



## IN MEMORIAM - FINN LAURSEN

The Jean Monnet European Union Centre of Excellence sadly mourns the passing of former director Finn Laursen. Finn arrived at Dalhousie University as a Canada Research Chair (Tier 1) in European Union Studies in 2006 before retiring in 2013. He provided tireless service as director of the EU Centre of Excellence (EUCE) at Dalhousie University. The EUCE was established in 2006 under his leadership. Finn's success in bringing an EU Centre of Excellence to Dalhousie – one of only 5 in Canada and 30 worldwide at the time— gave several department colleagues the opportunity to engage in research on EU related topics. He succeeded in renewing the EUCE for a second term in 2009, ensuring its longevity and proving that Dalhousie mattered in the realm of EU scholarship. In 2008 he was awarded an *ad personam* Jean Monnet Chair.

Finn organized an annual conference for the EUCE, bringing leading international scholars together with local experts. The events always brought good scholarship and collegial social interactions among persons from diverse backgrounds from many countries and were truly stimulating events. These conferences resulted also in a successful series of edited collections with publishers such as Pieter Lang and Ashgate. These volumes, edited with care by Finn, covered a range of topics including EU constitutionalism and treaty making, EU foreign policy, EU in the global economy, comparative regional integration, EU Federalism, the Lisbon treaty, EU and transatlantic security and economic relations, EU enlargement and the Eurozone crisis.

Finn was a leading expert on the complex issues of EU constitutionalism and treaty making and received numerous research grants during his career which have resulted in many publications. This includes some 10 self- or co-authored books, over 20 edited collections including some 10 for the EUCE at Dalhousie, and close to 100 journal articles and book chapters. His publications were written in English, Danish and French. He also taught as faculty or guest lecturer in Mexico, Japan, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Slovakia, Austria, France, China, Taiwan, and Norway. In Canada he taught or guest lectured at McGill, York and Carleton universities.

His research focussed upon European integration, particularly the evolution the European Union's core treaties and the repeated addition of new member states in the past two decades. He also wrote on the emergence of the European Union as an actor in the global political system. He did comparative research on regional integration in so called new regional systems, which are in part modeled on the EU. These include NAFTA and Mercosur in the Western Hemisphere and ASEAN in South East Asia. He took a scholarly interest in the evolution of federalism and multi-level governance arrangements within such regional blocs.

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Before coming to Dalhousie he held posts as Professor of International Politics, Jean Monnet Chair and head of the EUCE at the University of Southern Denmark, Odense; Professor and Head of the Thorkil Kristensen Institute for East-West Research, South Jutland University Centre; and Professor of International Politics, European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA), Maastricht, The Netherlands. He also taught at the London School of Economics.

Finn was active in the wider profession also, with a leadership role in various professional associations including as Member of board of ECSA-Canada, Member of board of Centre International de Formation Européenne (CIFE), and Member of board of Institut Européen des Hautes Études Internationales (IEHEI), Nice. He was also President of the Danish Society for European Studies.

Finn's legacy at Dalhousie is profound and enduring. He energized research on the European Union, which drew in several members of this department and scholars in other faculties, notably Law. He established the EUCE on a sound footing, and the Centre has been renewed continuously under the leadership of our colleague Ruben Zaiotti. He was involved as a CRC in securing Canada Foundation for Innovation money and matching funding from the Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust for renovation and equipment to make offices for the EUCE. For the Department of Political Science, Finn taught courses on The Politics of the EU, The EU as a Global Actor, and EU Treaty Reforms. He supervised several honours and doctoral candidates interested in European Union matters.

After leaving Dalhousie he became Honorary Professor at the University of South Denmark. He also was Editor-in-Chief, Oxford Encyclopedia of European Union Politics, Oxford University Press and Senior Editor Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics. He spent time with family in Denmark and Mexico.

The JMEUCE, the Department of Political Science, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the wider campus community owe Finn Laursen a debt of thanks for contributing research and publication opportunities for many faculty members, forging a network of EU specialists in Halifax and putting Dalhousie University on the map in European Union scholarship. All colleagues join mourning Finn's passing and send our sincere condolences and wishes to his family and friends.

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