and outreach of the University of Illinois, notably in security and global studies. Additionally, he was co-founder of the Program in Arms Control, Disarmament, and International Security at the University of Illinois and served as Director on two occasions (1983-86, 2010-16). He was also instrumental with colleagues in creating the university's European Union Center.

He lectured (in English and French) at universities, research centers, and governmental agencies in over 40 countries on all continents, notably in French-speaking Africa under the auspices of the US Department of State. He was also a fellow in global governance at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia (1999) and a visiting professor of political economy at Senshu University in Tokyo (2001). He lectured in China at Renmin, Beijing, and Fudan Universities (2006) and Nanyang University in Singapore (2007). He was appointed visiting professor of international security at Aoyama Gakuin University (Tokyo) in September 2007 and visiting professor of European-US relations at Hebrew University (Jerusalem) in October-November 2007.

Teaching was always a high priority for Dr. Kolodziej, to which several generations of his students will attest. He received the University of Illinois Political Science Department's Pi Sigma Alpha Award for excellence in undergraduate teaching, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teaching Award, and the all-campus Burlington Northern Foundation Faculty Achievement Award for teaching and scholarship. For several years he taught the introductory graduate course in international relations theory, and he shepherded many dissertations through to completion. He was especially proud of the students he mentored who went on to distinguished careers at other universities.

Ed loved jogging and tennis (played with more zeal than skill). He read avidly and widely, travelled, visited art museums around the world, and actively attended plays and artistic performances. He also enjoyed gardening and landscaping, capped by becoming a master gardener.

Ed's devotion to his family defined and directed his personal and professional lives. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 63 years, Antje Heberle Tonnies Kolodziej, his parents, Albert and Anna Chudzik Kolodziej, his oldest son, Peter Alexander, loving sister, Evelyn Wegrzyn, and a cherished friend and mentor, Alba Biagini.

Surviving are his three sons, their wives, and nine grandchildren: Andrew and Jeanette Jacobson Kolodziej, Winchester, MA (Zachary, Aiden); Matthew Kolodziej and Dana Richardson-ex/Rachel Beamer, Akron OH (Alexander, Charles, Peter); Daniel and Shanon Trygstad Kolodziej, Los Angeles CA (Alexandra, Katarina), and his son Peter's children Colin Kolodziej. Cincinnati, OH and Quinn Kolodziej, Champaign, IL.

—Jeanie Bukowski, Bradley University, and Paul F. Diehl, Independent Scholar

Robert M. Stein

Robert M. Stein, the Lena Gohlman Fox Professor of Political Science at Rice University, passed away on July 18, 2025, after a brief battle with cancer. He was 75 years old. A faculty member at Rice University for 46 years, Bob remained actively engaged in research, teaching, and public service through his final semester, retiring on June 30, 2025, just weeks before his death.

Bob's scholarship and engaging personality had a significant impact across our profession. Bob's unlimited curiosity and hard work led to a diverse and impressive academic record. This "In Memoriam" attempts to highlight a few areas that stand out among his most significant contributions, as well as his countless contributions to his students, Rice, and the community. It is a big task.

Bob was an accomplished and prolific scholar, publishing close to 100 journal articles, book chapters, and three books over his distinguished career. As a testament to his collaborative nature, he published research with over 40 different scholars across multiple subfields of political science—from voting behavior and election administration to urban politics, federalism and intergovernmental relations, emergency preparedness, and public service delivery. His work consistently bridged the academic and applied worlds, with research that informed policy and practice while advancing theoretical understanding.

Bob was at the forefront of studying how the mechanics of voting—where, when, and how people cast their ballots—shapes democratic participation. His research on early voting, vote centers, and vote-by-mail challenged conventional wisdom and provided empirical evidence that informed election policy across the country. In 2006, Bob was part of the bipartisan Carter-Baker Commission on Elections. The commission report "Building Confidence in US Elections" stressed the important role of elections in the nation's democracy and made a series of recommendations that inform how we vote today. His 2008 article in the *Journal of Politics* with Greg Vonnahme, "Engaging the Unengaged Voter: Vote Centers and Voter Turnout," demonstrated that Election Day vote centers could increase participation, particularly among less engaged voters. This line of research, funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts and the National Science Foundation, had immediate practical impact, with jurisdictions across the country adopting vote center models based on his findings.

Bob's work on convenience voting methods revealed important insights about voter behavior. In a series of articles with co-authors, he documented that voters often chose less convenient methods of voting than those available to them—an "anomaly" that challenged assumptions about how people make decisions about participation. His research consistently demonstrated that election administration matters, and that seemingly technical decisions about polling places, ballot design, and voting technology have profound implications for democratic equality.

