

## Words from the lives Professor Dugan became a pillar stone for...

- “I do not say this lightly (I suspect you have heard this before), but I count Professor Dugan as one of the most formative people in my life. I took every class I could with him, and occasionally would meet up with him when I was in town after graduating. He opened my mind in ways that forever changed me and profoundly shaped the person I am today. He taught me to be wildly curious, to always challenge preconceived notions, and to love the art of asking questions. For that, and more, I am forever grateful. He was one of the great ones in so many of our lives.”
- “He was an incredible human being who changed my life more than most people will ever know. “
- “Your father was easily the most important professor I've had in my education, from kindergarten through my masters no one has stuck with me more and helped me grow as a person as much as your father. Your father meant a lot to me, and I know he had a similar impact on so many other people. Your father helped me realize what being there for others really means. Not only was your dad a really smart dude but he was always so kind, open, and understanding. “
- “I had not been in touch with him for a while, but I think about him often. He was one of the best teachers that I ever had. I now teach philosophy and humanities courses at a community college in NYC, and it's in large part to his influence on me so many years ago”
- “He was my favorite teacher, ever. I took every possible class I could that he taught. His influence will be with forever. “
- “He remains a near constant voice in my head 15 years after I met him and I count him among the very top of those who've irreparable altered the course of my life. He was one of a kind.”
- “After my required philosophy course work was completed I still took two more classes with Professor Dugan. This has nothing to do with what he taught me (he'll claim he doesn't "teach" a la Socrates) but rather for the vast amount of learning I was able to do. Every class was like a guides tour of Mt. Everest, with Professor Dugan as the guide and your soul/mind/feelings as Mt. Everest.”
- “He was an important person in my life (at a time when I was struggling with existential crisis, and even after graduating from school).”
- “I had the opportunity to take multiple classes with him and was his TA for a semester. It was truly an honor to learn from him and get to know him. His classes had the largest influence on which I am today. “
- “He was one of my best professors at Northeastern! He helped me with some rough issues and made my college experience comfortable. Even after college when I visited him he would give much needed advice. “
- “Your dad was one of the best teachers I've ever had, and I've had a lot of great ones. He was even willing to act in a short film I made. He reinforced the importance of questioning everything.

He will certainly be missed and I'm truly saddened by your loss. The last time I saw him was 3.5 years ago when he showed up to my father's funeral. I was so surprised to see him there.

One of the funniest memories I have of him was when I was taking his Existentialism course at Northeastern. He staggers into class one day totally disheveled. Gets to the front of the class and lights up a cigarette. Blows a puff of smoke in a girl's face sitting in the front row. We all had to guess what he was up to. I don't think we had a clue.”

- “He was one of the best educators I have ever had. His ability to help a student withdraw knowledge within was uncanny and it’s something I will always try replicate in my own teaching practice. “
- “He was a great man and a great friend. He is the only person in the world that I could discuss ‘The Social Stratification of a Chinese Village’ with!

Reporting to him in the 80s, one day he was being particularly dictatorial, so I called him ‘Benito Bubbolini’. He cracked up.”

- “Not just a gifted mind, but a beautiful heart. 20 years ago Kerry Dugan gave me his book by Irvin Yalom called Existential Psychotherapy. He knew I was headed that way. Today I’m a family therapist and I pride myself on being available for and attuned to those who need me, like Kerry Dugan was for me. “

Good morning, sir.

- “He honestly taught me more than anyone else HOW to think. I can say with certainty that he played a huge role in helping me develop those skills, and I would not be on the path I am right now if I had not taken his courses and learned from him. “
- “He was literally the best teacher I have ever had. He inspired me to follow the philosophy path as my major. I remember he would always go the extra mile to cultivate that curious philosophy spark in his students, he would even meet outside of class to attend gathers and potlucks. He was simply the best.”
- “Professor Dugan was such a fixture of the department when I was a student, and he impacted so many student’s lives for the better. “
- “The last time I saw him, just pre-Covid, we were both contemplating knee replacements. He said nothing about any other health problems and seemed for all the world as sharp and articulate as ever.

He and I shared a bond. As outliers - the Heidegger and Wittgenstein weirdos in the department- we had a special motivation to relate, but there was more. We each respected what the other tried to do and let one another know that. We’ve known each other for over fifty years. When I retired as a full-time prof and continued only as a one-course-per-term part timer, he wrote me a beautiful note, which moved me terrifically.

I’ll let it go at that. He had a long and productive life, was a unique individual who had a profound effect on quite a number of his students. “

- “Your father brought you into class with your brother (it was around 2002-2004); you were maybe 13, your brother 9. It strongly impressed me how studious you both were while we had class. I was also always quite moved by how loving Professor Dugan’s family clearly was. I had the chance to meet your mother very briefly when she picked Kerry up from our apartment after an end of semester final class/party in Allston.

Your father was my first mentor. I still talk about him all the time. He changed my life, or as he liked to say, "ruined my life," by introducing me to existentialism. Today, I'm a professor of Philosophy and director of the Hong Kierkegaard Library at St Olaf College (in Minnesota). So, you see, it must've been a good path after all. The truth is, Dugan introduced me to a way of learning and teaching that has guided me ever since. And he brought me into a way of approaching philosophy such that its teachings have quite literally saved my life many times over.

It was also your father's example and reassuring conversations with him that convinced me that I could both pursue a career in academia and one day have a family. Today, I have three little kids, Charlie (6), Ricky (3), and Louisa (2).

