

LAUDATIO

In honor of **Professor Louis G. POL**,
John Becker Dean of the College of Business Administration
and Professor of Marketing,
University of Nebraska at Omaha

On the occasion of the award of the Doctor Honoris Causa title
of
Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași

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An integrative leader with an academic career that is collaborative and multidisciplinary, Louis G. Pol has made significant contributions in demography, marketing research, health care policy research, and academic administration. He has been a friend to Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, especially to members of its faculty of management and economics and to its students who have sought graduate education in the United States.

The successful dean of a college in a modern university must have many skills. For the faculty of the college the dean must have a deep understanding of the demands they face in research and teaching performance. A dean must have the ability to effectively manage political, human resource and budgetary challenges. A dean must also be able to win the support of the college's constituencies – particularly alumni, parents and community leaders. Most importantly, a dean must meet the challenges of leadership while always being concerned about providing an effective educational experience for students. Professor Louis G. Pol has been exemplar as dean of the College of Business Administration at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He is well regarded. His advice is sought by many. His achievements in academic research are distinguished.

In the United States, the pursuit of private dollars for the support of colleges has largely been the province of independent

non-profit institutions. Publicly supported state universities have only recently pursued private funding support. Where private fund raising has been successfully engaged in by public universities it has been limited to the major research universities and the central land-grant universities. The rise of municipal universities, like the University of Nebraska at Omaha, is a fairly recent phenomenon and any success recorded by these municipal sited universities in raising support from private donors is more recent still. Dean Pol has been at the forefront of such efforts. As dean of the College of Business Administration at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Professor Pol saw constructed a 121,000 square foot (11334.17m²) facility financed completely with privately donated money. In addition, he oversaw a fundraising campaign that secured enough additional private dollars to endow funds that generate income to provide resources for faculty research and for faculty and staff professional development.

When construction of Mammel Hall (named after donors Carl and Joyce Mammel) was completed in 2010 it was awarded the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold certification by the U.S. Green Building Council for its energy, soil and environmental conservation design. It was the first LEED certified academic building on any of the four campuses of the University of Nebraska system. That achievement was specifically attributable to the leadership of

Dean Pol. His leadership springs from a broad societal understanding that supersedes the discipline of marketing and that is rooted in the sensibilities of the twenty-first century. Mammel Hall is designed with wall and floor finishes that reminds of one of the corporate offices in Silicon Valley. Its ambiance includes two signature pieces by Jun Kaneko, four additional signature pieces by Fletcher Benton as well as paintings and sculptures by students and graduates of the University of Nebraska at Omaha. The student art pieces were purchased with funds from the building art budget, indicating Dean Pol's commitment to supporting the career aspirations of all students.

Professor Pol earned his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees from North Texas State University (now University of North Texas) in 1971 and 1973 respectively. He earned the Doctor of Philosophy degree at Florida State University in 1978. His areas of study were demography, applied statistics and research methodology.

He joined the faculty of Memphis State University in 1978 as an assistant professor of sociology. He was promoted to associate professor in 1983 and was given a joint appointment with the Department of Marketing, in recognition of his expanded research interests, applying demography to marketing problems. In 1984 he joined the marketing faculty at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He was promoted to professor

of marketing in 1987. He moved to Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida, where he was associate professor in the Roy E. Crummer Graduate School of Business. He returned to the College of Business Administration at the University of Nebraska at Omaha in 1990 as professor of marketing. In 2000 he was made associate dean of the College of Business Administration. In 2003, he was named dean of the College and continues to hold that position today.

Between these assignments, Professor Pol demonstrated an expanding interest in international affairs. He served as a visiting research fellow at the University of Ulster in Jordanstown, Northern Ireland in the Fall of 1992 and as a visiting professor at the University of Calabria in Italy in Spring 1996. During this period, from 1992 until 1994, Professor Pol made several trips to Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași as part of the University of Nebraska at Omaha project funded by the U.S. Information Agency. He assisted with business school program development, supervised research teams and lectured on research methods and marketing. He supported graduate assistantships that enabled students of Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași to study at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, earning the Master of Business Administration or the Master of Arts in Economics degree.

Following his work at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Professor Pol was a co-principal investigator of a Eurasia

Foundation project to assist the Academy of Economic Studies in Chisinau, Moldova in creating a small business development center program. The program established offices throughout Moldova and introduced academic encouragement of entrepreneurial ventures. He traveled to Moldova frequently in the period 1994 – 1997 to assist in program development. This effort included assistance to the Academy of Economic Studies in introducing demand market economics to the curriculum. Professor Pol continued his collaborations with faculty at both Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași and the Academy of Economic Studies in Chisinau well after accepting broader responsibilities at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. His most recent visit to Chisinau was in 2017.