Beyond election administration, Bob made foundational contributions to the study of federalism and intergovernmental relations. His book with Kenneth Bickers, *Perpetuating the Pork Barrel: Policy Subsystems and American Democracy* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), provided a sophisticated analysis of how federal grant programs create and sustain political coalitions. The book earned the special book award from the Urban Politics and Policy Section of the American Political Science Association.

His first book, *Urban Alternatives: Public and Private Mar-*

© AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION 2026

https://doi.org/10.1017/psj.2026.10167 Published online by Cambridge University Press

kets in the Provision of Local Services (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990), examined how local governments choose between public provision and private contracting for municipal services, advancing our understanding of urban governance. It won the Special Book Award for Best Book on Urban Policy at the 1991 APSA Annual Meeting from the Urban Politics and Policy Section.. This book was the product of his research fellowship at the Workshop in Political Theory and Public Policy.

Bob was a pioneer in applying political science methods to emergency management. Following Hurricane Ike in 2008 and continuing through Hurricane Harvey in 2017, he led interdisciplinary research teams—working with engineers, computer scientists, and emergency managers—to understand evacuation behavior, risk perception, and infrastructure resilience. This research, funded by multiple NSF grants totaling over $2 million, produced tools that Houston and other cities used to improve emergency preparedness. His willingness to work across disciplinary boundaries and to engage directly with practitioners exemplified his belief that scholarship should serve the public good.

Throughout his career, Bob published in the discipline's top journals, including the *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, and *Journal of Politics*. He earned the Best Paper Award from APSA's Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations Section in 2004, and the Outstanding Reviewer Award from *Political Research Quarterly* in 2010. Yet Bob was equally proud of his applied work—consulting reports for cities, testimony in voting rights cases, and analyses that informed real-world decisions.

Bob dedicated much of himself to building institutions to make Rice University and the broader Houston community better.

At Rice, Bob served in key leadership roles during his 46-year tenure. He chaired the Department of Political Science twice (1984-1986 and 1994-1995) and served as dean of the School of Social Sciences for a decade (1996-2006). As dean, he strengthened the social sciences at Rice, recruiting outstanding faculty and creating new programs. He was instrumental in developing Rice's undergraduate policy studies major, which he directed from 1987 to 1995, providing students with rigorous training in policy analysis combined with practical experience.

Perhaps Bob's most lasting institutional contribution at Rice was founding the Center for Civic Engagement in 2007, which he directed until 2021. The center grew out of Rice's accreditation process in the early 2000s. As dean of social sciences at the time, Bob helped shape the university's Quality Enhancement Plan, which called for more hands-on, experiential learning. The Center for Civic Engagement—now the Center for Civic Leadership—brought that vision to life, embedding civic learning into the undergraduate curriculum and creating partnerships between Rice students and Houston's civic institutions. To honor Bob and continue his legacy, the university recently established the Robert M. "Bob" Stein Fund for Social Policy Research at Rice. The fund will be used to support undergraduate research in public policy.

Bob's vision for civic engagement was not about service alone, but about creating opportunities for students to apply their learning to real community challenges while contributing to the public good. Under his leadership, the center developed programs that sent students into city agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community groups to conduct research, analyze policy, and help solve problems. These were not symbolic gestures but substantive partnerships that produced real value for Houston while giving students invaluable experience.

In one of his final appointments, Bob was named co-director of Rice's new Center for Voting, a multidisciplinary initiative focused on improving election administration and expanding access to the democratic process. True to form, he was actively planning the center's agenda and recruiting collaborators until his final weeks.

Bob also served the discipline through professional leadership. He was president of the Urban Politics Subsection of the American Political Science Association (1999-2000) and president of the Southwestern Political Science Association (1998). He served on the editorial boards of the *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Politics*, and *Social Science Quarterly*, among others. For decades, he mentored junior scholars, reviewed countless manuscripts and grant proposals, and worked to strengthen the infrastructure of political science.

Finally, Bob was a founding member of the Election Science, Reform, and Administration Conference. The ESRA conference brings academics from multiple disciplines and election officials together to study the quality of elections. The ESRA recently created the Robert M. Stein Prize in Research Excellence. It will be given at the annual Election Science, Reform, and Administration conference for the best poster presentation.

Bob approached teaching and mentorship with the same energy, enthusiasm, and commitment that characterized all his work. He received Rice's George R. Brown Award for Superior Teaching twice (1987 and 1998)—a rare honor that reflected his impact in the classroom. He also received the Outstanding Mentor of Women in Political Science Award from the Women's Caucus of the American Political Science Association in 1996.

