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Eugene Grant, pioneer in quality control, dies at 99

STANFORD -- Eugene L. Grant, a founder of the fields of engineering economics, statistical quality control and industrial engineering, died July 9 after a short illness. He was 99.

Grant, professor emeritus of economics of engineering in the department of industrial engineering, died at Channi House in Palo Alto, where he had lived since 1966.

Grant was a pioneer in applying economics to engineering. His work on statistical quality control was used in training programs to improve production in World War II industrial plants. His textbooks, *Engineering Economy*, first published in the early 1930s, and *Statistical Quality Control*, first published in 1946, are both still in use today, with current editions co-authored by Richard Leavenworth.

"His book was the first textbook on quality control," said Jim Jucker, chair of the department of industrial engineering. "It is fascinating, in light of the intense interest in quality control [today], to go back and read [that] book. What it finds is that Gene Grant knew in 1946 what most of U.S. industry discovered 40 years later."

Grant was born Feb. 15, 1897 in Chicago, and graduated from Hyde Park High School there. He received his bachelor of science degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1917 and his civil engineering degree from Wisconsin in 1919. In the meantime, he also served in the Navy during World War I, worked with the U.S. Geological Survey in various projects in the western United States, and, beginning in 1920, taught civil engineering and industrial engineering at Montana State College in Bozeman.

He joined Stanford's department of civil engineering in 1929 and served as its chair from 1947 to 1956. He co-founded the department of industrial engineering with Professor Grant Ireson and Provost Fred Terman in 1955, and remained as one of its emeritus members after his retirement in 1962.

He was a member of the National Academy of Engineering and a founding member of the American Society for Quality Control, which granted him its top award, the Shewhart Medal, and also issued a Eugene Grant Award in his honor. He was also a fellow of the American Statistical Association and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Grant's first wife, the former Mildred Livingston, died in 1980; their only daughter, Nancy Chamberlain, died with her husband and four sons in an airline crash in 1961. In 1985, Grant married his cousin, the former Dorothy Northrup, who died in 1989.

Grant is survived by his stepson, Robert Northrup of Lake Luzern, NY. Grant will be buried in Bozeman. In accordance with his wishes, there will be no memorial service.

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