



Andrew Mark Isserman

(1947-2010)

Andrew Isserman died unexpectedly on November 4, 2010 of an apparent heart attack after engaging in basketball game in preparation for a faculty-graduate student challenge match. At the University of Illinois, Andy was Professor of Regional Economics, Planning and Public Policy with primary appointments in the departments of Agricultural and Consumer Economics and Urban and Regional Planning and affiliate appointments in the Institute of Government and Public Affairs and the Department of Geography.

After completing his doctoral work at the University of Pennsylvania (David Boyce was his advisor), he moved to Illinois for the first of two appointments at that institution. He was an Assistant Professor in both Urban and Regional Planning and Economics, receiving promotion to Associate Professor in 1977. In 1981, he joined the faculty of the University of Iowa as an Associate Professor of Planning, Geography and Economics; he was promoted to Professor in 1984. A year later, he moved to West Virginia University where he directed the Regional Research Institute upon William Miernyk's retirement. At West Virginia, he also held appointments in Economics and Geography and for eight months he served as Interim Assistant Provost for International Affairs. He remained at WVU until 1998 when he returned to Illinois with a small detour to serve as Research Director of the Public Policy Institute of California. From 2002-2004, he was the head of the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics at Illinois.

Andy was a passionate scholar, whether it was research, teaching, advising students, serving on committees, or helping to promote regional science; his energy level was always high. He loved to walk around campus engaged in conversation and was often reluctant to leave a meeting or a classroom. He was an innovative teacher, who emphasized learning-by-doing and used a variety of approaches to engaging students with material. In addition to more standard courses in urban and regional analysis, economic impact analysis, and federal program analysis, he conducted a film and writing course on regional cultures and economies. His take was that whether it was film, narrative, quantitative articles or even personal experiences, effective story telling was a critical component to understand how systems, especially the regional economy, worked.

Andy was the founding editor of the *International Regional Science Review* and was forever proselytizing for innovative articles and contributions during the twenty years (1976-1996) he

served in this position. His experiences in this role were translated into two doctoral courses in regional development that helped build students' research and writing skills. His teaching was recognized over many years as among the University's best.

His research on federal policy, often conducted with graduate students, has contributed to changes in several federal programs. He conducted applied research for the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Energy, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, and Transportation. He has been scholar-in-residence or fellow at the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Appalachian Regional Commission, and Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

He pioneered methods for analyzing and forecasting economic and demographic change. Perhaps, some of the most cited work centers on his experimentation with matching regions in the search for ways to isolate the impacts of policies or programs. He is listed as one of the 50 faculty members with the greatest number of citations in urban and regional planning and among the 100 all-time intellectual leaders of regional science. He received awards or fellowships from the American Planning Association, American Statistical Association, National Council for Geographic Education, and Regional Science Association International. His activities in regional science were extensive. He served as President of the Southern Regional Science Association in 1991-1992. In 1999, he received the David Boyce Award for Service to Regional Science of the North American Regional Science Council, and in 2005 he was President of the North American Regional Science Council.

Obituary by Geoffrey J.D. Hewings, Director, Regional Economics Applications Laboratory, Interim Head, Department of Economics, University of Illinois.