

Resolution for the Retirement of Peter L. D. Reid
Professor of Classics
May 19, 2010

On behalf of the Department of Classics, it is my very great pleasure and privilege to present this resolution on the retirement of our beloved colleague, Professor **Peter L. D. Reid**, who will retire at the end of this calendar year.

Peter was born and raised in Scotland, and inasmuch as his father was the headmaster of Loretto Nippers School on the outskirts of Edinburgh, Peter was learning to read Greek and Latin at an age when the rest of us were starting to read comic books. He then won a scholarship to Oundle School in Northamptonshire, England, an institution maintained by the Worshipful Company of Grocers of the City of London since its foundation in 1556. As a young man he joined the Royal Marines and with the rank of lieutenant participated in the Anglo-French military operations during the Suez Crisis of 1956, as well as serving with British forces challenged by a nationalist guerilla insurgency on the island of Cyprus. For those of you who are not convinced that this “tough guy” we’re talking about is the same placid and gracious Peter Reid that you know, I will compound your confusion by adding that he also led cadets on winter training missions in the Scottish Highlands, conducted mountaineering expeditions in the New Zealand Alps, played rugby for Perthshire County and the Royal Marines, and coached both rugby and soccer.

Peter caught the teaching bug early on, instructing at preparatory schools in England and Scotland in the mid-1950s and at Trinity College in Scotland in the early 1960s. He received the B.A. degree from Cambridge University in 1960 and the M.A. in 1964. Subsequently, he struck out on a worldwide odyssey. Between 1964 and 1966, Peter chaired the Classics Department at the Collegiate School in Wanganui, New Zealand. In 1966, he made his way to North America and undertook several transcontinental hitchhiking adventures across the United States and Canada. The details of these expeditions are shrouded by the mists of time and surely, in some cases, apocryphal, so I leave it to each of you to extract the truth from Peter himself. However, there is incontrovertible evidence that he soon discovered he could easily get rides whenever he donned his Scottish kilt. Rumor has it that some people he met from those travels still write to him from time to time. Landing in California, he taught at the Thacher School in Ojai from 1966 to 1970, where he also directed their Sierra Wilderness School before beginning a Ph.D. program at UCLA. He wrote his dissertation on the prickly tenth century bishop and writer Rather of Verona under the direction of Professor Bengt Lofstedt, and received his doctorate in 1974.

Peter joined Tufts as an Assistant Professor in 1973 and was promoted to Associate Professor in 1980 and to Full Professor in 1999. During his nearly four decades at Tufts, he has been devoted to his students, his department, and the university. He has served on three occasions as chair of the Department of Classics. He has been chair of

the Curriculum, Advising, Minors, and Foreign Language Committees, as well as the Experimental College Board. Peter was also elected to the Tenure and Promotion Committee and the Committee on Committees, and has served on many other standing and ad hoc committees and task forces. He has stood on the podium as a presenter at Matriculation, Baccalaureate, and Commencement ceremonies since 1991.

Peter is the world's leading authority on Rather of Verona, a major literary and intellectual figure of the tenth century AD, and has published four books, including a study of Tenth Century Latinity, editions of the major and minor works of Rather, and translations of all the works, as well as articles and reviews. He has received awards from the Ludwig Vogelstein Foundation, the Gerondelis Foundation, and several Tufts Faculty Research Awards. In the 1980's and 1990's, he secured seven grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities totaling \$1,200,000, with which he offered a highly successful series of summer workshops for secondary school teachers. Through these workshops he built bridges to the national community of secondary school teachers, an endeavor that has brought many fine students to Tufts. For almost twenty summers he also directed the New England Classical Institute.

In his long career, Peter has taught a stunning 32 different courses in Classics (for my colleagues in Arts and Humanities departments, I've done the math, and that averages out to a new course almost every year). These courses run the gamut from Greek and Latin language courses at all levels to in-translation courses on a wide variety of Greek and Roman literary, cultural, and historical topics (occasionally even venturing beyond any conceivable definition of Classics in offering "Gilbert and Sullivan" and "Scottish Poetry and Dance"). Only in a Peter Reid course can one learn the shocking origin of the word "pencil". He has supervised and/or served on the committee for numerous graduate theses, not just in Classics but also in Drama and Art History, and in the early 1980's he sponsored the last Ph.D. dissertation in Classics awarded by Tufts.

One area to which Peter has been especially committed and made major contributions is the improvement of academic advising. Peter has always believed that academic advising is undervalued and is, in truth, one of the most important responsibilities of faculty. He wrote the nomination that led to the "Freshman Explorations" Program, developed by Tufts Experimental College, being given the 1984 award for Academic Advising in the Private University category by the National Academic Advising Association (ACT/NACADA). And he "puts his money where his mouth is." He has always been sought out by large numbers of majors to be their advisor, and he takes on a new group of freshmen advisees almost every year.

Students appreciate Peter's concern for them, his warm, kind and gentle treatment of them, and his manifest enthusiasm for the subject matter. Peter's lovely wife, Heather, shared a story with me that epitomizes the mutual devotion and affection of Peter and his students. Peter, Heather, and their son David were traveling through the North of England from Scotland, and Peter knew that they would be passing the remarkable excavation at Vindolanda, near Hadrian's Wall, site of a Roman army camp where the special character of the soil preserves materials that don't usually survive underground

for two millennia. As they approached the site, one of our M.A. students stood up, covered in mud, and as she caught sight of Peter she waved a Roman sandal in the air with glee. As Heather Reid put it, “Peter has always been proud of student achievement and his son and I saw this many times, especially at this moment.”

In sum, Peter Reid has had a long and distinguished career of scholarship, teaching, and service at Tufts. He has been the keystone (to use an ancient metaphor) of the Classics Department. During his multiple stints as department chair, he had the trust and respect of all his colleagues, who knew they could rely upon his calmness and fairness in all circumstances. At a recent “farewell breakfast” where his colleagues gathered to salute Peter, it occurred to us that none of us has ever known a Tufts Classics Department without Peter, nor can we imagine one! Every member of the Classics Department, past and present, would line up to vouch that one could not have a finer colleague than Peter Reid, as would many other faculty and administrators who have worked with him in many capacities over the years.

On behalf of the Department of Classics, I request that this resolution on the retirement of Professor Peter L. D. Reid be spread on the permanent records of this faculty and that a copy of it be presented to Professor Reid.

For the Tufts Classics Department, Steven W. Hirsch, Associate Professor of Classics