In Memoriam: James McBrearty

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James C. McBrearty, associate professor of economics at the Eller College of Management [1], died on March 16 at the age of 73. At the time of his death, he was the college’s longest-serving faculty member.

McBrearty was born on Dec. 2, 1941 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He earned his doctorate from the University of Illinois in 1968.

That same year, McBrearty joined the UA’s Department of Economics, where he would teach for the next 46 years. He specialized in labor economics and was also a labor arbitrator.

"Jim was an excellent teacher, an outstanding colleague and just a great stand-up guy from Philly with a genuine humor about him," said Jeff Schatzberg, dean of the Eller College. "He superbly taught a countless number of our undergraduate students over the years, including my youngest daughter, who often told me he was one of her favorite teachers."

McBrearty taught thousands of students throughout his career in a wide array of different classes, including large lecture classes with more than 400 students. He taught core classes for the Eller College, introductory classes as part of the University’s general education curriculum and specialized classes for economics majors.

During his tenure at the UA, McBrearty also served as dean of the College of Business Management at the University of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates as part of a partnership agreement with Eller.

John Drabicki, assistant department head and associate professor in the UA Department of Economics, said McBrearty was dedicated to his students, always sharing his advice and humor with them.

"Jim was very friendly and outgoing," Drabicki said. "Most fundamentally, Jim was very comfortable in his own skin; he knew who he was and what he wanted, he was completely unpretentious and was an all-around good guy. His distinctive Philly accent, his friendship and collegiality and his wisdom will be greatly missed."

A memorial Mass was held for McBrearty on Friday. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, and his two children, Danielle and Brian.

To read McBrearty’s full obituary and leave condolences in an online guest book, click here [2].

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Links:
[1] https://www.eller.arizona.edu/