Prof. Carolyn Barta was named the Meadows Foundation Distinguished Teaching Professor at the Meadows faculty meeting on May 20, 2011, where the following remarks were made. The remarks were repeated when Prof. Barta was recognized at the Meadows School of the Arts Diploma Presentation Ceremony, May 14, 2011. Thirty Meadows professors have been honored as Distinguished Teaching Professor since 1982-83. Prof. Barta is only the second journalism professor to receive the award.

Carolyn Barta

Before beginning a second career in teaching at SMU, Carolyn Barta was for 40 years a distinguished journalist for *The Dallas Morning News*. She was a state and national political reporter, worked on the editorial page staff and handled special projects. She was an integral part of a staff that took the paper to national prominence as one of the outstanding regional newspapers in the United States. She has written two books on Texas politics: *Perot and His People: Disrupting the Balance of Political Power*, published in 1993, and *Bill Clements: Texian to His Toenails*, published in 1996.

When she began working for *The Dallas Morning News* in the early 1960s, most women worked in what was referred to as the "Women's News" section. That was never Carolyn Barta's style, and she was in the vanguard of women in the newsroom. She went toe to toe with men reporters in covering politics, local, state and national affairs. In doing so, she began the mentoring of an entire generation of young women entering newsrooms all over Texas for the first time in the 1970s and 1980s.

Since 2003 she has taught writing and reporting skills classes in the Division of Journalism. These include basic reporting, editorial and opinion writing, political reporting and arts and entertainment. She was the 2010 winner of the Rotunda Outstanding Professor Award. She is known by all her students simply as "Barta," an acknowledgement of respect in journalism.

Professor Barta, through her long years covering politics, has maintained a close friendship with former President George Bush. In fact, she was able to secure the former president for one of his first campus appearances when he spoke to her reporting class in the Journalism Complex. Tweets and YouTube video were up immediately, and several Journalism faculty have pointed to the appearance as a turning point in helping students understand the power of social media. About her selection for the Meadows Distinguished Teaching Award, President Bush said: "I congratulate Carolyn Barta for winning this outstanding award. I've known Carolyn for many years. I admire her intellect. I appreciate her willingness to lend her talents to educate our next generation of journalists."

Several leaders from our Journalism graduating class were asked to comment on Professor Barta and her teaching.

Said one: "I can hardly think of anyone who has modeled the complete package of a teacher as well as Barta. She is demanding, yet encouraging; honest, yet tactful; accomplished, yet humble. She has made her students better journalists and better people. I speak for many others when I say that I am thankful that she has been such a supportive guide to me."

Said another: "The great thing about Barta is that she has so much experience in journalism and knows how to handle any situation. She knows where you can find the perfect source for your last interview, how to write a better lede and she also coaches you on how to land your dream internship. Plus, if you just want to talk she always makes time. Barta is the kind of professor whose relationship with students doesn't end at the end of the semester. When Barta is your teacher she'll continue to be your teacher for as long as you need. "

Said another: "Barta is a quality teacher, putting her students first in all she does. When you take her class, you learn the basics and then some."

And another had this to say: "Barta represents true excellence in teaching. Especially in journalism, it's important to be ethical at all times. Professor Barta emphasized this concept in class, but a lot of students take that lesson outside classroom walls and apply it to other aspects of their lives."