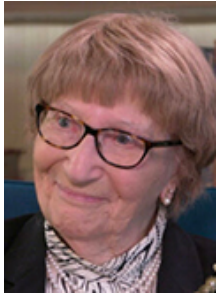


Anita Summers, Wharton School

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Anita Summers

Anita Arrow Summers, an emeritus professor of economics in the Wharton School and a leading expert in public policy, died on October 22 after a short illness. She was 98.

Born in Great Neck, Long Island, to immigrants from Romania, and raised in Manhattan, Dr. Summers was born in 1925. She earned her bachelor's degree at Hunter College in 1945 and a master's degree at the University of Chicago in 1947, then studied in a doctoral program at Columbia University. Early in her career, she held a position at John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil Co. After raising her three sons, Dr. Summers began teaching economics at Swarthmore College in 1967, and in 1971, she joined the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, heading its urban economics unit. There, she helped enforce the Community Reinvestment Act of 1977, which required banks to make loans available in poor communities. Despite facing and

overcoming misogyny in the workplace (chronicled in former Facebook executive Sheryl Sandberg's 2013 book, *Lean In*), Dr. Summers became a highly cited scholar who worked at universities around the world, served on numerous boards, and was a sought-after economic adviser to state and local governments.

In 1979, she came to the Wharton School as a research associate at the Samuel Zell and Robert Lurie Real Estate Center. In 1982, Dr. Summers became a professor of legal studies and, a year later, the founding chair of what is now known as the department of business economics and public policy. During the 1980s, Dr. Summers held a secondary position in the School of Nursing. She was active throughout the University: she served as the Wharton School's ombudsman, then as Penn's ombudsman from 2001 to 2003 (*Almanac* September 4, 2001 (<https://almanac.upenn.edu/archive/v48/n02/Summers.html>)). She also served on the provost's planning and budget committee from 1984 to 1990. After retiring from Penn in 1991, she continued to teach in Wharton's MBA program until 2005 and worked in Wharton's Dean's office until 2012.

"She was the best community builder I have ever known," said Joseph Gyourko, a real estate professor in Wharton and the current director of the Zell/Lurie Center. "She was not just talk; she did things. Others saw and emulated her, expanding her influence." "Dr. Summers was an intellectual giant," said Wharton Dean Erika James. "She never backed down, she never gave up, and she pushed for excellence in the work. We can all see a bit more clearly because we are standing on her shoulders."

Dr. Summers was an innovative and sought-after researcher. Her 1977 paper, "Do Schools Make a Difference?," first published in the *American Economic Review*, was the first to suggest that school-specific inputs are the best metric of individual schools' education quality, and colleagues lauded that paper as ahead of its time. She researched the economic changes taking place in southeastern Pennsylvania as it transitioned away from heavy industry, mainly shipbuilding, and wrote several books, including *Economic Development Within the Philadelphia Metropolitan Area* (1987), with Thomas F. Luce, and *Urban Change in the United States and Western Europe: Comparative Analysis and Policy* (1999), with two coauthors. "She pioneered the idea that Federal Reserve regional bank economists should work on local and regional issues," her son, Lawrence Summers, who served as secretary of the U.S. Department of the Treasury under President Bill Clinton, told the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

Dr. Summers is survived by her sons, Lawrence, John, and Richard; and seven grandchildren. Services were held on October 25 at Beth David Reform Congregation in Gladwyne.