



Dr. Richard Arnold Cording

June 23, 1936 - July 5, 2021

Dr. Richard "Dick" Arnold Cording, 85, passed away on July 5, 2021, in Huntsville, Texas. He passed peacefully at home, with his wife by his side. He was preceded in death by his parents, Melvin Gerhardt Cording and Helen Rhudy Cording, his sister Patricia Cording Pearce and his daughter Susan Dwan Cording Smith. He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Frances Watson Cording, daughters Lisa Lynne Cording Burns and husband Rick, Sheri Renae Cording Gaines and husband John, Jennifer Shay Cording Cox and husband Nelson, son in law Timothy Smith, grandchildren Richard Cording Burns and wife Mallory, Colby Watson Burns, Savannah Shay Gaines, Sarah Frances Gaines Brown and husband Jackson, Stratton Cording Gaines, Nelson E "Trey" Cox III, Tristynn Ansley Cox, Braedon James Smith, great-grandchildren Jady Lee Goodrow, Bret Maverick Burns, his brother Terry Melvin Cording and wife Delois, as well as a circle of extended family and close friends.

Dick grew up in Wallace, North Carolina, where he and Frances were childhood friends and later high school sweethearts. Dick graduated from Wallace High School in 1954 and was voted Most Likely to Succeed and Best All-Around. He and Frances married the summer after her first and his second year of college. He graduated with his B.A. from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He furthered his education by obtaining a M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Missouri.

Dr. Cording's 40-year career with Sam Houston State University began in

1970 when he was recruited to initiate and develop the Philosophy Department. From 1981 to 1994, Dr. Cording was dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, presiding over a period of dynamic growth and development. He founded and was the first president of the Texas Deans of Liberal Arts and Sciences during this time. In 2013, he was a recipient of the Sam Houston State University Wall of Honor.

Dr. Cording then returned to his great love as professor of philosophy, professor emeritus of philosophy, and served as an adviser to his beloved students in the Student Advising and Mentoring Center.

As a professor, Cording exhibited top-notch teaching skills, maintaining superior student-evaluation scores some 35 years after winning the university's Excellence in Teaching Award. His 44-year record of teaching is a testament to his dedication to his students.

Dick and Frances have been faithful members of First United Methodist Church for 51 years. Dick was a member of many committees and served on the administrative board. Dick was also active in civic affairs. He served as President of the Rotary Club and was a recipient of The Paul Harris Fellow Award.

Dick was best known for his love of family, golf, games of chance, religious study, self-exploration, and all sports. The only teams he rooted for more strongly than his beloved North Carolina Tar Heels were his kids' and grandkids' sports teams. Dick was a fierce competitor striving for the win, from the golf course to the poker table and family games while befriending and supporting his competition along the way. Dick was fondly called by many names: Dad, Sweetheart, Pop, Dean, Doc, Dickey-doo, Coach, and 321. He served many roles. He was often credited with rescuing students' college careers when challenged, turning a rocky academic career around for a struggling student.

Visitation will be Friday, July 9, 2021 at 10:00 AM and the service for Dr. Richard Cording will be held at 11:00 AM, both at First United Methodist Church of Huntsville. Burial to follow at Oakwood Cemetery-Mayes Addition,

Huntsville, Texas.

Memorial donations can be made in Dick's name to The Richard Cording Endowed Scholarship through Go Fund Me, <https://gofund.me/79e1a07e>.

Memorial condolences to the family may be made at www.shmfh.com.

Cemetery Details

Mayes Addition of Oakwood Cemetery

800 Martin Luther King BLVD.
Huntsville, TX 77320

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 9. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

First United Methodist Church of Huntsville
1016 Sam Houston Ave.
Huntsville, TX 77340

Funeral Service

JUL 9. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

First United Methodist Church of Huntsville
1016 Sam Houston Ave.
Huntsville, TX 77340

Graveside Service

JUL 9. 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Mayes Addition of Oakwood
800 Martin Luther King BLVD
77320

Tribute Wall



“ *Dr. Richard Arnold Cording*

November 15, 2022 at 08:33 PM



“ *Heartfelt condolences to you, Mrs. Cording, your girls, & extended family.*

He was a true gentleman of his time and had a special place in the hearts of my folks.

