Memorial Resolution
For
Professor Emeritus Webster M. Christman, Jr.

Webster M. Christman, Jr., Professor Emeritus of Industrial & Systems Engineering died on Friday, October 27, 1989, at the age of 78 years from complications following a heart attack. He was known to friends and colleagues as "Chris" and/or "Web".

Chris obtained his B.S. degree in Industrial Education at Pennsylvania State University in 1935. He taught physics and graphics in high schools in Easton, Pa., Roanoke, Va., and Hagerstown, Md., during the years of 1935-1941. In addition to this teaching, he worked on a M. S. degree at Penn State, obtaining it in 1940. During World War II [1941-1945] he worked as a loftsman, designer, and head of several design groups at Fairchild Aircraft Company. Chris joined the Penn State faculty as an Instructor in Engineering Drawing in 1945. A year later he moved to Milwaukee as an Assistant Professor on the UW-Extension faculty. As a member of the Department of Engineering Drawing and Descriptive Geometry, he also was a member of the equivalent department in the College of Engineering, UW-Madison. This required regular trips to Madison to attend department faculty meetings. He was Department chairman from 1954 until 1965 when the Division of Engineering became the College of Engineering and Applied Science, resulting in a complete reorganization of UWM engineering departments. He retired in 1981.

The text material that he developed for the basic engineering graphics courses in the 1950's still provides the basic philosophy for the materials used in the course today. His text has a much stronger foundation of descriptive geometry and learning pedagogy than the typical graphics book. This approach has resulted in a very smooth transition from manual to Computer Aided Graphics methods over the last decade. Many graduates remember Prof. Christman as a task master who pushed them to achieve at level well beyond their "freshman" definitions of excellence. They also now appreciate what that experience did for them, and the level of commitment to teaching that was required to accomplish such transformations.

Chris was an active member of the American Society for Engineering Education [ASEE], Society of Manufacturing Engineers [SME], and Engineers & Scientists of Milwaukee [ESM]. He also was instrumental in seeing that new young faculty members recognized the value of professional activities and service in their careers.
Memorial Resolution  W. M. Christman, Jr.  Page 2

Prof. Christman provided valuable services to industrial companies in Wisconsin, and across the nation. He made significant contributions as a member of the American National Standards Institute's Geometric Tolerancing Committee [ANSI Y14.5] for many years. He shared his strong understanding of the principles and applications of these standards by teaching UW-Extension seminars, and "in-house" short courses at a number of companies in Wisconsin and other mid-west states.

His off campus interests included auto racing, railroading and music. He was well known in the Milwaukee area as a string bass player for the Milwaukee Civic Orchestra [1946-77]. Chris's knowledge of pipe organs was shared with members of many local churches over years of gratis consulting on organ selection, maintenance and rebuilding. This interest in music in Milwaukee was a leading factor in his decisions to turn down job offers at several large mid-western universities that could not match the rich cultural environment that he had come to appreciate.

Work with Kalmbach Publishing in the 1947-1952 period, strengthened an interest in trains and model railroading. This interest paralleled his interest in airplanes that resulted from his earlier work at Fairchild Aircraft Co. However, both of these areas took a back seat to auto racing. While he followed the overall national racing scene closely, his great love of dirt track midget car racing made him a regular knowledgeable spectator at Sun Prairie, and Slinger.

I. A. Kahn
E. W. Knoblock
J. M. Leaman

December 13, 1989