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Chip Case to hold last lecture this Friday

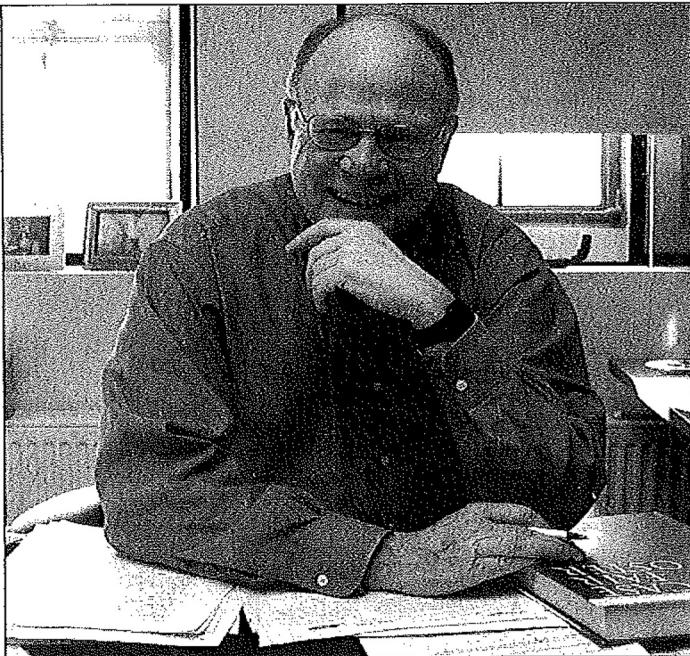
By VICTORIA PENG '11
News Editor

Karl E. "Chip" Case, the Katherine Coman and A. Barton Hepburn professor of Economics, will give his last lecture this Friday, Dec. 11, in Pendleton West 212 at 11:10 a.m. After teaching at the college for 33 years, Case will retire at the end of the academic year.

Case received his B.A. from Miami University in 1968 and Ph.D. in Economics from Harvard University in 1977. He served three years in the U.S. Army immediately after completing his undergraduate studies. Case's research has been in real estate, housing and public finance.

While he is internationally renowned as the "Case" in Standard and Poor's (S&P)/Case-Shiller Home Price Index, Chip Case is a professor, colleague and mentor who has profoundly affected the college community with his supportive and outgoing personality.

Case is respected by his colleagues for his contributions to economics and admired for adding vitality to the economics department. "He's a larger than life figure. It's hard to deny his presence anytime he's around," Phillip B. Levine, the Class of 1919 Professor and Chair of the Economics Department said. "Whether it's the country music blasting in his office or his whistling down the hallway or the slapping people on the back as he's walking by...if Chip is here you know it."



Briana Murphy '11, *Photography Editor*

Karl Case, known to the community as "Chip," is considered the most distinguished professor and colleague currently at the college.

Those who've known Case long enough to see the multi-dimensions of his life shared instances that provide comic relief for the rest of us. Stanford Calderwood Professor of Economics David Lindauer recalled when Case painted one side of his house each summer with as much sense of accomplishment after four years as he held after publishing an article. Case would mention that he was reading books to fix his washing machine, or offer to help his

friends with the great task of moving a piano based on his previous experience. "He would have been successful in anything and at any time in history," Lindauer said.

Lindauer and Case were both graduate students at Harvard University. He joked that part of Case's rise to success was due to his ability to perform with only four hours of sleep per night—thus getting in more work than the rest of his peers. Yet in all seriousness, Lindauer stated that Case demon-

strated the importance of caring about the institution through his exemplary efforts helping admissions, supporting athletics, speaking to college clubs all over the world and pushing his colleagues to teach the students and not just the curriculum. "The love and esteem he held, by professionals, colleagues and former students are unseen of and won't be seen by faculty in the department for many...many decades," Lindauer said.

The Harvard Kennedy School held a two-day symposium to honor Case and celebrate his accomplishments in Dec. 2007. "This [was] purely an academic event for people to discuss his contributions as a scholar," Levine said. Harvard economics professor Ed Glaeser and University of California, Berkeley economics professor John Quigley published a book this year, based on the conference, titled, "Housing Markets and the Economy: Risk, Regulation, and Policy: Essays in Honor of Karl E. Case." "This honor is almost unheard of for a person at a liberal arts institution," Lindauer said.

In addition to contributing to economics through his own research, Case has mentored a generation of scholars. Students observed that Case's impact on their lives stretched far beyond the limits of the classroom. When asked what he believes is his life accomplishment, Case replied without hesitation, "you guys." The witty professor erased the anticipated

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Case to retire at end of spring after 33 years of teaching

