

## **In Memoriam: Susette Talarico**

Athens, Ga.—The University of Georgia today mourns the passing of Dr. Susette Talarico, a UGA faculty member for three decades. Beloved by scores of students and colleagues, Susette died following a 17-year bout with breast cancer.

“Susette was not only one of UGA’s best faculty but also one of the university’s finest citizens, and her good works benefited students and faculty colleagues alike,” said UGA President Michael F. Adams. “She had a strong international reputation in legal and judicial studies, and represented UGA well over the course of many years. She will be sorely missed.”

Born on May 10, 1946, in Danbury, Connecticut to Ella and Nathaniel Talarico, Susette had two siblings, Robert Nathaniel Talarico (Barbara) and her twin sister Annette Talarico Adams (Kenny).

After graduating as the valedictorian of her high school class, she joined the Sisters of Mercy for six years, during which she earned her bachelor’s degree at Diocesan Sisters’ College (St. Joseph’s College). Upon reflection, she chose to leave the convent to pursue a joint master’s and doctoral program in political science at the University of Connecticut, which she completed in 1976.

Following a brief teaching stint at St. Michael’s College in Vermont, Susette joined the political science faculty at the University of Georgia in 1977 where she pursued her passion for teaching until retiring in 2006.

Susette Talarico was Albert Berry Saye Professor of American Government and Constitutional Law, Emerita and Josiah Meigs Distinguished Teaching Professor at UGA’s School of Public and International Affairs. A charter member of UGA’s Teaching Academy, Susette was known for her innovative approach to teaching and mentoring, and for her contributions to curriculum development at the university—serving as the driving force in the creation of the interdisciplinary undergraduate degree program in Criminal Justice.

Not only was she a two-time winner of the coveted Josiah Meigs Award, Talarico was named the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences General Sandy Beaver Teaching Professor for three years and a Danforth Teaching Fellow for six years. Most recently, the UGA chapter of Phi Kappa Phi presented Susette with its Love of Learning Award. Upon her retirement, the Department of Political Science’s teaching award was named in her honor. The award was endowed by Susette’s former students and generated so many contributions that its funds are also used to support public lectures and research funds for students in criminal justice and political science.

In addition to her success in the classroom, Dr. Talarico was an accomplished scholar with over fifty published articles and books focused on the study of sentencing, criminal courts, and civil litigation. She served as editor-in-chief of the National Center for State Courts’ *Justice System Journal* from 2000 to 2004.

Throughout her professional career, Susette was devoted to advancing the socialization of women into the academy. As the only tenured female professor in the Department of Political Science for years, she played a pivotal role in mentoring junior women in the field, often times helping them with the submission of their first papers for publications. In creating a coffee hour for the women of the School of Public and International Affairs, she informally brought together female graduate students to meet and interact with female faculty members.

In May, she was awarded the 2007 American Political Science Association's Law and Courts' Teaching and Mentoring Award, a well-deserved honor that reflected her devotion to students.

One former student put it this way, "I graduated from UGA more than 25 years ago, I live 1700 miles from Athens, I have no political or professional clout to speak of, yet she still sends my family a holiday card every year with a personal note. What does a card have to do with Dr. Talarico's success as a mentor and instructor? It illustrates her true genius as an educator; she cares for you as a student, but more importantly, she cares about your development as a person."

Commenting on her teaching, Robert Grafstein, head of the Department of Political Science said, "Soon after she came to Athens, her energy, devotion to her students, concern for her colleagues, and general public spiritedness seemed irreplaceable. But her profound influence long ago transcended the University through the impact she had on her former students far and wide. On someone's passing, we often say she will be missed. In Susette's case, that doesn't begin to describe it."

"This remarkable woman touched the lives of countless students, colleagues and friends in ways that will never be forgotten," said Thomas P. Lauth, dean of the School of Public and International Affairs.

While known as a brilliant scholar and a dedicated teacher, Susette will also be remembered as a loving wife and mother, a devoted sister and daughter, and a magnificently caring friend.

On December 29, 1982, Susette married the love of her life, Rodger Taylor Carroll and on March 15, 1984, they had a son, Robert David Carroll: a great joy for both of them.

Though her greatest love was reserved for her family and friends, Susette Talarico also loved to sing and was known to devour books.

Susette is survived by her mother, her two siblings, her husband and son, nineteen nieces and nephews, and fourteen great nieces and nephews.

The family will receive friends at Lord & Stephens (eastside) on Friday, May 25, from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm. A funeral Mass will be said at The Catholic Center, 1344 S. Lumpkin Street in Athens at 10:00 am on Saturday, May 26. Fr. John W. McDowell will preside and the Rt. Rev. G. Porter Taylor will deliver a homily.

A Memorial Mass will be held at St. Peter Church in Danbury, Connecticut at a later date.

Memorial gifts may be made to the Susette M. Talarico Fund, which supports students and faculty in criminal justice and political science. Contributions can be made to The Arch Foundation, specifying the Susette M. Talarico Fund, and mailed to the School of Public and International Affairs, 217 Candler Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602.