

Obituary: Lawrence R. (Larry) James

Larry J. Williams and Justin A. DeSimone



It is with great sadness that we report the death of our SIOP colleague, Lawrence R. (Larry) James.

He died peacefully August 14, 2014 due to complications from open-heart surgery,

in the presence of his wife Leslie and son Jordan. Larry completed his BS, MS, and PhD at the University of Utah under the mentorship of Calvin W. Taylor, and during his career he held held academic appointments at Texas Christian University, the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, and the Georgia Institute of Technology, from which he retired in 2013. Over the course of his career, Larry was awarded nearly \$7 million in research funding and authored over 90 articles and book chapters as well as three scholarly books.

Early in his career, he wrote seminal articles on organizational structure and psychological climate, employee selection, and performance evaluation; however, Larry is perhaps known best for his scholarship in the areas of statistics and research methods, as he is an author on 3 of the top 20 most cited books, chapters, and articles on methodology in organizational research (*The Industrial-Organizational Psychologist*, 2009). Among his major accomplishments, he wrote a definitive work on causal modeling, created the r_{WG} metric routinely used in aggregation, and developed

the Conditional Reasoning personality assessment system. Larry also made substantial contributions to the topics of meta-analysis, mediation and moderation, and multilevel modeling.

Larry has been recognized as a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, the American Psychological Society, and the Academy of Management. He also received the Academy of Management's Research Methods Division Advancement of Organizational Research Methods Award as well as the *Academy of Management Review's* Best Paper award. He also was the recipient of the Research Methods Division's Distinguished Career Award in 2003. Last spring Larry was the recipient of SIOP's prestigious 2014 Distinguished Scientific Contributions Award.

Larry was never satisfied with the status quo, always believed that improvement was possible, and had a unique ability to connect ideas from various disciplines. He was one of the most approachable individuals in the field and was always willing to offer assistance or explanation to those who asked. His greatest pleasures in academia came from mentoring graduate students and junior faculty and developing ideas through debate. Even after retirement, he met weekly with students and faculty members to discuss ideas and develop his research program in conditional reasoning. Whether it was teaching in the seminar room, providing

informal feedback on papers for friends and colleagues, talking shop over coffee or lunch, or writing equations on cocktail napkins while at conferences, he was always willing to share his ideas and help develop those of others, and he did so with a most interesting style, a great sense of humor, and an approach to solving

the problem that was usually just as interesting as the solution itself.

The field of I-O psychology has benefited immeasurably from Larry's intelligence and creativity. Our field will miss his scientific contributions, and those who knew him will miss his friendship.

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