Thoughts & prayers are with you.

Jocelyn del C. - September 12, 2021 at 08:48 AM



“ *Dear Cording Family,
It is with deep sympathy and prayers that go out to you for the loss of Dr. Cording. God's peace and love be with you always. Amen.
Tasha Shearer Fry*

Tasha Shearer Fry - July 19, 2021 at 11:52 AM



“ *Rodney & Evelyn Turner lit a candle in memory of Dr. Richard Arnold Cording*



Rodney & Evelyn Turner - July 16, 2021 at 11:31 AM

RE

“ *Dean Cording was an inspiration to myself and late husband in the 70s and 80s. His kind and positive influence lasts a lifetime. Prayers for his family. Sorry for your loss. Ree Slovin*



Ree - July 13, 2021 at 05:42 PM

FF

“ Dick hired me in 1971 as the second person in the Philosophy Department, and in the very next year we hired Tom Satre. Dick was the leader of our trio, and he led by his inspiration and his example which was that, if you take care to do the best you can for your students and to respect your faculty colleagues, then good things will follow. Dick also encouraged us to innovate in our courses, so we quite early on began to teach courses in Critical Thinking and Contemporary Moral issues, for example. It helped immensely that Dick was so well-regarded by faculty across the university and had, by his teaching, created a group of students who were enthusiastic about learning philosophy.

Janet and I also got to know Frances and the girls, and in fact for a while we lived next door to them on Avenue O. That made it easier for one of the girls to be our first baby-sitter for our two very young children. Dick was always a person who lovingly put his family first, and it showed over the years to all of us who knew him.

Dick was a student of a philosophical movement known as Existentialism, and he taught a course on it for many years. He was especially familiar with the work of Jean-Paul Sartre, and I appreciate a bit of irony in that. One of Sartre's characters in the play *No Exit* utters the line "Hell is other people." This is exactly the opposite of the way Dick saw other people. As an example,, to my mind it was very fitting that in his retirement Dick worked part time at the SHSU Student Advising and Mentoring Center. There he helped students to stay on track and to finish their degrees. It was work that showed us all how deep and continuing his commitment was to taking good care of the students who place themselves in our hands.

Frank Fair

Frank Fair - July 10, 2021 at 02:29 PM

NH

“ *Nancy Hopper lit a candle in memory of Dr. Richard Arnold Cording*



Nancy Hopper - July 10, 2021 at 11:00 AM



“ *Nancy Hines purchased the A Full Life for the family of Dr. Richard Arnold Cording.*



Nancy Hines - July 09, 2021 at 03:33 PM

CB

“ *If this is repetitive, please forgive me. I thought I posted this but it doesn't seem to be posted. Condolences to Mrs. Cording and family. I will always remember Dr. Cording, of course, as Sheri's dad. However, my fondest memories are of him (unsuccessfully) trying to talk me into taking his 321 golf bet. Even with the intimidation factor of him being a parent, I wouldn't take that bet. No one in their right mind would give Dick Cording or anyone else 46 strokes! But he never quit trying to talk me into it. And everyone else apparently! Rest In Peace, Dr. Cording.*

Clif Baker - July 09, 2021 at 12:46 AM

BJ

Dean Cording was a wonderful person I admired. Deepest sympathy in your loss.

I was a student aid in the philosophy dept in 1976 & he called me Bonnie Blue because he loved the color blue (his blue eyes?). When my son was born I sent Dean C a picture Christmas card & signed it 'Bonnie & Little Boy Blue.' When my son was in 4th grade Dean C let my son & I sit in on some classes on campus. I wanted my son to be exposed to many different subjects leading to many different careers. Dean Cording was the sweetest guy.

bonnie gloeckner johnson - August 05, 2025 at 11:47 PM



“ *Thomas Warren lit a candle in memory of Dr. Richard Arnold Cording*



Thomas Warren - July 08, 2021 at 11:06 PM



“ *I absolutely loved that Dr. Cording was so surrounded by women all the time that one more in the house (me) did not change his routine at all. I remember traipsing through the living room and there he sat in his boxers and undershirt reading the paper just like my dad did at home. It just made me feel completely welcome!*

Nancy Hines - July 08, 2021 at 08:21 PM

WS

Dick was one nice person, always willing to go the extra mile for you,
Woody Smith

Woody Smith - July 21, 2021 at 09:55 PM

WS

We all loved dick

Woody Smith - July 21, 2021 at 09:57 PM

JS

“ I knew him and Susan, Lisa, Sheri and Jennifer’s dad. He was always present, quietly supporting his daughters and their friends in any and all endeavors, of which there were a lot!

