

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

**ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS WINSTON L. BREMBECK**

On March 7, 2009, we lost a valued member of the communication arts community with the passing of Professor Emeritus Winston L. Brembeck. Brembeck, who served on the faculty from 1946 until his retirement in 1984, passed away peacefully at his home at the age of 96.

Winston was born in Urbana, Indiana, in 1912, and was united in marriage with Neva P. Gloyde in 1940. He earned his bachelor's degree from Manchester College in Indiana and began his life-long teaching career at Iowa College. Brembeck served in the U.S. Army during World War II as an intelligence specialist in the Pacific Theater.

He earned his master's degree in 1935 and doctorate in 1947 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, in what was then the Department of Speech, which by the time he retired was the Department of Communication Arts. For many years, he directed the speech team, which was known as the Wisconsin Forensic Union. During his first few years as director, Brembeck coached the team to a Big Ten debate championship and tremendous success in oratory, extemporaneous, and after-dinner speaking. Under his leadership, the speech and debate teams grew rapidly in membership, financial potential, and successful tournament competition. In addition to his contribution to collegiate speech competition at UW, Brembeck was a founding member of the American Forensic Association, a national organization.

As a scholar, Brembeck helped to establish the field of social influence as well as studying rhetoric, debate, critical thinking, and speech. His book *Persuasion: A Means of Social Influence*, first published in 1952, proved to be a foundational text in the communication discipline. This book, which went into multiple editions, not only laid out theories of persuasion, it also was used to teach students methods of strategic communication. Brembeck was a dedicated teacher, who believed that students living in a democracy must see persuasion as a way of life and that communication courses should provide pragmatic skills that prepared them to do so. Brembeck is quoted as saying: "To know another's language and not his culture is a very good way to make a fluent fool of one's self."

Up until just a few years ago, Winston attended one faculty meeting every year or two, visiting with former colleagues and meeting new professors in order to stay connected with the Department of Communication Arts.

**MEMORIAL COMMITTEE**

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