



**Memorial Resolution:  
George M. Bodner (1946-2021)  
Department of Chemistry**

Emeritus Chemistry Professor George M. Bodner passed away on March 19, 2021 at the age of 75.

Professor Bodner was born in Rochester, New York in 1946. He graduated from SUNY Buffalo in 1969 with a B.S. in Chemistry and earned a Ph.D. from Indiana University in inorganic and organic chemistry in 1972.

Dr. Bodner began his career at the University of Illinois and Stephens College, and then joined the faculty at Purdue in 1977.

His more than 40 years at Purdue were highlighted by enormous accomplishments and contributions in teaching, research, service, and engagement.

Dr. Bodner was instrumental in creating one of the first Chemical Education graduate programs in the nation. The program has produced more than 100 Ph.D. graduates and has been emulated by many chemistry departments.

He taught thousands of students in our general chemistry program, teaching CHM 115 and 116 for many years. Dr. Bodner was tireless in his research and support of chemical education, mentoring more than 50 masters and doctoral students, as well as countless undergraduates.

He and the students in his research group developed materials to improve undergraduate instruction, conducted ground breaking research on how students learn undergraduate chemistry, and delved into the history and philosophy of science.

He published more than 150 papers, and more than 50 book chapters, laboratory manuals, and books. His 1986 paper in the Journal of Chemical Education, ***Constructivism: A Theory of Knowledge***, is among the all-time most cited papers in chemistry education with nearly 1800 citations.

Dr. Bodner was a leader on campus, too. In the early 2000s, he worked with the founding head of the Department of Engineering Education to create the first such school in the world. He encouraged the newly-hired Engineering Education faculty to pursue discipline-specific educational research, and he served on students' committees for more than two decades.

Dr. Bodner served the University Senate for nearly 35 years and was chair in 2007-2008. His work in the Senate created The Center for Instructional Excellence, The Teaching Academy, The Purdue Honors College, and October Break.

Nationally, he served on the American Chemical Society Board of Directors and numerous ACS committees for more than a decade. He spearheaded the society's formation of the American Association of Chemistry Teachers -- where he convinced the ACS Board to fund the creation of a new organization run by K-12 chemistry teachers. Today, the group has grown to more than 4,000 members.

He is the only person to be awarded the ACS Pimentel Award in Chemical Education, the Royal Society of Chemistry Nyholm Prize for Education, the James Flack Norris Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Teaching of Chemistry, and the ACS Award for the Achievement in Research for the Teaching and Learning of Chemistry.

Dr. Bodner was a Fellow of both the American Chemical Society and the Royal Society of Chemistry. At Purdue, he was named the Arthur E. Kelly Distinguished Professor of Chemistry in 2000. And in 2013, he was presented the Morrill Award -- Purdue's most prestigious faculty award.

Away from campus, his interests included history, philosophy, political science, literature, motorcycles, and music. He was a regular fixture at the Fiddler's Gathering and Friends of Bob events, and was a long-standing member of his treasured book club.

Dr. Bodner genuinely cared about people and tried to help them reach their full potential. Even after retiring in 2019, he stayed an additional year to lead the Chemical Education division. His greatest joy was to see students become successful and contribute to the world.

We will truly miss his kindness and charity that knew no bounds. We also convey sincere condolences to his wife Christine, his sister Jacqueline, and his many cousins, nieces, and nephews.