

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

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITA LOIS B. GREENFIELD

Dr. Lois B. Greenfield, professor emerita of general engineering, passed away on June 26, 2006. She was born in Chicago in 1924. She had a long, interesting and valuable career in the College of Engineering, serving as a pioneer in recruiting women to the study of engineering. She was the first woman faculty member in the college.

Professor Greenfield began her career at the College of Engineering in 1956 as a project associate in the Engineering Experiment Station. Her assignment was to analyze the problem-solving abilities of incoming students and to work with a team to recruit the brightest students to the college and to help them succeed in their studies. She also helped faculty develop better testing methodologies.

She was well qualified for this assignment as she had worked for Curtiss-Wright Corporation and was sent to the University of Minnesota for an engineering education at the beginning of WW II. Later she went to the University of Chicago where she earned a bachelor's degree (1945) and a master's degree (1946) in psychology. In 1953 she earned a Ph.D. in educational psychology from the University of California, Berkeley.

She began teaching in the Department of General Engineering and became an assistant professor in 1958, associate professor in 1972, then professor, before she retired on February 28, 1989. She received emerita status on July 1, 1989.

Professor Greenfield taught drawing and descriptive geometry, logic, technical writing, and a freshman engineering course that was an orientation to engineering. One faculty member comments, "I've always been impressed that she was willing to teach whatever needed teaching, whether it was technical writing, freshman orientation, or descriptive geometry." Playing her role as educational psychologist she focused on helping students decide if they wanted to be engineers, and if so, what branch. At that time she estimated that about 50% of the students would transfer out of engineering during the subsequent four years. Professor Greenfield invited practicing engineers to give guest lectures about their field so that students could learn first hand about various professional branches of engineering.

Professor Greenfield served as chairperson of the Committee on Engineering Education that set up programs focused on improving faculty and teaching assistant teaching skills. Long before the university set up requirements for teaching workshops she was attempting to interest faculty to improve their classroom delivery. This eventually took hold as a voluntary improvement program that was adopted by many of the faculty in the college.

Professor Greenfield established a summer program to help recruit young women to the College of Engineering. She also toured high schools in the state and helped educate high school teachers about engineering so that they could better advise students of both sexes on the opportunities in engineering. During her tenure of forming teams of faculty and staff in the recruiting effort, the college increased the percentage of women student engineers from 1% to 18%.

Well outside of the scope of academic responsibilities, but appreciated, Professor Greenfield is remembered by many of the older faculty and staff as the pioneer for installing more restrooms for women in engineering buildings. This was something that had been overlooked by most architects designing engineering facilities up through the 1960s.

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One faculty member comments, “She was also at least 20 years ahead of her time as a cognitive psychologist studying learning and problem solving in engineering Her thesis was widely quoted as a seminal work on how students solve problems.”

Professor Greenfield was friendly, supportive and dedicated to understanding the learning process in engineering subjects, and she was very effective in communicating to others, both students and faculty, how the process could be improved and nurtured in young minds. She had a good sense of humor and was widely appreciated for the many contributions she made during her tenure.

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE
John G. Bollinger