



Thursday, March 21, 2002

Distinguished Professor Sheldon Appleton

Sheldon Appleton, professor of political science, is a recognized authority on presidential politics and public opinion, an exemplary teacher who won Oakland University's first Teaching Excellence Award, and an energetic provider of service and support to students, the university and the local community.

Professor Appleton joined the Oakland faculty in 1960 after completing degrees in history and political science at New York University and the University of Minnesota. His early scholarship focused on communist China and Taiwan and includes a book-length study of U.S.- China policy published by Michigan State University Press in 1961. His other book, "American Foreign Policy: An Introduction with Cases" (Little, Brown, 1968), is a widely adopted textbook. His more recent scholarship, published in top journals in the field and presented at professional conferences, includes studies of the political beliefs of Americans.

Appleton served six years on the editorial board of the "American Journal of Political Science." At various times during his career, he has developed his expertise through appointments as a United States Foreign Service Officer, as a Ford Foundation Training Fellow in East Asia and as a visiting professor at the University of Hawaii.

Appleton's low-key, but highly effective, teaching style is legendary. In the classroom, he skillfully encourages interaction, rational discourse and discovery, and he challenges students to reconsider unsubstantiated assumptions and to support generalizations with evidence. Many years after graduating, alumni report warm memories of Professor Appleton's stimulating and challenging classes. In addition to a broad range of courses he has taught in political science, he has made important teaching contributions to American Studies, International Studies and the Honors College.

Although Appleton has many accomplishments in the area of service, he is most often recognized for his work in student advising and finding better ways to guide students through the intricacies of the curriculum. Good advising is essential to the success of most students.

Appleton also has served as associate dean of the College and as associate provost for undergraduate studies. While holding these administrative positions, he continued to teach a course almost every semester.

His service to the local community has included such worthy projects as the Human Relations Council, Little League baseball, the church and advocacy on public issues. He was a participant in the 1965 Selma to Montgomery voting rights march led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. He often is consulted by the press and by community and university organizations for his expertise on electoral politics and public policy.

SUMMARY

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