Professor Pol also engaged with other countries in a broad embrace of international studies. These included direction of four projects for Executive MBA students in 1991, 1992, 1998 and 1999. These students conducted on-site research for Omaha-based corporate and community organization sponsors in United Kingdom, Spain, Argentina, Mexico, Chile, France, Germany and Italy. In 1998 and 1999 Professor Pol conducted a two-day seminar on market research and the business environment for the Turkish – American Business Association in Istanbul, Turkey. In 2001, he conducted a one-day seminar on health-care marketing for MGB, Inc. in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Dean Pol has demonstrated broad interest in international topics. Among his published papers are: "Health Care in the United Kingdom and the United States: Heading in Opposite Directions?" *Public Money & Management* 15(4):55-60, 1995 (with Patrick Butler); "The Economic Status of Women in Romania," pp. 43-58 in *Women in the Age of Economic Transformation*. Steven Pressman (ed.) Routledge Press, 1994 (with Walter Bacon); "The International Research Experience: Executive MBA Distinctiveness," *Journal of Teaching in International Business* 7(1): 1-18, 1995 (with David M. Ambrose); "The Influence of Rural-Urban Migration on Migrants' Fertility in Korea, Mexico, and Cameroon," *Population Research and Policy Review* 12(1): 3-36, 1994 (with Bun Song Lee); and "The Effect of Marital Dissolution on Fertility in Cameroon," *Social Biology* 35: 293-306, 1989 (with Bun Song Lee). He is currently under contract to co-edit a book, *International Applied Demography* (Springer).

Since 2007 Professor Pol has served on the advisory committee for the Peking University China Center for Finance in Beijing. He also served, from 2007 to 2009, on the Panel on Business Demography for the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population. He has made numerous trips to China and India since 2004 to foster university partnerships.

Although his initial research focused primarily on applied demography in the interest of sociological research, Professor

Pol made a transition to the use of applied demography in market research and then, specifically to healthcare research. He has had 27 papers and book chapters published on healthcare related subjects.

He wrote, with Richard Thomas, *The Demography of Health and Healthcare*. It was first published in 1992 by Plenum Publishing Company and is now in its third edition. It was translated into Chinese and published by Peking University Press in 2005. He had previously authored, with Richard Thomas and Eric Berkowitz, *Healthcare Market Research* (Irwin Publishers, 1996), one of six books he has authored or co-authored.

Greenwood Press published *Demography for Business Decision Making* in 1997. His authorship of this text, again with Richard Thomas, demonstrated a further integration of his background in demography with business management. This is a separate use of the skills of demographic analysis than seen in the social analysis more common to sociology.

Other work in healthcare policy analysis was forthcoming. In *Brain and Spine Surgery in the Elderly*, published by Springer in 2017, his was the lead chapter, "Rapid Growth in the Elderly Population of the World." In the 2010 online publication *Population Health Metrics*, he contributed the chapter "Correlating Pharmaceutical Data with a National Health Survey as a Proxy for Estimating Rural Population

Health.” He has had papers published on healthcare demography in the *Journal of Health and Human Services Administration*, *Health Care Management Review*, *Journal of Rural Health*, *Journal of Immigrant Health*, *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, *Journal of Family Practice*, *Marketing Health Services*, *Family Practice Management*, and *Journal of the American Dental Association*.

The familiarity Professor Pol has with healthcare management issues assisted him in developing joint projects for the College of Business Administration at the University of Nebraska at Omaha with initiatives of the University of Nebraska Medical Center (also located in Omaha). These include programs that enable students working on the Doctor of Medicine degree at the University of Nebraska Medical Center to also earn a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Joint programs have also been developed with the College of Public Health and the College of Pharmacy at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

Professor Pol’s research in the mainstream of topics in sociology and marketing produced frequent journal articles for *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *Industrial Marketing Management*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, *Population Research and Policy Review*, and others.

Some of his articles apply demographics to marketing of healthcare services. Others are on more traditional business marketing problems, especially in retail marketing. These have included advice to both academic and business researchers on data collection and comparisons of dissimilar populations. Professor Pol has also maintained an interest in rural populations, writing both on rural healthcare and rural business marketing. Early, as a professor at the University of Nebraska at Omaha he helped the Nebraska Business Development Center (Nebraska's small business development center) in marketing lectures for and student research for rural retail businesses in Nebraska. In the projects both at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași and at the Academy of Economic Studies in Chisinau, Professor Pol applied his knowledge of the small business development center program to program development for Romania and Moldova. As dean of the College of Business Administration at the University of Nebraska at Omaha he has been a strong advocate of the programs of the Nebraska Business Development Center. The programs in small business development, government procurement assistance, environmental and energy reduction assistance, and in operations management of the Nebraska Business Development Center resulted in almost \$400 million of economic impact on the State of Nebraska in 2016. Through its programs, the Nebraska Business Development Center brings more than \$2

million in federal grants to the College of Business Administration at the University of Nebraska at Omaha annually. Dean Pol has encouraged this program and efforts by faculty to increase research and service grants from agencies of the United States federal government and non-governmental organizations. They benefit faculty, Nebraska communities, and provide an important resource for funding of graduate assistantships for students in the Master of Business Administration, Master of Accounting and Master of Arts in Economics programs.

