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Two longtime professors' Furman careers come to a close: Sorensen's impact on art program will live on

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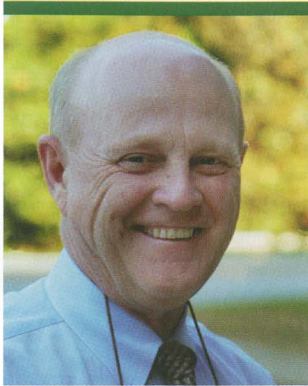
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Two longtime professors' Furman careers come to a close



Campus, community shared benefits of Alford's expertise

It has been rumored that Charles Alford has nine lives and that he spent many of them on the faculty at Furman.

A Greenville native, he received his B.A. degree in economics from Wofford College and his Ph.D. in

marketing from the University of Alabama, with a minor in economics and quantitative methods. He joined Furman's Department of Economics and Business Administration in 1971 at the young age of 25, and since then he has introduced hundreds of business students to such topics as statistics, marketing principles and research, and urban and personal economics.

It didn't take long for Charlie to earn a reputation as a rigorous instructor, strong administrator and respected colleague. By 1976 he had been named chair of the department, a position he held until 1985. In 1982 he received the Western Electric Fund Award for innovative teaching from the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business, and in 1994 the university recognized his distinctive talents by naming him the James C. Self Professor of Business Administration.

Aside from his efforts within the department, Charlie has also served Furman in a variety of other capacities. He was chair of the faculty from 1993-95, and for the last seven years he has been the faculty athletic representative to the NCAA. In 1983 he was invited to present one of the first talks in the prestigious L.D. Johnson Lecture Series on "What Really Matters."

Outside of Furman, Charlie has generously shared his insights and expertise with the local community. He has been active in civic affairs in nearby Travelers Rest, serving as vice chair of the town's Area Council and as co-chair of that group's Economic Development Community.

He has also established quite a reputation as a consultant in the fields of business appraisal and forensic economics. Over the last 15 years or more he has been a stalwart witness for the legal community in matters of business evaluation, estate valuation and damage assessment. He has qualified in both state and federal courts as an expert, and his testimony is sought by counsel for claimants, counsel for defendants, and judges throughout the state.

He may have decided to retire from Furman at the end of the 2002-03 academic year, but his decision has hardly left him wondering what happens next. Indeed, it has given him an opportunity to refocus. He has opened an office in downtown Greenville from which he plans to continue his consulting business and other projects. However, I suspect that he is reserving some special time to join his wife, Tish, in spoiling their new granddaughter, Mary Charles.

Charlie is an avid golfer and at one time was a dedicated fisherman. On several occasions I have heard him threaten to buy a boat and start fishing again. I am not sure what that implies about his golf game.

— Cheryl Patterson

Chair, Department of Economics and Business Administration



Sorensen's impact on art program will live on

"Everything in excess, nothing in moderation."

— R. Olof Sorensen

Sorensen's motto could be heard on any given day in the bright, colorful nave of the Thomas Anderson Roe Art

Building — a building for which he was influential in attracting the funds, helped to design, and in which he entertained and educated students for the last 17 of his 29 years at Furman, until his retirement at the close of the 2002-03 academic year.

While there are as many Sorensen legends as truths, each legend is in great part truth, and each truth is of legendary proportions. It will likely take two and maybe three people to fill his shoes, for at Furman Sorensen taught painting, printmaking, drawing, advertising design, senior seminars and art surveys from medieval to modern. He also helped to develop an interdisciplinary course that brings together students and professors of music, theatre and the visual arts.

As a former student of Sorensen's who went on to become his colleague, I can attest to his motto "everything in excess," but would like to add, "done excellently." Thanks in great part to his efforts, the number of art majors tripled during his Furman tenure, the art history curriculum was expanded, and the department's alumni are regularly accepted to some of the most prestigious graduate programs in the country.

Sorensen exemplifies a liberal arts education. From him one can learn to draw, to paint, to make a print, to analyze a painting, to speak French, Spanish and German, to love the symphony, fine food and wine — and to appreciate big, abstract painted canvases. His paintings are characterized by bold colors and vigorous brushstrokes, and in the spirit of his interest in all the arts, many are titled after musical forms. He has been quoted by students, who lovingly mimic his accent and mannerisms, as "attacking the canvas with his brush," and he has been known to paint almost to the point of exhaustion. *"Everything in excess . . ."*

Sorensen earned his undergraduate degree in painting from the Minneapolis School of Art, his M.F.A. from Pratt Institute and his Ph.D. from Ohio University. Before coming to Furman, he taught in the Baltimore public schools and at Ursinus College.

Throughout his career, he has been committed to opening students' eyes to the process of creating art. He organized trips for students to such places as New York, Chicago, Washington, Atlanta, Raleigh and Winston-Salem, all the while placing the chronology of the art they saw within the context of his own experiences as a student. As testimony to his devotion to art education, a fund has been established in his name, the income from which will help pay student expenses for art department trips.

And now that he is retiring from Furman, Sorensen will have more time for the studio, as well as the symphony, the theatre, France, Mexico . . . *"Everything in excess,"* done excellently.

— Evan A. Gatti '94

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