IN MEMORIUM – Professor Emerita Campbell Tatham

Campbell Tatham, Associate Professor Emeritus of English, died on 28 October 2008; he was 68 years old. Cam was born in New York; he graduated from the Hotchkiss School and Amherst College. He took an MA at NYU and his doctorate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Upon completion of the PhD in 1968 Cam joined the UWM faculty; he retired in 2005 after 37 years of service.

Though equally comfortable writing about *Huckleberry Finn*, Cotton Mather and Benjamin Franklin, Cam’s most important scholarly work was in post modern fiction—as a participant observer in a field where fiction and criticism and pure play readily intermingle. Cam was often in touch and collaborated with Raymond Federman, Ronald Sukenick, and other leading figures in the post modernist enterprise. He mentored some of the department’s best and most interesting doctoral candidates. He was an expert on jazz and the blues as well, and many years ago hosted a weekly blues program on WUWM.

As an academic, however, Cam’s vocation—really his passion—was undergraduate teaching. He created new courses almost every semester during his early career. His dedication to teaching and to his students led him to accept an appointment as Associate Chair of English in 1985, a position he held for an unprecedented fifteen years. His responsibilities as Associate Chair included advising of all English majors and prospective majors, overseeing the undergraduate curriculum, and building the enormous English class schedule each semester. Cam’s experience with the curricular issues of the university’s largest department naturally resulted in his being elected to the L&S Course and Curriculum Committee and the Academic Program and Curriculum Committee, where his leadership was crucial at defining moments in our institutional evolution. Cam served on the college Course and Curriculum Committee for five years and the APCC for eight, five as committee chair. Development and modification of curricula require an overarching vision and the capacity to manage a maddening amount of detail. These capabilities are rarely to be found in a single individual, but Cam had them. He was one of the most dedicated and influential curricular planners of his generation at UWM.

But it was his teaching that compelled Campbell Tatham the most; he had known it was his vocation from the age of sixteen, he said. The UWinteriM session provided him an additional teaching opportunity, and he never missed teaching in that session. He taught as often as he
could in retirement, finishing his last class in May of this year. Only when his devastating last illness rendered teaching impossible did he give it up.

Cam was devoted to his family and loved his farm in the town of Cedarburg: most especially his horses, goats, and chickens. His hens laid delicious eggs in wonderful colors; cartons of them were gratefully received by his colleagues.