

Terrence Fitzmorris honored for longtime service to SoPA

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Mike Kuczynski (left) delivers words of admiration to his longtime friend and colleague Terrence Fitzmorris (center) as Fitzmorris' wife Mary looks on. (Photo by Don Cooper)

Friends, colleagues, and former students of Terrence Fitzmorris paid homage to the beloved Tulane University scholar during an intimate retirement celebration held at the Tulane School of Professional Advancement (Tulane SoPA) on Thursday, Sept. 23.

[\[View photos from the event.\]](#)

Since the 1980s Fitzmorris has been a presence in Tulane's University College, known today as Tulane SoPA. He served previously as the Associate Dean of University College and a Professor of Louisiana history. In retirement, he leaves behind a legacy of scholarship, but also of extraordinary compassion and care for students.

“He has always been unfailingly optimistic.”

— Mike Kuczynski, Tulane Professor of English

Richard Exnicios, who first met Fitzmorris during his early role as an adviser, said that Fitzmorris changed the lives of many students by helping them when others had given up.

“I met Dr. Fitzmorris in 1987 when I was told by another division at Tulane that I probably would not be able to finish,” recalled Exnicios. “I walked over to University College and I met Dr. Fitzmorris who found a way for me to stay. He did that for countless university college students, who didn't quite fit the Tulane process. He found a way for us to finish.”

Longtime colleague [Mike Kuczynski](#), spoke about his fond memories working with Fitzmorris for more than three decades. “He has always been unfailingly optimistic,” recalled Kuczynski. “Over many years I've worked with him... I found him to be someone whose judgment was superb and whose trustworthiness was the proverbial pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.”

Current Tulane SoPA Dean, [Suri Duitch](#) credited Fitzmorris with being “the building block for how the school moved forward” and offered insight into his invaluable assistance with the transition to her administration.

“There was always a culture of care in the school,” said Duitch. “I was well-aware that this in many ways originated with Terrence, who set a tone with his kindness, decency, and humility.”

Fitzmorris was gifted a two-year membership through the Historic New Orleans Collection to more than 1,000 historic societies throughout the United States. His

wife Mary was also in attendance.