MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS CHARLES A. WEDEMEYER

Charles A. Wedemeyer, William H. Lighty Professor of Education (Emeritus) of the University of Wisconsin - Madison and University Extension, died on August 1, 1999 in Huntsville, Alabama. He was born on September 8, 1911 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the son of Adrian August Wedemeyer and Laura Marie Marks Wedemeyer. His education included a Bachelor of Science in Education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a major in English and a Masters in Education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, also in English. World War II sadly interrupted his PhD. He was however awarded numerous honorary degrees including honorary doctorates from Oxford University and University of Ethiopia.

He was named the William H. Lightly Professor in Education in 1967. The William H. Lightly chair enabled Wedemeyer to develop a new discipline in the field of education - non-traditional learning. This new discipline integrated adult, distance, open and independent learning with instructional systems design, applications of instructional technology, organizational development and evaluation. Chuck is best known throughout the world for his efforts to extend learning opportunities to populations traditionally excluded from formal education - the poor, the geographically isolated, the handicapped, the socially over-burdened, and the very bright for which traditional schooling had little to offer. His work on learning theory and the sociology of nontraditional learners has drawn the attention of students and scholars from throughout the world.

As a naval officer in World War II, he first began thinking about using communication technologies in adult education to train hundreds of thousands of sailors around the world. Later, as Director of University of Wisconsin's Correspondence Study Program, he brought the University of Wisconsin to a preeminent position among correspondence divisions worldwide. He inspired a movement that broke the mold of adult and higher education and helped fashioned a whole new prototype. His multi-million dollar Carnegie-supported Articulated Instructional Media (AIM) project led to new models for higher education institutions in the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Spain, India, Mexico, South America, Israel, Africa, Australia, the South Pacific, Japan, Indonesia and Malaysia. Perhaps the best known among these is the British Open University – the prototype for those that have followed around the world. His EDSAT project pioneered the social application of communication by satellite for educational purposes, with direct application in the University of the South Pacific. Working in both developed and developing countries on six continents, Wedemeyer made contributions to cross-cultural learning and comparative education. He originated the unique UW Educational Telephone Network, a model for teleconferencing and multi-modal instruction and counseling throughout the world. Today, many scholars acknowledge that the teaching of distance education started with Dr. Wedemeyer.

As visiting professor, scholar, and consultant, he worked in many countries and was adviser to many organizations including: U.S. Department of State, National Institute of Education, UNESCO, Swedish Institute for Developing Areas, Deutsches Institut fur Femstudien, NASA, USAID, and many other agencies, ministries, and universities. He is the author of more than 150 publications, including his major work, Learning at the Back Door: Reflections on Non-Traditional Learning in the Lifespan published by the University of Wisconsin Press. Dr. Wedemeyer has received many honors and awards. Among these are first American named Kellogg Fellow at Oxford University, a Fulbright Senior Scholar, Distinguished and Sustained Excellence and Innovation in Higher Education Award from the University of Wisconsin - Green Bay, Wisconsin Fellow from the Madison Human Values Institute, and the Rotary Senior Service Award. In his honor, the University Continuing Education Association instituted a
Charles A. Wedemeyer Annual Award for the Distinguished Book in Distance Education. The University of Wisconsin-Madison and The Pennsylvania State University jointly recognize his leadership and scholarship in distance education through the annual Wedemeyer Award presented in conjunction with the Annual Conference on Teaching and Learning at a Distance.

Chuck is survived by his wife, Mildred Brown Wedemeyer of Huntsville, Alabama; two children, Mary Beth Wedemeyer Walker of Huntsville, Alabama and Carol Wedemeyer Becker of Spokane, Washington; four grandchildren, Sarah Engberg of Indianapolis, Indiana, Robert Engberg of Huntsville, Alabama, Adrianne Becker of East Lansing, Michigan and Derek Becker of Seattle, Washington; and a sister, Helen Streng of Milwaukee. A beloved colleague, he will be missed by the international committee of distance education scholars and practitioners.

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE
Marcia Baird
Chere Gibson, Chair
Terry Gibson
Robert Najem