Professor David Close, a distinguished retired member of the Memorial University Political Science Department, passed away unexpectedly in hospital on September 15, 2019. In addition to his nephews Jamie and Jon Close, his former wife Alice Close, and Rosa García-Orellán, David leaves an array of friends, colleagues and former students here and across the world.

David was born in Adrian, Michigan on May 15, 1945. He obtained degrees in international affairs and Latin American studies at Georgetown University and Wayne State University, before earning his PhD in political science from McGill University. In 1975 he was appointed as a founding faculty member at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College in Corner Brook. From there he transferred to the Political Science Department in St. John’s in 1977.

David was a highly productive and respected scholar. Early in his career his focus shifted from Canadian to Latin American and comparative politics. He authored three books on Nicaragua and edited or co-edited several more books in this field. He also published some forty articles and book chapters. A number of his works were written in, or translated into, Spanish. His facility with that language, as well as French and Portuguese, enabled a leading international presence. He served as President of the Canadian Association of Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CALACS), member of the Board of Directors of Fondación Canada-America Latina (FOCAL), and as Editorial Board Member for the Journal of Conflict Studies.

In addition to teaching, researching and writing, David served Memorial University and the wider community in numerous administrative capacities. For many years he served as Coordinator of the Political Science Department Graduate Studies Committee, and also as Director of the Internship Programme. He served as both Acting Head and Interim Head of the Department. He was a member of many University and Faculty committees and served as Vice President of the Faculty Association (MUNFA). He served on the Boards of the St. John’s Oxfam Centre and the Newfoundland Human Rights Association. He provided commentary on public affairs in French and Spanish for Radio Canada and Nicaraguan radio.

David was a congenial, witty friend and colleague. After retiring in 2013, David remained in St. John’s and continued to research and write at a somewhat more relaxed pace. He was a sports fan and avid mystery reader who enjoyed travel and could be found throughout his neighbourhood walking his dog, Bailey. He was a good neighbour who took the time to stop and talk and allow Bailey to be petted.

The Memorial University Political Science Department will host an informal reception to honour David Close in the Junior Common Room, R. Gushue Hall, on Tuesday, November 12, 4:00 p.m. Colleagues, friends and former students of David are invited to share their memories. Refreshments will be served. Additional information may be found on the department website, https://www.mun.ca/posc/, or phone (709) 864-8179.

Parking will be available in Area 15. There are also a few spaces in front of R. Gushue Hall.