



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** John Jay College Community

**FROM:** Raj Singh  
AVP for Administration

**DATE:** May 27, 2020

**RE:** Passing of Dr. Raymond Pitt, Professor Emeritus of Sociology

We regret to announce the passing of Dr. Raymond Pitt, Professor Emeritus of Sociology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, the City University of New York. During several decades of teaching at John Jay, Dr. Pitt also served for a number of semesters as chairperson of the College's Department of Sociology.

In addition to being a respected teacher throughout his career, Dr. Pitt has been committed to the development of sensitive, humane policies and practices in the treatment of mental illness. Early in his career, Dr. Pitt served as Director of Research at Fountain House, an innovative organization focused on facilitating the adjustment of formerly hospitalized persons to life in the larger community.

At John Jay, Dr. Pitt led a team of faculty that developed and implemented training programs for police officers who are the first responders to crisis situations involving mentally ill persons. Recognizing the often life-and-death risk in police encounters with persons who are mentally ill, the programs developed by Dr. Pitt utilized recreations of actual police encounters with mentally ill individuals in order to encourage participating officers to explore the best, safest, and most effective practices.

In a related area, Dr. Pitt led a team of John Jay College faculty who developed and staffed a U.S. State Department program that was initiated to encourage developing nations to support democratically oriented law enforcement policies and practices. The John Jay portion of this program was called Human Dignity and the Police and involved strategically focused seminars and workshops offered to Law Enforcement officials who were identified as future leaders of their agencies. Participants included officials from nations in Latin America, Eastern Europe, Africa, and East Asia. Over a number of years in the 1990s and early 2000s, several thousands of international law enforcement officials participated in this program.

His passing is painful and has deeply affected our community. We have lost an outstanding individual who contributed so much to John Jay, to his students, to his colleagues. During this difficult time, we send our thoughts and heartfelt condolences to Dr. Pitt's family and friends on their loss.