Be it resolved that the Council of the Faculty of Arts & Science deeply regrets the passing of of Associate Professor Emeritus Kenneth R. Thompson, a member of the Victoria College Department of Classics, on 26 August 2016 in his 86th year.

Professor Thompson received his B.A. in 1953 from Queen’s University and his A.M. in 1954 from Harvard University. In 1954-1955, he worked as Principal Clerk at the National Research Council (forerunner of CSIS) in Ottawa, where he met his future wife Katharine (Appleby), and from 1955-1957 he taught as Lecturer in Classics at Dalhousie University in Halifax.

Married in 1957, he moved back to Boston to pursue doctoral studies under the supervision of E.A. Havelock (formerly of the Classics department at Victoria College in the University of Toronto), with a proposed thesis on “Technique of Composition of Hesiod’s Works and Days.” He left Harvard ABD in 1959 to take up a position as Lecturer in Classics at Victoria College, where he was promoted to Assistant Professor (1963), Associate Professor (1973), Associate Registrar (1975), Acting Registrar (1977) and thence to Registrar (1978). During his years in the Registrar’s Office of Victoria College, Professor Thompson continued to teach Introductory Latin and Greek in the combined Department of Classics at the University of Toronto. He was a kind and patient teacher and a staunch and generous friend to generations of students and colleagues.

From 1978 to 1995, he served as the Registrar of Victoria College, and throughout his long registrarial career he contributed stalwart service to the collegial missions of his Department, College, and University. For Classics he served a lengthy term on the High School Liaison Committee (1982-1987), and for the University he served a still lengthier term on the General Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Science (1977-1995), with appointments along the way to the Faculty of Arts and Science Committees on Standing (as voting member or assessor in alternate years), Admissions (likewise), and Academic Standards, as well as to the FAS High School Liaison group.

But it was to his College that he devoted his energies most especially throughout his career. At Victoria College, he did yeoman service as the Secretary of the Senate of Victoria University as well as its various committees, including the Honorary Degrees Committee and the Baccalaureate, Charter Day and Convocation Committee; he chaired the Scholarship Committee, the Bursary Committee, the Office Space Committee, and the Committee on Academic Standards; and he served continuously on the Victoria and Emmanuel College Councils and various of their committees, including the Academic Advisory Committee,
the Counselling and Recruitment Committee, the Research and Publications Committee, the Fellows Selection Committee, and a slew of ad hoc committees. The history and community of Victoria College were of great importance and interest to him, and he had a rich professional life there until his retirement in 1996 and well beyond. For he remained closely involved with the College throughout his retirement, updating the scholarships and awards brochure and regularly advising on convocation procedures (including the Latinity of the College’s diplomas).

The Department of Classics and Victoria College deeply regret the loss of our valued colleague.

Professor Thompson is survived by his wife Katherine; his son Bernard (wife Kuniko, their daughters Mayuko and Hinako), and his daughters Cecily (husband Shakir Panjvani their children Michael and Sarah) and Hope (partner Simone Jones).

Be it further moved that this resolution be inscribed in the minutes and that a copy be transmitted to the survivors as a token of our deep respect.

Alison Keith FRSC
Fellow, Victoria College
Professor and Acting Chair
Department of Classics
University of Toronto