In his tenure as dean, Professor Pol has championed the Center for Collaboration Science. The Center was founded in 2006 as a gift from Omaha entrepreneur Steven Wild. It draws from the work of professors across six colleges at the University of Nebraska at Omaha: the College of Business Administration; the College of Arts and Sciences; the College of Public Affairs and Community Service; the College of Communications, Fine Arts and Media; the College of Education; and the College of Information Science and Technology. Dean Pol planned space for the Center within Mammel Hall, where it has been housed since 2010. The Center conducts research on the theories of collaboration, uses evidence-based practices to solve collaboration problems for groups and organizations, and teaches courses that introduce students to the concepts of collaboration. In 2014, a behavioral research laboratory was

added to enable faculty and student researchers to extend that work. Among its major successes is the Strategic Leadership Fellow Program, which provides a graduate course of study for civilian employees of the United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM), which is located at Offutt Air Force Base near Omaha.

Within the College of Business Administration, Dean Pol relentlessly pursued the creation of an academic program in entrepreneurship. The Center for Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Franchising enables students to explore the possibility of self-fulfillment through the pursuit of their own ideas. In addition to its coursework in entrepreneurship and franchising, the Center for Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Franchising offers creative outlets for students to explore their own potential. The annual Maverick Business Plan Competition is an opportunity for students to have their business plans judged by experienced entrepreneurs. The Midwest Entrepreneurship Conference is an opportunity for students to gather for two days to hear from some of the most dynamic entrepreneurs in the United States. The Entrepreneurial Living Learning Community is a student housing facility that enables students who want to pursue entrepreneurship as a career to live together and learn together. Dean Pol also enabled the launch of Stedman's Café, a coffee and lunch bar in Mammel Hall that is run by students and staffed by students. There they learn the practical realities

of running a business. Steadman's Café is named after an alumnus of the College of Business Administration.

Throughout his career, Professor Pol has engaged with and contributed to many organizations and institutions that assure quality and integrity in his field. He has served on the editorial boards of academic journals, including *Population Research and Policy Review*, *Health Marketing Quarterly*, *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, *Journal of Professional Services Marketing*, and *Journal of Services Marketing*. He was book review editor for the *Journal of Healthcare Marketing* from 1993 to 1996.

A member of the Population Association of America, he was a board member of the Business Demography Interest Group from 1987 to 1992. In the Population Association of America, he also served on the Committee for Applied Demography. He has been active in the Southern Demographic Association, serving as vice president (1995-1997), president-elect (1997-1998), and President (1998-1999).

From 1993 to 2004 he served as a panel member for the National Institutes of Health study section and was panel chair from 1994 to 1998. This team reviews submissions to the National Institutes of Health for the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. SBIR is a federal program through which the eleven United States agencies with the largest research budgets set aside a portion of their budgets to contract

with small businesses. The program is a serious effort made by the United States government to encourage entrepreneurial innovation and to achieve results that would be difficult to obtain through research grants by large corporations and universities.

Professor Pol's research pursuits and international engagement has informed his approach to academic administration. He became the dean of the College of Business Administration at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, holding the John Becker chair, in March 2004. His tenure of more than 13 years in the position places him among the senior business college deans in America. Before taking the post, he served for three years as the associate dean of the College.

As dean, Professor Pol has led expansion of the UNO College of Business Administration in number of students, number of programs and number of faculty. At the same time, he improved the quality of the College's academic offer and the quality of its facilities. This was accomplished through an extraordinary fundraising campaign that he managed proactively (see "Effective Fundraising," pp. 115-135 in *Advanced Management for Deans*. Terri Friel (ed.), Charlotte NC: Information Age Publishing, Inc., 2016). The campaign raised \$34 million for the construction of a new building for the UNO College of Business Administration and more than \$20 million to endow a fund that generates earnings used to provide

resources for faculty research, to underwrite professional development experiences for both faculty and staff, and to generate scholarship support for students. Dean Pol also sought a special tuition premium for courses at the UNO College of Business Administration that built on precedent at other University of Nebraska professional schools. The additional funds from the tuition assessment enabled the addition of faculty with improved specialization of offer.

The College of Business Administration at the University of Nebraska at Omaha is fully accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business – International (AACSB). This is the most rigorous accrediting organization for collegiate business schools. The Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, the Master of Business Administration, and both the Bachelor of Science and the Master of Accounting degrees at the University of Nebraska at Omaha are all accredited by AACSB. Fewer than 200 business schools worldwide have this combination of accreditations. Dean Pol is a regular participant in meetings of his peers with AACSB and has served on many review teams inspecting accreditation at other AACSB member schools.

This combination of experience and success in advancing a business school and outstanding achievement in academic and applied research distinguishes Professor Pol among his peers.

He has become a trusted advisor and mentor to many who aspire to academic leadership positions.

Today, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași is exceptionally honored to offer a token of its appreciation and gratitude – the title of Doctor Honoris Causa – to a distinguished scholar and academic administrator, to a leader in international collaboration, and to a friend.

The Laudatio Committee

President

Professor Mihaela ONOFREI, Ph.D., Authorized Signatory for the Rector, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași

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Professor Dinu AIRINEI, Ph.D., Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași

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Iași, October 27th 2017