Gifted Teacher
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A memorial Mass for Barbara Farrelly will take place at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 12, in the Immaculate Conception Chapel. A reception will follow in the Kennedy Union Torch Lounge.

Farrelly, who retired in 2004, died Tuesday, Aug. 20. She taught English at the University of Dayton over 30 years.

"She was such an extraordinarily gifted teacher," said R. Alan Kimbrough, professor of English and longtime friend. "She was one of the very, very best at being perfectly frank with students about their missing the mark, yet they adored her. I treasured our friendship."

Friend and colleague Anne Pici remembered Farrelly for her passion. "Barbara would speak up, speak out, speak over — bossing all around her into writing good sentences and paragraphs, reading good literature and living good ethics," said Pici, retired writing program coordinator in the English department who now teaches in the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute on campus.

"Under her advising and prodding, so many UD athletes expanded their talents, and so many of them were still contacting her years and decades after they had left campus. Past students credited her red pen and her tough, direct manner for their current successes in jobs as professional writers and speakers and thinkers."

Friend and colleague Barbara De Luca echoed those sentiments. "If you want to know the many lives Barbara influenced, just look at the list of phone calls we made when she passed away. It ranged from basketball players to priests. She played a major role in 'making' many, many people," observed De Luca, associate dean for graduate education and research in the School of Education and Health Sciences.

Farrelly began teaching English courses as a graduate assistant in 1968-1969, served as an instructor from 1969-1971 and spent another decade teaching part time from 1975-1985. In 1985, she joined the English faculty in a full-time lecturer role before serving as academic coordinator for athletics from 1990-1994. She then returned to the English faculty for another decade in the classroom.

Over the years, she taught composition, freshman writing seminar, introduction to literature, contemporary drama and tragic dilemma.

"She had too many favorite authors, but Carson McCullers and Flannery O'Connor fascinated her, and she presented Chaucer's Canterbury Tales with much energy and expertise," Pici said. "In more recent years, she also took so seriously the task of reading and analyzing books of possible candidates for the Dayton Literary Peace Prize awards. She was simply an insatiable and insightful reader."

Farrelly earned a B.A. in English from Good Counsel College in 1965 and an M.A. in English from the University of Dayton in 1969. In 2000, she received the University of Dayton's Miryam Award for her support of women's achievements on campus.

She is survived by her husband Jim, a professor of English at the University of Dayton, and their children, Ann and Mark Farrelly, both University of Dayton graduates.

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