoned and sleeves rolled up. Wearing socks. No shoes. I stared at his feet. Then I realized I was staring at his feet and looked up. He laughed, "C'mon girl; it's been a long day. My room's this way. I suppose it's too early for a glass of wine?" Well, I thought, if *this* is what they're like in California. .

Rick had a way of putting one instantly at ease. He was so casual that I felt barely aware of being interviewed for a job. We chatted. He made me laugh. Instead of my rehearsed list of accomplishments, somehow I wound up telling him about a conceptual problem in my dissertation. I hadn't meant to do that, but he was listening so thoughtfully. Forty-five minutes went by and the next candidate was due for his or her appointment. He walked me back to the elevator. He never did put on his shoes.

When I got to Fullerton a year later, Rick was serving his second year as department chair and actively engaged in community based activities that would continue to involve him for the next two decades. He was on the executive committee of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) and in the process of co-founding, together with another new hire, Sid Baldwin, the Orange County Chapter of ASPA. He would serve as chapter president the next year. During the following years, he served as vice president of the California Coordinating Council of national ASPA, and vice president and president of the newly formed California Association of Public Administration. These organizations helped fulfill Rick's great desire to bring together both the practitioners and academicians involved in public administration. His own career--combining professional consulting with scholarly research and teaching--served as the model for the expanding MPA program. Future scholars were always encouraged to become active in the professional community, and the internship program he founded gave students the opportunity to gain practical experience as they completed their studies.

One of Rick's early projects was a training program designed to assist local government practitioners in honing their political and administrative skills. Rick received funding for the program from the U.S. Department of Education under Title I of the Higher Education Act, one of the first DOE grants awarded to the University. Rick also received grants from the Social Science Research Council for study in Brazil and from the American Philosophical Society for his one-year leave in 1970, which he spent in Italy. Two of his research efforts resulted in books, including a textbook on public administration, co-authored with colleague Sid Baldwin, and another analyzing Brazilian public administration.

When he became vice president for administration in 1971, Rick began to "practice" for real the administrative principles he had taught for so long. And he loved the job. He enjoyed working with his close friend, President Don Shields. He had stolen one of our very best

political science staff members, MaryAnn Kreter, to be his administrative aide. He was always skilled at recognizing talent (I say, modestly), and found ways to assist former students and colleagues as opportunities arose. CSUF was in a growth phase during his time in office, and he relished the challenges that naturally came his way. (His colleague, Anne Feraru, remembers that he exorcised some of his job frustrations by taking up pottery and shaping clay--a more malleable substance than faculty and administrators--into fine art pieces.)

As hard as he worked, Rick enjoyed his vacations and he and his wife Jane became seasoned globetrotters. When Rick's daughter Ann got a job as a flight attendant, Rick exulted in the now easily expedited trips to new locales. Rick once told me that Ann had gotten the perfect job, for him, because as a family member of an airline employee, he could indulge his love of travel even more. And he did love to travel. Rick and Jane went back to Italy, to China, to Europe, to the far Pacific, and of course to his first love, Latin America.

After he retired from the vice presidency, Rick continued to teach for a while and became a frequent guest lecturer in public administration classes. He never lost his curiosity about politics and administration, or his fascination with California and its sometimes-incomprehensible political actors. Alan Saltzstein, who directed the MPA program after Rick left, tells a story that illustrates Rick's enjoyment and bemusement of the California political scene. Rick was a guest lecturer in Alan's class and talked about his experience testifying about the California State University system before an Assembly committee chaired by John Vasconcellos. (Vasconcellos enjoys some notoriety in California lore as the creator of a task force to study self-esteem in our golden state.) Rick told Alan's class that he testified about all the positive programs the university had initiated on campus and in the community to meld academic skills with public needs, about our classes, our internships, our outreach programs. When he finished, Assemblyman Vasconcellos took the microphone and said, "Yes, I see. But what are you doing about love?"

Rick's skill as a public administrator may have deserted him when faced with Vasconcellos unorthodox question, but his family--Jane, Ann, her husband Ken Harris and their daughter Lauren, and sons Robert and John and John's wife Mitzi--and his colleagues, students and friends could have answered for him. Rick did a lot about love, and we are the happy beneficiaries of his commitment to Cal State Fullerton.

Submitted by
Sandra Sutphen
Professor of Political Science
September 1, 1997