We have lost a very special person. I am mourning with you. “

- “Kerry had a tremendous effect on my life. He was the architect for a lot of how I perceive the world. And I know he was for many students in his career. A math teacher can teach you calculus or a biology teacher can teach you about cells. In Dugan's classes, we learned about ourselves. He was an educator par excellence. Education as transformation.

To paraphrase Heidegger:

"It is true that nothing is to be done with philosophy, but that doesn't mean philosophy can't do something with us."

His memory will remain in the hearts of his students, and their lives are footnotes in his legacy. A special man, indeed.

If he didn't know fully the breadth of the impact he had in his waking life, I hope he knows now.

Rest in Power Professor Dugan.”

- “I was a student of his at Northeastern University. I took a couple semesters with him. One of the courses was Existentialism. We covered Heidegger's Being and Time. Your father helped my mind/consciousness expand in ways that would have been impossible for me to accomplish on my own. I really owe him for a huge leap in my personal growth. I wouldn't be the person I am now without those classes. Our time together sticks out in my memory like a monument.

I always wished I could go back and take more of his courses. He had such a unique mind. And was very funny and kind. I would stay after class a lot to ask him more questions. And we joked around a lot. I'd like to think we were buddies. We kept in touch for a bit afterwards but haven't spoken in ages.

I had no idea he was ill, of course. I would have loved to have a few more chats and pick his brain some more, and have mine picked! Like him, I have a deeply philosophical nature, albeit at a much more amateur level. Having him as a mentor was like a kid who loves spaceships getting to sit shotgun on a trip to the moon with Neil Armstrong. This inclination can be a bit of a blessing and a curse. There are sparingly few people on this earth with whom I could have the kinds of conversations that I had with your dad. It was a great relief and thrill for me as a young philosopher. I could go full blast! Whereas most people tend to get exhausted and annoyed by the endless Socratic questioning and so forth. Professor Dugan was indefatigable!”

- “I first met Prof. Dugan my freshman year at Northeastern University in the fall of 2002. I took his intro to philosophy class to fulfill my humanities requirement as a physics major and I was instantly hooked on Philosophy by your father. Every morning of my first semester I would go to his class and we would argue three days a week about topics that I had never even dreamed of. By the end of that semester I had asked him if I could take his existentialism class, and he let me in even though I did not meet the requirements.

The next semester is the semester my life changed -- and it is directly attributable to Prof. Dugan. During the existentialism class, which was at 8 am, we continued our on-going arguments, but this time over Being and Time (I still have my beat up, over underlined, over dog eared copy...). Three days a week I would show up to the class at 8 am, be one of the few people awake, and Kerry and I would argue for the full time. In the end, he won, and I was convinced of the need for the other. This moment changed my life -- before this point I was a pull yourself up by the bootstraps type of guy -

- but Kerry showed me through utterly convincing logic that there can be no self without other, and this, changed my entire life, and life course. I changed majors to philosophy after this, and embarked on an entirely different life than my previous hard science track.

Throughout the rest of my four years at Northeastern Prof. Dugan and I continued to be very close -- he was a mentor to me. I TA'd his existentialism class 3 times, and generally just looked to him for life advice. I spent many hours sitting in his office surrounded by all of his wonderful books and chatting with him. He inspired me to go into education and to continue to expand my thought. I have recently completed my PhD and I am looking to transition into Academia, and whenever I think of why, it is because of how influential your father was in my life. Thank you for sharing him with the world “

- “I am honored to be on this list — he meant so much to me as a professor and as a person. Many of my college memories took place in his classes, and so many of his words still echo in my head. Not to mention the way he'd genuinely laugh at class topics and student antics. He was really one of a kind as an educator and I feel extremely lucky to have met him.

I have a cousin who is like a little brother to me, and he majored in philosophy (existentialism hooked him, of course) then had a career direction crisis last year as a senior. I thought of your dad all the time and quoted him a ton while talking to my cousin over the past few years. It brought us closer together and always makes me reflect on how much I learned from “Dugan” at a critical time in my life, not just in terms of academics but in attitude about the world. “

- “Uncanny, I was just telling my parents this morning how lucky and grateful I was to learn from your father 20 years ago at Northeastern, and how he literally helped shape who I am today. I must have felt the earth shift,, he was a special man.

Professor Dugan introduced me to existentialism, he shared mysteries of the world that blew my mind, and he helped open my eyes to new ways of thinking. Did that orange choose you, or did you choose the orange? He made me question everything and I still do lol!! He would provoke so much thought and let us dangle and marinate on the concept and challenge our thinking and not give us the answers (brilliant!). Lots of things I thought I understood then, but didn't really get until years later. He also taught me to listen to my dreams and subconscious and not to be driven by fears. And there's something much greater architecting our collective experience that we are all in together. I'll never forget he let me read my final project to the class while I had everyone blindfolded. He allowed us to be our authentic self and create experiences while expanding our mind.. I have so many more memories, I could go on and on...

Professor Dugan was hilarious, so much fun and one of the best minds I've ever encountered, I'm so grateful. “

- “Dugan was a life changer. I took three classes from him during my time at Northeastern. Existentialism, the second of which, was held in a windowless basement classroom. He walked in on one of the rare sunny days we had during Boston spring and I said: we can't have class inside today, it's too pretty. And without a word, he turned on his heel and led us to one of the gardens for a lecture on doing to being that has informed my entire life. He taught us all to say yes to life. His ripple will be never ending. “
- “What was the gist of “doing to being?” Being and Time largely went over my head...”
- “In typical Dugan fashion it took us the better part of the semester to get through to it but my memory has the culmination of that day's lecture ending in the realization that we have to do in order to be. The \*what\* we do isn't significant, just the doing. We be by doing. Feels like such an oversimplification but if you know, you know, ya know?”