Bob supervised numerous doctoral dissertations during his career, on topics ranging from voting behavior to emergency management to media and politics. Many of his former students are now tenured professors at universities across the country; others work in research organizations, government agencies, and nonprofit institutions. What unified his advising was his genuine investment in his students' success—not just in completing their degrees, but in launching meaningful careers.

For those lucky enough to work with Bob at the graduate level, his impact went well beyond the professional. His keen insights, unrivaled work ethic, and generosity with time shaped students' thinking, work habits, and the research they produced. But it was more than that. Bob's intellectual curiosity and enthusiasm for developing and testing new research questions modeled for his students that working in a profession centered around research and teaching in social sciences–is a joy and privilege, and he made it fun. Working with Bob was an adventure that forged deep bonds among students. Some of those bonds began with phrases like, "Here's what you need to know if you are going to work with Bob," followed by tips about his quirks and habits—including his tendency to change into cycling clothes during meetings, yelling through the wall of his conference room while stripping down to his biking gear.

Even now, years and decades later, his former students gather at conferences and dinners are populated with Bob stories and Bob-isms. They invoke his voice: "It's a Tiebout model!"

© AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION 2026

https://doi.org/10.1017/psj.2026.10167 Published online by Cambridge University Press

They remember him taking them out to lunch at his favorite places in Rice Village, bringing his suitcase bike to conferences, and his infectious laugh. The legend and lore of Bob Stein became the foundation for deep friendships and professional relationships among his students. Bob's orientation toward life and work made his students into true academic siblings.

Perhaps most importantly, Bob taught his students that mentoring is for life. Even as his former students advanced in their careers—earning tenure, taking on leadership roles, moving to new institutions—Bob remained available. He would read drafts, talk through methodological challenges, provide career advice, and write letters. Former students could always call Bob, knowing he would pick up the phone. That commitment created a network of scholars who pay it forward because Bob taught them what mentorship really means.

Bob's teaching extended well beyond the classroom and his advisees. For over 40 years, he served as the political analyst for Houston's KHOU-TV, providing election analysis and political commentary. He was a go-to resource for journalists covering Houston, Texas, and national politics. His sharp, data-driven analysis regularly appeared on local newscasts as well as outlets including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and NPR, making him one of the most trusted political voices in the region. Bob believed that political scientists have an obligation to share their expertise with the public, and he modeled that commitment throughout his career.

Bob saw his role as both teacher and citizen. He believed that political scientists should not just study democracy, but actively participate in strengthening it. Throughout his career, he served as a consultant on election administration to Harris County, Texas; Albuquerque, New Mexico; the Colorado County Clerks Association; and numerous other jurisdictions. He provided expert testimony in voting rights cases in Montana, South Dakota, Georgia, Texas, and Pennsylvania, lending his expertise to ensure that election laws and practices protected citizens' right to vote.

A lifelong cyclist, Bob made headlines in 2024 after speaking at a Houston City Council meeting about the removal of a protected bike lane near his home. Framing his remarks around public safety rather than cycling advocacy, his comments went viral and helped stall additional removals. As he noted in a recent interview, "That experience reminded me that sometimes the best lesson is to show up and speak out." It was a lesson he taught his students not just through words, but through action. In 2025, just months before his death, Bob received Rice's Y. Ping Sun Award for Outstanding Community Engagement, honoring his lifelong commitment to public service.

Born in New York City in 1950, Bob earned his bachelor's degree from Ohio Wesleyan University in 1972 and both his master's (1974) and doctoral degrees (1977) from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He briefly taught at the University of Georgia before joining the Rice faculty in 1979 at the age of 29.

Bob is survived by his wife, Marty; their daughters, Nora and Annie; and five grandchildren.

Bob Stein embodied what it means to be a scholar-citizen. He believed that universities exist not just to create knowledge but to serve society, and he spent his entire career putting that belief into practice. He showed generations of students that political science can make democracy work better—that research can inform wiser policies, that teaching can inspire civic engagement, and that scholars have an obligation to contribute to the communities in which they live.

—Johanna Dunaway, Syracuse University,
Kevin Arceneaux, Sciences Po,
Greg Vonnahme, University of Missouri-Kansas City,
*and Stephanie Post, Rice University** ■

*Retired Rice University Administrator

To submit to the In Memoriam section of *Political Science Today*, please email publications@apsanet.org.

© AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION 2026

https://doi.org/10.1017/psj.2026.10167 Published online by Cambridge University Press