

in world affairs.” Attending CURA events for years after his retirement, Berger impressed Longman “as he asked probing questions and challenged speakers.”

“Peter’s legacy runs deep and wide in multiple fields,” says Mary Elizabeth Moore, dean of the School of Theology and a professor of theology and education. “His work has been groundbreaking for a vast range of people wrestling with thorny questions of human culture, religion, secularity, and meaning.”

For all his formidable intellect, Berger disdained academic tediousness, as evidenced by the title of his 2011 memoir, *Adventures of an Accidental Sociologist: How to Explain the World without Becoming a Bore*. The “accidental sociologist” part of his memoir involved the 20-year-old Berger’s original career aspiration: becoming a Lutheran minister. But as a Viennese immigrant to New York, he took a night class, Balzac as a Sociologist, to learn more about the American congregants he’d have to pastor. The class taught him nothing about his new country, Berger wrote, but infected him with sociology and “an endless curiosity about every aspect of human behavior.”

He attributed his drift from youthful religious conservatism to a more liberal viewpoint both to the mellowing of growing older and to his adopted homeland.

Berger was CURA’s director from 1985, when it was founded, until 2009. Today part of the Pardee School of Global Studies, CURA conducts research and education about religion and world affairs.

## “A Deep Love of Liberal Education”

*Susan Jackson left “an indelible mark on the curriculum and pedagogy” at BU | BY ANN CUDD*

*Susan Jackson, assistant provost for general education implementation and a College of Arts & Sciences associate professor of French, died on June 30, 2017. Previously, she had been CAS senior associate dean of undergraduate education, responsible for oversight of academic policy, curriculum, and teaching.*

*“Susan Jackson was a tremendous colleague, teacher, and friend to so many across the Boston University community,” says Jean Morrison, University provost and chief academic officer. “Susan was incredibly dedicated to BU, and there are few people who knew or cared more about undergraduate education than she did. She had enormous impact on the University in mentoring students and staff, developing high-quality and distinctive academic programs, and successfully implementing the BU Hub—our first-ever University-wide general education program and one of our highest priorities. She leaves a rich and lasting legacy and will be deeply missed.”*

After starting her professional career at Duke, Susan (Klem) Jackson came to Boston University in 1982 as a lecturer in French, became an assistant professor in 1985, and was promoted to associate professor with tenure in 1991. A proud member of Phi Beta Kappa since her junior year at Wellesley, Jackson was also the long-time secretary of the Epsilon Chapter of Massachusetts, which is housed at BU.

In 1994, she joined the College of Arts & Sciences dean’s office as the associate

dean, and she was named senior associate dean in 1998.

Valedictorian of Wellesley College’s class of 1972, fluent or highly competent in multiple languages, Susan Jackson had a powerful, philosophical mind, astounding erudition, and a deep love of liberal education. Her intellectual breadth and appreciation for the arts and the sciences equipped her to help faculty add new courses to the catalog and to assist departments and programs in creating dozens of majors and minors. Her adherence to the principles of liberal education led her to fiercely and steadfastly defend the foreign language and mathematics requirements against pointed and even litigious attacks.

Jackson was also a policy wonk who could craft the language to accomplish the goals of the college by creating needed boundary lines for faculty and

students. She was especially concerned about the status of lecturers and of women faculty, having experienced personally how each could be mistreated in academia, and she worked to make policies and practices more inclusive and fair for both groups by clarifying promotion criteria and improving family leave policies, among other things.

Jackson’s research and writings centered around the literature and philosophy of 18th-century France, particularly Jean-Jacques Rousseau, but also included women writers such as Isabelle de Charrière.

She was a tireless servant of the college. Legendarily, she put in longer hours at her work than seems humanly possible. And her hours were full of both deep, intense thinking and efficient ticking-off of items on the to-do list. Susan Jackson got stuff done and done right.

*Ann Cudd is the dean of Arts & Sciences and a CAS professor of philosophy.*

**Susan Jackson was especially concerned about the status of BU lecturers and of women faculty, and she worked to make policies and practices more inclusive and fair for both groups, says Ann Cudd, dean of Arts & Sciences.**



🔗 **ONLINE:** Read Ann Cudd’s full appreciation at [bu.edu/cas/remembering-susan-jackson](http://bu.edu/cas/remembering-susan-jackson).