

Marc Ratner, Professor, English, passed away, April 2023

Marc Leonard Ratner was born Jan. 19, 1926, in New York City to Ukrainian immigrants Abraham and Nadine (Blumberg) Ratner. His father was a pharmacist and pharmacy owner. Raised on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, Marc Ratner graduated from Bronx High School of Science in 1944 and served in the Army Air Corps from 1944 to 1946.

He earned a B.A. from Fordham University in 1950, an M.A. from the University of Pennsylvania in 1951 and Ph.D. from New York University in 1957.

He became a professor of English and American literature with a particular interest in American writers of the mid-20th century. Ratner taught at Fairleigh Dickinson University; the University of Colorado at Boulder, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and California State University Hayward (now Cal State East Bay), from which he retired in 1992.

His studies and teaching took him around the world. Ratner was a Fulbright Scholar in Frankfurt am Main, West Germany, in 1963 and in what was then Czechoslovakia in 1971. He was director of the Atlantic Studies Program of the University of Massachusetts in Freiburg, Germany, in 1966. He taught on Fulbright grants in Brazil and Romania and also taught in Argentina, England and Paraguay.

Ratner worked a long career as a university professor in the United States and overseas before retiring in the 1990s. His ensuing career as a volunteer instructor in Ashland would exceed two decades.