

Stephen Kobrin, Management

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Stephen Kobrin

Stephen J. Kobrin, the William H. Wurster Emeritus Professor of Multinational Management at the Wharton School, passed away on May 6. He was 83.

Dr. Kobrin earned a BMgtE from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1960 and an MBA from Wharton the next year. From 1965 to 1971, he served as a brand manager at Procter & Gamble, then received a PhD from the University of Michigan in 1975. After graduating, he held academic appointments at New York University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1987, he joined the faculty of the Wharton School as the Anheuser-Busch Term Professor of Management. He quickly rose to eminence in the department, taking a position as its chair in 1989. In 1992, Dr. Kobrin was named the William H. Wurster Professor of Multinational Management (*Almanac* May 26, 1992 (<https://almanac.upenn.edu/archive/v38pdf/n34/052692.pdf>)).

“Professor Kobrin is a distinguished scholar and teacher,” said then-Wharton Dean Thomas Gerrity. “I am pleased, thanks to the generosity of Bill Wurster, that we can recognize his outstanding work.” As part of his professorship, Dr. Kobrin served as director of the William H. Wurster Center for International Management Studies from 1992 to 1994. He also served on several University Council committees and, in 1998, on the committee for the selection of a new dean of the Wharton School.

In 1994, Dr. Kobrin was named co-director (with G. John Ikenberry) of the Lauder Institute, a dual-degree program between Wharton and the School of Arts and Sciences that had been formed from the organizational framework of the Wurster Center (*Almanac* May 10, 1994 (<https://almanac.upenn.edu/archive/v40pdf/n33/051094.pdf>)). This appointment recognized Dr. Kobrin’s expertise in the international business sphere, which included Congressional testimony on issues of international economic policy and trade and service on the editorial boards of the *Journal of International Business Studies*; *International Organization*; *Academy of Management Journal*; and *International Political Economy Yearbook*. A prominent scholar of global integration, globalization, and the international political economy, Dr. Kobrin authored numerous books and journal articles, with his most recent article, “Is a Networked World Economy Sustainable?” appearing in *Progress in International Business Research* in 2021. Dr. Kobrin served as director of the Lauder Institute until 2000, then again as its interim director from 2006 to 2007. In 2008, he launched Wharton School Press; he was also a Wharton Group Speaker from 2000 until 2014.

In 2014, Dr. Kobrin retired and took emeritus status. “Steve Kobrin was an esteemed scholar of multinational management, a valued colleague, and an institutional leader who contributed to Lauder, Wharton, and Penn in multiple ways,” said Martine Haas, current director of the Lauder Institute. “He will be much missed.” Read more remembrances of Dr. Kobrin from former colleagues here (<https://news.wharton.upenn.edu/in-memoriam/2022/05/stephen-j-kobrin/>).

Dr. Kobrin is survived by his wife, Carol Fixman; children, Tom (Lisa) Kobrin, Katherine King and Jennifer Kobrin (Steven Bullard); brother, David Kobrin (Diane Berreth); three grandchildren; nieces; nephews; cousins; and many good friends and colleagues.