My memory will always have him in his living room at his home in Forrest Hills with a certain look upon his face....a look of slight amusement (aided by the high arch of his eyebrows), a tiny bit of bewilderment (from the chaos usually going on around him), and a barely there smile, but you knew he was smiling fully on the inside a very loving and proud smile that was directed not only at his daughters, but at you, too. You could feel it.

His family is a testament to the wonderful role model he was and I am so appreciative of the love, support and advice he gave to me, as well.

I send my love to all of the “Cording girls,” to you, Mrs. Cording, and the rest of the family that he was so proud of. He was a wonderful and kind-hearted man who will be deeply missed. I am so sorry for your loss.

*With Love,
J. J. Peterson Slowinski*

J. J. Slowinski - July 08, 2021 at 09:16 AM

SL

“ Shane And Madilene Loosier lit a candle in memory of Dr. Richard Arnold Cording



Shane and Madilene Loosier - July 08, 2021 at 09:08 AM

PS

“ Thoughts and prayers for the family



Pat Sprott - July 08, 2021 at 08:12 AM

CN

“ Clay Newcomb & Frances Newcomb lit a candle in memory of Dr. Richard Arnold Cording



Clay Newcomb & Frances Newcomb - July 08, 2021 at 02:05 AM

DT

“ Such a kind man who obviously loved his family!My prayers are with Frances and the rest of the family. ❤️

Delanise Taylor - July 08, 2021 at 12:13 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Dr. Richard Arnold Cording.



July 07, 2021 at 11:03 PM

JO

“ I remember seeing at all his daughters' dance recitals. --Judy Olson

Judy Olson - July 07, 2021 at 09:03 PM

FK

“ While I never participated in his 321 golfing challenge, I enjoyed having him as a partner in the Sam Houston State University faculty/staff golf tournament and working with him on many news releases that helped make known the outstanding people and programs of the university, many of which were under his supervision. He was wonderful to play and work with, and I can only imagine how much he will be missed by all of his family and friends.
Frank Krystyniak

Frank Krystyniak - July 07, 2021 at 08:38 PM

SM

“ I will never forget watching MTV at the Cordings in Forest Hills- it was brand new and not everyone had cable so I thought Jennifer had the coolest Dad!!! Many good times at that house as cheerleaders:) what a full and wonderful life he lived 🙏

Sheila Jeffcoat MD - July 07, 2021 at 08:11 PM

KH

“ Dr. Cording was such a delight! I took every course that I possibly could with him as the professor. He was a great teacher and he could really tell some good stories 😊. I am sad to hear of his passing and say a prayer for your family's comfort. Kathy Hudson

Kathy Brown Hudson - July 07, 2021 at 06:17 PM

JJ

“ Dr. Cording was one of the kindness men I will ever know. My prayers are with the family during this difficult time.

Jeannine Jacoby - July 07, 2021 at 04:54 PM

MS

“ *Much love, Doran Erwin Smith purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Dr. Richard Arnold Cording.*



Much love, Doran Erwin Smith - July 07, 2021 at 03:19 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Dr. Richard Arnold Cording.*



July 07, 2021 at 02:55 PM



“ *Days of Sunshine Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr. Richard Arnold Cording.*



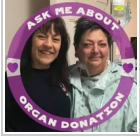
July 07, 2021 at 02:50 PM



“ *Tranquil Seas was purchased for the family of Dr. Richard Arnold Cording.*



July 07, 2021 at 02:32 PM



“ Mrs Cording and girls, I am so sorry for your loss. Dr Cording was a wonderful person and friend to all. I think about Susan so very often and how young she left this earth. Please know that I send sincere prayers for these sad times ahead. Hugs and much love....
Jamie Brinegar



Jamie Sue Brinegar - July 07, 2021 at 02:08 PM



“ Rose Remembrance was purchased for the family of Dr. Richard Arnold Cording.



