



Robert Malcolm Lawrence

January 30, 1932 - October 8, 2023

Ever pragmatic and organized, our Dad wrote his own obituary many years ago. And while his words cover the basic facts and details of his life, we, his daughters, have more to say about our remarkable Dad.

His words:

CSU Professor Bob Lawrence passed away on October 8, 2023. He was born January 30, 1932, in Emporia, Kansas to Charles S. and Majorie U. Lawrence. Following graduation from Kansas State University where he majored in journalism, he served as an intelligence officer in the Air Force. He then earned a master's degree and a Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of Kansas.

Before moving his family to Fort Collins in 1971, he was a research associate at the Hudson Institute, was on the Political Science faculty at Texas Tech, was a research associate at the Stanford Research Institute, and was on the Political Science faculty at the University of Arizona. For ten years, he held an unusual joint appointment in the Political Science departments of Colorado State University and the University of Colorado. He taught classes at CSU in the morning and at CU in the late afternoon. He earned teaching awards at Texas Tech, the University of Arizona, and both Colorado schools. He taught at CSU for 35 years.

Subjects of his books and scholarly articles included explanation about, and defense of, the Federal Government's activities; the use of nuclear weapons to deter large-scale wars; models to analyze energy policies; and arms control and disarmament options. Two of his CSU students established scholarships in his honor, The Bob and Elaine Lawrence Gateway to Law School Scholarship and The Bob Keller - Bob Lawrence Scholarship for Students in the Honors Program at CSU.

He taught his students how to compensate for, and protect against, excessive greed and abuse of power in politics and economics. He urged his students to be bold, daring, and imaginative, and to protect our democracy by working to prevent those two human excesses.

Professor Lawrence was a member of the Beta Theta Pi social fraternity and the Fort Collins Rotary Club. For some 30 years, he coordinated CSU faculty in presenting "Burning Issues" Lectures at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 61 years, the former Elaine Woodbury and one daughter, Kay Lawrence. He is survived by three daughters, Karen Lawrence Perse, Nancy Lawrence, and Linda Lawrence, and Chris Neilly, his son-in-law; ten grandchildren, Nick Lawrence and his wife, Katie, Jamie Perse, Val Perse, Mel Perse, Madelin Murphy, Glynnis Murphy, Sophia Pennacchio, Ben Pennacchio, Isabel Neilly, and Olivia Neilly, and two great-grandchildren, Zane and Zoe Lawrence.

Our Dad hung the moon. In his high school yearbook, the words beneath his picture read, "Everybody's friend." And he was. At Kansas State, his nickname was "Mouthpiece." It was fitting that he became a professor. Long after he retired from CSU, he continued to hold office hours at his home. Former students would regularly visit, wanting to know what Professor Lawrence

thought about current political and world events.

Our parents' first date was the junior/senior prom, 73 years ago. Our mom was the center of his world. Theirs was a love story for the ages.

In the days ahead, you can honor our Dad by questioning authority, visiting a National Park, cheering on your favorite college team, looking west towards Longs Peak, watching the movie Oppenheimer, reading the Constitution, listening to Blue Moon, staying engaged (democracy is not a spectator sport), taking a hike, voting, and giving back.

Should friends desire, contributions may be sent to The Bob and Elaine Lawrence Gateway to Law School Scholarship or the Food Bank for Larimer County. There will be an Open House honoring our Dad's remarkable life on Sunday, October, 29th from 1 - 4 pm. Please contact the family for more information.

Tribute Wall

JM

“ I am so sad to hear of Professor Lawrence's death -- I'm so sorry for your loss. When I studied journalism at CSU thirty years ago, I was required to take a political science class. I took US Foreign Policy. It's one of the best classes I ever took: entertaining, informative, and life changing. I loved it so much, I took another of Professor Lawrence's classes and then considered changing my major. I didn't do that, but I did continue to talk to the professor, asking for insight about articles I was writing, books I was reading. He was always available with remarkable insight laced with great humor and wit. I know he was the same with all his students, what a gift to the world or education!

Julia Martin - February 22, 2024 at 02:15 PM



“ A sympathy card was purchased for the family of Robert Malcolm Lawrence.



October 30, 2023 at 08:26 PM

LC

“ I am deeply saddened about Professor Lawrence’s passing. He leaves a void in the lives of all who had the fortune to have known him. Professor Lawrence was my daughter’s mentor since her junior year at CSU, when she signed up for his US Foreign Policy class. As attested by so many other former students, Professor Lawrence became a constant source of support and encouragement in her educational and career paths. I once told him that he had helped me raise my daughter, and I meant it. With his guidance and advice, my daughter forged a valuable college education here and abroad, and would bring and apply this knowledge in her career. As an academic myself, I was always in awe of Professor Lawrence’s ability to instill and effect in his students a genuine sense of responsibility, engagement, and commitment for a democratic world. I thank his family for sharing with us his scholarly wisdom and down-to-earth humor.