CASE, from Front Page

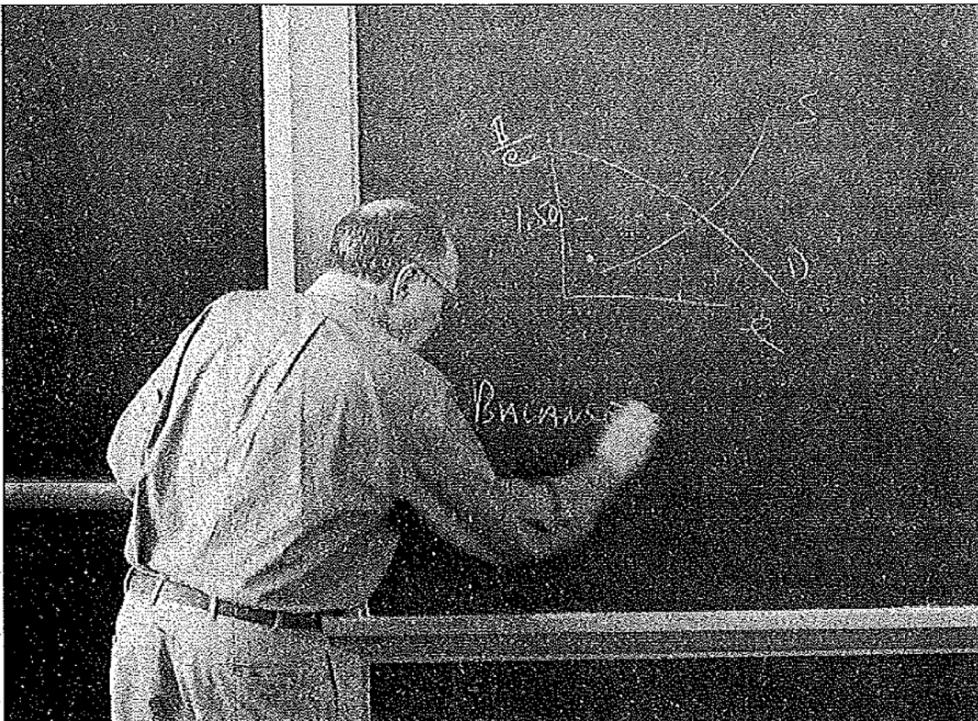
housing index answer and replaced it with a higher-yielding one—human capital.

"I try to get you educated, teach you some economics, get you a job, be on the phone when you need help when your employer is asking you hard questions...and I have 5500 of them!" he said about students being his product. He explained that his research, books and publications count towards his accomplishments, but that they are an aspect of teaching. "You could say my teaching is my product, [but] I look at my product as value added to your lives. And I think I've had a pretty successful career."

Case's legacy, however, will not be limited to the classroom. "He comes to cheer at sports games, brings his favorite psych-up music to class and amuses students, and takes time for individuals to talk about anything," Marie Watanabe '12 said. "I was always impressed by how much time he spends on talking to each student especially since he is a busy person."

Students find it exceptional for a professor to talk with them like he will be invested in it even after they graduate. "Chip is the reason why I'm here at Wellesley, why I stayed after I got here, and he is the reason why I have somewhere to go next semester," Alice Kate Cummings '10 said. Students also appreciate his easygoing nature. "He is the most vivacious and caring professor, who never allows for a dull moment in his class. He always knows how to cheer up his students," Lana Dweik '11 said.

There never seems to be even a short period of time when Case is not receiving a phone call, letter or visit from a former student. This was made certain when Olga Shurckov '01 became Assistant Professor of Economics last fall. Rising in the ranks from being Case's student to colleague, Shurckov recalled Case to be a "clear, but also [a] witty and funny [lecturer]," but also constantly challenging his students and pushing them to think outside the box. "I feel like I've gone full circle. He was my mentor, and now as his colleague, I'm con-



Briana Murphy '11, Photography Editor

Case has taught over a dozen different courses in the economics department.

stantly learning from him still," Shurckov said. She also mentioned Case's hospitality for students in need. "He hosts international students if they don't have anywhere to go for Thanksgiving or Christmas. He's door is always open," she said.

Many faculty members find Case's generosity to others throughout the years most admirable. Director of the Writing Program Ann Velenchik described Case as "generous and grateful." Formerly the Chair of the Economics Department, Velenchik admires his financial and emotional generosity to the community. She has watched him host international students in the fall when they arrive a few days before school started and even host some students after they graduated. She characterized him as the professor who has probably been to more weddings than any other faculty member. "If Chip

Case decides that you're in his life, that's it! You're in his life. There is no exit from having Chip Case in your life," Velenchik said. "That generosity is about really extending himself to others all the time."

Current students, who have worked with Case revealed that his dedication ceases to dwindle with time. "It's not very often that you meet someone [who is] so willing to help you and other people," Cummings said. She experienced Case's warmth on her Senior Night—the last volleyball home match of the season—when he handed her a poem he'd written, titled, "One of these days Alice!" "I remember being astonished one time I spoke with him...because he said, 'I owe that to you,' and I was bewildered that he could say he owed me anything because I owe him so much for all that he's done for me throughout my career at Wellesley,"

she said.

Case has always followed Division III sports. He said his passion for sports began when he got cut from the seventh-grade basketball team. But Case is a strong advocate of taking care of an aspect of the body not supplemented in lectures—going beyond focusing on the mind to maintaining a strong mind-body connection. "I think athletics is a big deal...it's good for the life of the place, it's good for the energy of the place," Case said. "It's fun for me, and I think it's good for education that athletics is taking a more prominent role. Not everybody thinks that, but I do." He is considered the most dedicated fan of the Wellesley Blue for consistently attending athletic events across the board throughout the years. "He genuinely loves and believes in Wellesley College and Division III athletics for women, and he will do almost anything to promote, support and help our programs," Dorothy Webb, Associate Professor and Head Volleyball Coach, said.

After the spring semester, Case plans to keep an office and sustain his presence on campus. He will mostly be missed in the classroom. "I would not be surprised if he was still at every basketball game, if he was still recruiting students, if he and [his wife] still have an international host student every fall," Velenchik said. Case explained that teaching a class is difficult with 40 to 60 students to get to know and teach each semester. "Giving a lecture twice a week may sound like a small task, until you try to do it," Case said.

For Case, retiring from active teaching means more time to see friends. He has always been a busy faculty member, but he is not at full capacity to do so many things at once as he was before. As for his timing to take the college's Retirement Incentive Package, Case noted the coincidence in leaving during the worst economic recession since the Great Depression. "I started in the fall of 1976, and it was during a recession...at the time [it was] the worst since the Great Depression. So it's kind of ironic."