July 07, 2021 at 01:42 PM

JW

“*Dr. Cording was a gentle giant of a father, and his 70-year love affair with his wife, Frances, was a fairy tale romance come true.*

As a three-year-old, new to Huntsville, I was lucky enough to move in a few doors down from the Cordings on Elmwood. I immediately gained four sisters. I also gained Dr. Cording as another role model for the powerful influence that strong, smart, patient men can have on their daughters (and their daughters' friends). He was so endearing in his interactions with his daughters, for whom he had affectionate, silly nicknames. He was calm in the presence of the chaos of four daughters and always supported their talents from twirling to band to cheerleading to dance to softball. And, he was equally supportive of their friends.

My two favorite memories are these:

Dr. Cording has an old, blue VW Bug that he loved. Showing sign of age, the floorboards were failing and you could see through to the pavement passing quickly below. We loved playing Fred Flintstone and Barney Rubble in that car by pretending that we were propelling it with our feet.

And, the visual that will live with me for the rest of my life will be Dr. Cording and my father, Bud Warren, sitting on the mounds adjacent to the fields on the SHSU campus in the scorching Texas summer heat wearing golf shirts and short (and perhaps discretely hiding their cigarettes from view) while Jennifer and I performed at cheerleading camp. They were committed and present and selfless dads, and we all are so much stronger, kinder, and wiser for it.

I will be forever grateful for his influence on my life!

Love, Jill Warren

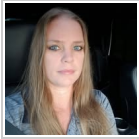
Jill Warren - July 07, 2021 at 01:21 PM

MH

“ *Marvin Hyvl sent a virtual gift in memory of Dr. Richard Arnold Cording*



Marvin Hyvl - July 07, 2021 at 12:38 PM



“ *Angela Perry lit a candle in memory of Dr. Richard Arnold Cording*



Angela Perry - July 07, 2021 at 12:28 PM

MW

“ *I am so sorry for your loss. Your family is in my prayers. We loved having your family as our former neighbors. My four kids always called Frances Dr. Frances since she worked at the pediatrician office for so many years. Every time I drive by your old house on Elmwood, I thought about your family. It was great to keep up with you through FB. It seems like the last few years we would only see each other in person at funerals & would say we need to see each other at a more positive location! It was always pleasant to see you no matter where. I am out of town babysitting Heather's twins so they could go away for their 14th anniversary. If they get back in time I will try to be at the service.*



Mellicent (Sikes) Wiley - July 07, 2021 at 12:16 PM

RM

“ My heart is heavy with the news of Dean Cording’s passing. He, along with a few others, were “larger than life, will love forever” men in my life, but Dean Cording was at the top of that list! As the Director of Freshman Orientation in the 1980’s, I could always depend on him for support and to assure our new parents that their students were in great Bearkat hands! I am honored to have called him my friend and forever blessed by that friendship. My prayers to each of the family members.


*Rebecca Halbert Mohr
Class of 1983*

Rebecca Mohr - July 07, 2021 at 12:12 PM

CS

“ Dr. Cording was one of my favorite professors and I still remember his class that I attended in the early 1970's. I always enjoyed seeing him and Frances at SHSU events and around town. I know he had serious health issues in the last few years but now he is at peace and out of pain. God Bless Dr. Cording for all the lives he touched in his many years of teaching, mine being one of those. My prayers are with Frances and all of the family.

Carol Shaw - July 07, 2021 at 12:12 PM


Charlotte
Efird

“ Charlotte Efird lit a candle in memory of Dr. Richard Arnold Cording



Charlotte Efird - July 07, 2021 at 11:03 AM



Charlotte
Efird

Dr. Cording you will be missed.

Charlotte Efird - July 07, 2021 at 11:04 AM



DH

Dick Cording was a friend, great teacher, and dean.

Dr. David Henderson - July 07, 2021 at 02:48 PM



SS

“*Thoughts and prayers are with all of the family. He was a special man and will be missed. Cherish all your memories.* 🙏❤️



Sue Sprott - July 07, 2021 at 10:55 AM