Liliana Castro - October 18, 2023 at 08:54 PM

RL

“ Like so many others whose lives he touched, I will miss Bob greatly. He had an indelible influence on my life, inspiring me to apply to the Foreign Service, which led to a rich 32-year career as a diplomat. I tried to make a visit to Bob a regular part of my sometimes infrequent returns to Colorado, where we would solve all the world's problems over a cup of coffee. Such a shame that the powers-that-be didn't pay more attention. He was my favorite professor, and I took every class I could from him, even knowing that doing so meant he would assign extra work if students took both American foreign policy and American security policy. Through the course of my career, I often drew on the lessons that I took from his classes and on the thoughtful discussions we had over the years. After I retired from the service and began teaching myself, he was one of my main role models, and I hope I lived up to being anything near the teacher he was. I will always remember him as a true gentleman and a true patriot.

Robrt Loftis - October 17, 2023 at 05:27 PM

PP

“ It was with sadness that I learned of the passing of my friend, former colleague, and fellow Rotarian, Bob Lawrence. My daughter took a course from him and she had the greatest compliment that I could have imagined. She said that when the course was over, she did not know his political affiliation. Bob didn't let his own opinions color his teaching. Bob and I would talk politics in a calm and respectful manner recognizing that he was a Democrat and I a Republican. He was a loyal Rotarian respected by all. He was a good man and I will miss him.

Pat Pellicane - October 17, 2023 at 11:35 AM

WI

“ I add my sense of loss and sadness over hearing about the death of Professor Bob Lawrence. As a fellow veteran, one generation (20 years after him), we shared a sense of respect, pride and understanding of national security and service from an instructor-student perspective in his class. I still have one of my papers he graded (I think I got an A..which was not easily handed out) from class in the early 1990s and will cherish that. He lived an engaged life full of intellectual pursuits and importance to both the local and national communities. He will be remembered. A final salute and may it be said, "Well Done" ! LTC (Ret, US Army) William Doe, PhD, CSU 1992G

William W Doe III - October 16, 2023 at 01:20 PM

ME

“ I was saddened to hear of the death of Professor Lawrence. I met him several years ago at CSU when we were both teaching courses for the Honors Program. I was teaching a course on the American Civil War and he graciously agreed to come to my class to talk about Abraham Lincoln and the constitution. He brought pocket copies of the Constitution for every student. He shared his remarkably broad knowledge graciously and with humor and humility. He did this for several semesters and we always had lunch together in the cafeteria (he wanted to be close to the students). At a later date, he filled in for me with Professor Donald Mykles when I was ill. He was a wonderful man. I feel privileged to have known him.

Mary Elkins, Honors Program

Mary Elkins - October 15, 2023 at 06:34 PM

JG

“ *Dr. Lawrence was my professor in Political Science at CSU 1975 through 1978. He was a great professor who cared for his students and school. I learned so much from him. I know his family as well. He will be surely missed.*

Jerry Gavaldon - October 15, 2023 at 05:11 PM



“ *Bob was a kind and generous human being. He was greatly loved and respected by our students. Bob served the University Honors Program as an instructor and as an adviser for students' Senior Honors Theses, which continued well past his retirement. Bob was always willing to help out, sometimes at the last minute. When an Honors instructor suddenly became ill, Bob stepped in and taught the last few weeks of a Senior Honors seminar, so that the students could graduate that semester with "University Honors Scholar" distinction. He challenged his students to think critically, but always with kindness and humor.*

Don Mykles, former Director, University Honors Program

Donald Mykles - October 15, 2023 at 02:44 PM

PH

“ Bob was always kind to me. I enjoyed his company and only wish I could have known him longer.

There was no reason why Bob should have taken an interest in me, someone who joined the CSU faculty over a decade after his retirement. But Bob was generous from day one. He read and commented on my work, joined me in arranging events, met with my students, asked after my family, and always offered wise counsel. He was an effortless mentor and a good friend. I learned a lot from him and can only hope to follow his example.

Bob, I will always remember watching the US Navy's blue angels with you on a warm October day in 2021. You were fun to be around, and I will miss you.

Peter Harris - October 13, 2023 at 02:56 PM

VM

Dr Lawrence was a very special man and professor. He will be greatly miss. I had several years working with him. I taught he how to save his exams on a diskette. I will miss him. My prayers and thoughts are with his family.

Violet Marquart - October 19, 2023 at 10:29 PM

BR

Members of the Bob Lawrence Family are dear to our hearts. We have dear memories of Bob and Elaine when we and other church friends gathered at their cabin in Estes Park for moonlight hikes in Rocky Mountain National Park. What fun and what gracious hosts Bob and Elaine were! Nancy, Karen, Kay and Linda will always have a special place in our hearts, and our thoughts are with you and your collective family as you pay such a lovely tribute to your wonderful parents.

*Lovingly,
Bill and Carol Richey*

Bill and Carol Richey - October 28, 2023 at 01:23 PM