

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

**ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS JOHN M. KEAN**

John Michael “Jack” Kean, a member of the University of Wisconsin-Madison faculty for 35 years, from 1965 to 2000, died of cancer at St. Mary’s Hospital in Madison, Wisconsin on Monday, August 23, 2004 at the age of 66.

Jack Kean was born May 28, 1938 in Portsmouth, Ohio to John (Jack) Edward and Johanna Mulcahy Kean. He earned a bachelor of science degree in English and Mathematics at Ohio University in Athens, and taught English and mathematics at Eastern Heights School in Elyria, Ohio from 1960-1963. He then earned a Master’s of Education degree in English and Education, and a Doctor of Philosophy degree from Kent State University (Ohio) where he also served as a research assistant and instructor. He joined the faculty of the Department of Curriculum & Instruction at the University of Wisconsin-Madison as an assistant professor in 1965 and was promoted to associate professor with tenure in 1968. He was on leave from the university in 1967-68 to study as a post-doctoral fellow at the Institute on School Learning and Individual Differences, John F. Kennedy Center for Research on Education and Human Development at Vanderbilt University. Jack was promoted to professor in 1972. He was a Fulbright scholar at the Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, Spain from 1973-1974 .

Jack chaired the Elementary Education Program from 1972-1976, and from 1982-1986, and he chaired the Department of Curriculum & Instruction from 1986-1990. He also was director of the Native American Teacher Corps from 1977-1982, a collaborative teacher education program among the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the Menominee Nation School District, and the federal government. In addition, Jack was, at various times in his career, the acting director of School Evaluation Services, the Instructional Media Development Center, and Education Academic Services, all in the School of Education. He also offered distinguished service to the School of Education as its Associate Dean for Teacher Education and Undergraduate Education from 1996 to the time of his retirement in 2000. As associate dean, Jack worked tirelessly with the Wisconsin state legislature and the Department of Public Instruction to support and improve programs of teacher education around Wisconsin. Following his retirement, Jack joined the staff of the Department of Public Instruction as the Assistant State Superintendent for Teacher Training and Academic Excellence, where he served with distinction until shortly before his death.

A strong and skilled administrator, Jack also wrote, lectured widely, and led workshops concerning three strands of scholarship: the teaching and learning of language arts in general, the teaching and learning of writing—especially by children in the elementary and secondary schools, and the processes and policies of the censorship of books. His knowledge of the teaching of writing led him to direct the Wisconsin Writing Project, an affiliate of the National Writing Project where he supported the education of teachers by teachers in intensive summer workshops and residencies throughout the year. Jack also was an active member of numerous organizations, including Phi Delta Kappa (where he served as faculty advisor for over 20 years), the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Education Association, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, and the American Association of University Professors.

Jack also was a strong supporter of intellectual freedom, and was a member of the Commission on Intellectual Freedom of the Conference on English Education (National Council of Teachers of English), and of the Executive Board of the Wisconsin Intellectual Freedom Coalition. Jack was active in presenting information concerning intellectual freedom to numerous organizations in the state. Further, Jack’s book *Censored Books, Critical Viewpoints* (1993) received an award for outstanding work on intolerance from the Myers Center for Human Rights in North America in 1994.

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In addition, Jack was a gifted teacher of both undergraduates and graduate students. He was renowned for his teaching of a course on children's literature that enrolled every undergraduate teacher who received certification to teach elementary school at UW-Madison. In his work with graduate students, he was a supportive, kind, and encouraging mentor to more than 40 doctoral students and over 100 master's degree students. These students have taken up distinguished careers nationally and internationally in university research and teaching, school district curriculum directorships, and school district and university administration.

One of Jack's finest personal qualities was his ability to listen carefully to others and to help them feel that someone was listening intently to their concerns. His office door was always open for an encouraging word. This served him well as an administrator, teacher, and mentor. Jack loved all things Irish—including hearty laughter and a good story, and was famous at the university and Department of Public Instruction for his dark green blazer, which he found suitable for all occasions. In his rare free time, Jack enjoyed working in the Boy Scouts with his son, Sean; playing golf with friends from the university and Madison Metropolitan School District; and gardening.

Jack is survived by his wife, Carol and son, Sean of Madison; his son Michael, his wife, Julie, and their children Joseph, Anna, and Patrick of Middleton; daughter, Mary of Alameda, California; and brother, Edward of Portsmouth, Ohio.

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