

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
*Regents Communication*

**ACTION REQUEST**

**Subject: Report of Faculty Death**

**Action Requested: Adoption of Memorial Statement**

The Regents of the University of Michigan acknowledge with profound sadness the death of **David C. Blair, Ph.D.**, professor of computer and information systems in the Stephen M. Ross School of Business, who died on March 27, 2011 at the age of 63.

Professor Blair received his A.B. degree in 1969 from Whitman College, his M.L.S. degree from the University of Washington in 1973, and his Ph.D. degree from the University of California, Berkeley in 1981. He joined the University of Michigan faculty as a lecturer in 1979, and was promoted to assistant professor in 1981, associate professor in 1992, and professor in 2001. From 2001-03 he was the Jack D. Sparks-Whirlpool Corporation Research Professor of Business Administration.

Professor Blair's research focused on the problem of representing information in the context of information retrieval. Information retrieval is concerned with the linguistic, logical, and computational issues of representing and providing access to the intellectual content of information, especially on computers. He established and anchored himself in his major research stream early in his academic career with a groundbreaking study of the effectiveness of IBM's "STorage And Information Retrieval System" (STAIRS).

Professor Blair taught across all degree programs for over 20 years in a field which has experienced phenomenal changes in content, direction, and tools. He served on numerous school and university-wide committees, including the Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs (SACUA). He served on the editorial boards of *Information Processing and Management*, the *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, and *Operations Research*, was active in the American Society for Information Science and Technology, and was a reviewer for many of the field's top journals. Professor Blair was named the 1999 Outstanding Researcher of the Year by the American Society for Information Science.

As we mourn the loss of our beloved colleague, we also extend our heartfelt condolences to his wife, Barbara, and his sons, Alian and Christopher.

**Requested by:**



---

**Sally J. Churchill**  
Vice President and Secretary of the University

April 2011