

YEAR OF AWARD: 2003

Patricia H. Werhane

Professor Emeritus,
former Ruffin Professor of Business Ethics

Senior Fellow for the Olsson Center
for Applied Ethics at the
Darden School of Business

Adjunct Teaching Professor of Business
Administration, Business Administration,
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign,
2016 to present

Visiting Scholar, Opus School of Business,
University of St Thomas, 2014 to present

Years of service at UVA: 1993-2009



A founder of the field of business ethics, **Patricia Werhane** remains a force and one of the most distinguished scholars of the field, not only at the Darden School of Business but around the world. Werhane is the founder and former editor-in-chief of *Business Ethics Quarterly*, the leading

journal of business ethics, and was a founding member and past president of the Society for Business Ethics.

In her time at UVA, she had a significant impact on the Darden School of Business through her tireless work on institutional issues. She worked with colleagues to found the PhD program in business ethics, and has long been a stronger advocate for and supporter of doctoral students and emerging scholars. She co-directed the Olsson Center for Applied Ethics, developed multiple elective courses, and was active with the Graduate Women in Business (GWIB) organization. When she arrived at Darden, she joined a faculty that had no tenured women faculty members. Her work was crucial to the cultural change that occurred during her time at

Darden: when she retired the number of women on faculty had tripled and six of them were tenured.

She had been a Rockefeller Fellow at Dartmouth College, a visiting scholar at Cambridge University, and on the faculty of Loyola University for 18 years before joining the Darden School of Business in 1993. While at UVA, she was chair of the Faculty Senate and co-chair of the Envision Integrity initiative, which sought to integrate honor and ethics more fully into University life. From 2003-2014, she was Wicklander Chair of Business Ethics in the Kellstadt School of Management at DePaul University, during which time she was also managing director for the Institute for Business and Professional Ethics.

She is the author of *Moral Imagination and Management Decision-Making* (Oxford University Press, 1999), which points the way to exemplary moral corporate leadership, and co-author of *Alleviating Poverty Through Profitable Partnerships: Globalization, Markets, and Economic Well-Being* (Routledge, 2009). She is co-producer of a documentary television series on global poverty alleviation, “Big Questions,” and currently working on a project filming all the founders of business ethics and the very first corporate ethics and compliance officers.

She is still teaching as an adjunct teaching professor of business administration and a Center for Professional Responsibility Faculty Fellow at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She also serves as a visiting scholar at the University of St. Thomas.

WHY DID YOU COME TO UVA?

I came to UVA **A**) because it’s a wonderful school, and **B**) I got a job offer, and **C**) because there was only one senior woman at the Darden School of Business. And there were 22 chaired professors out of 60, and not one was a woman. I thought, well, I guess I’ll go and see what I can do. And actually, one woman came up to me and asked me, why are you coming here? This is a hornet’s nest of male-dominated, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. So then I thought, well, I’m glad I came.

I retired in 2009; my last few years at UVA overlapped with another position in Chicago. I had to move back to Chicago because I had a daughter there who was very ill. But I didn’t want to leave the University of Virginia, so I commuted back and forth.

HOW HAS UVA CHANGED IN THE YEARS SINCE YOU BEGAN WORKING HERE?

I worked primarily in the business school, which did change. We had a new Dean who was hired in 1993, Dean Leo I. Higdon, Jr., who said, we’re going to hire senior women, which he did deliberately and which I helped him do. He only brought in women candidates, and it’s amazing what great women you can find when you go out and look, which we don’t always do, I’m sorry to say. Then he said, we’re going to hire scholars of color and scholars from other countries. For example, India produces the best management scholars in the world. Period. Every business school in the world has a few Indian scholars, because they’re just the best, better than any of us. But we had none. Zero when I came. That was very unusual; even in 1993, that was extraordinarily unusual. We set about to hire some very outstanding scholars who also diversified the faculty. That was, I think, a big improvement. It was not without pushback, but it slowly started to change the environment at the business school.

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In Her Words | Patricia H. Werhane

I think the whole university has worked harder on diversity. I don't think they've always succeeded, and all academia is still short on this frankly. It takes concentrated effort like the effort of Dean Higdon. That was a challenge. We've slipped back a bit, I think. The whole university is focused more on that now. They were not, *not* diverse. They just didn't think about it. It just didn't cross their minds. And then it began to cross their minds, they became aware of it, and they got better.

HOW DO YOU THINK DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF YOUR IDENTITY, INCLUDING BEING A WOMAN, IMPACTED HOW PEOPLE RESPONDED TO YOU IN YOUR POSITION?

You have to think of yourself as a leader, period, and you have the same obligations, whether you're a man or a woman to lead from the middle to bring in everyone as participants, not you as the boss and they as the followers.

One of the reasons that I was able to have staying power in my position, I would say, is that I had a very strong vitae and most of my colleagues couldn't beat that. I had published more than all but two other faculty members, one of whom had hired me. I was frankly academically stronger. In the beginning, as a woman, you had to be better and smarter than the men in the room to get these jobs.

WHAT SUPPORTS HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE FOR YOU?

I had to make up my own support. Some women look for having mentors. I didn't have any mentors, so I just mentored myself. I think that's one of the things one still has to do. If you can't find a mentor, can't find someone who is sympathetic, someone you can talk to, I think you mentor yourself. That makes you makes you strong, at least it did for me.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A WOMAN IN A SIMILAR POSITION TODAY?

I remember when we brought in a woman from business who talked about hiring and she discussed having a reverse mentor. She did exactly everything her previous boss did not do. She just turned it all around. That was her advice. When things go bad, thinking that the way I can do better than this is, I'm going to do it differently. She was a really good supporter for the Darden women. The enrollment of women increased every year I was there, and still does. We created a course on women leaders to discuss things that we thought we needed to discuss.

WHAT DOES LEADERSHIP, ESPECIALLY WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP, MEAN TO YOU?

I don't think there's a difference between men and women leading. And I think to try to make that a difference is wrong. I think instead you have to think of yourself as a leader, period, and you have the same obligations, whether you're a man or a woman to lead from the middle to bring in everyone as participants, not you as the boss and they as the followers. That is often linked to feminism, but good male leaders do that, too. I don't like the distinction. Although we think women are more caring, they're not always more caring. Sometimes they try to emulate what they think is a male leader, but that can be harmful. I think that that distinction really skews the conversation quite a bit.

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE REMEMBERED? WHAT LEGACY ARE YOU LEAVING THAT YOU ARE MOST PROUD OF?

I worked on a lot of aspects of applied ethics, but my most significant work is on what I call the idea of moral imagination, that is, how do you think differently? Because we tend to just follow our old habits. And the idea is, how do we, individuals, companies, organizations, get out of that box? How do you look at the world from another point of view? Because the world is changing. We've got to be able to look at it differently. Look at the Black Lives Matter movement and look at the new understanding of LGBTQ identities. It is a whole revolution, and if we don't look at the world and try to figure out where they're going, they're going without us. Commerce has to be versatile and able to be creative. If you are not able to get out of your old box, you're not going to be a leader and you're probably going to fail. My biggest contribution is to help people, including leaders, look at the world through new lenses.



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