Born June 11, 1905 in Krakow, Poland, Professor Steinhauer moved to Toronto, Canada, with his parents at age five. He received his BA (1927), MA (1928) and PhD (1937) degrees in French and German Literature from the University of Toronto. He then taught at the University of Saskatchewan and University of Manitoba in Canada, as well as Ohio State University, Antioch College, and Case Western Reserve Universities before coming to the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1964 as Professor and Chair of Foreign Languages and Literatures.

In 1965 he oversaw the division of this Department into the Department of Germanic, Slavic and Oriental Languages and Literatures and the Department of French and Italian. While serving as Chair of the Department of Germanic Slavic and Oriental Languages and Literatures, he built up its German and Russian programs to a total strength of 20 full-time faculty members. During his tenure, the Department instituted the MA (1967) and the PhD (1970) in German, as well as an undergraduate major in Russian (1969).

Because of his recruitment of distinguished faculty and outstanding graduate students, the German program of the Department attained national standing in the upper third of all German graduate programs in the US by the early 1970s. Professor Steinhauer retired in 1971. In retirement, he devoted himself to the study of Hebraic literature.

Professor Steinhauer had a distinguished career as scholar, translator, and university teacher in the US and Canada. In 1962, he received the Order of Merit, First Class, of the Federal Republic of Germany, recognizing his distinction as teacher and scholar and his service to the field of German literature and culture.

He is the author of numerous textbooks in German language, including Basic German (1963) and literature, including Die Deutsche Novelle 1880-1933 (1936, expanded 1958), Das Deutsche Drama, 1880-1933 (1938) German Literature since Goethe, 2 vols. (1959), as well as an anthology of French literature, An Omnibus of French Literature, 2 vols. (1941). He also authored numerous scholarly articles in the most prestigious Canadian and US scholarly journals.

Entire generations of German Studies undergraduates in the US and Canada have been taught by his carefully edited anthologies of German literature with their concise and precisely formulated introductions to the different genres, periods and authors of German literature. Some 6,600 websites still testify to the continued vitality of his translations of German literature, for example, Goethe’s Werther (1962, reissued in 1969 with interpretive introduction and Ten Novellas (1969).

After retiring in 1971, Dr. Steinhauer devoted himself to the study of Hebraic literature. For many years, he met monthly with a close circle of friends, including Novel laureate and UCSB physicist Walter Kohn, professor emeritus of physics Mael Melvin and Sophia Melvin, to read and discuss French plays in one of his former offices on the sixth floor of Phelps Hall.
The room, renamed the Steinhauer Library, houses more than 3,000 of his collected books on 18th to 20th century German literature, which he donated to UCSB.

Despite his personal and academic success, Mr. Steinhauer – having grown up in poverty in Canada – lived frugally. Fiercely egalitarian both socially and politically, he stood with his fellow Antioch professors in refusing to testify during the McCarthy era.

On January 12, 2006, Professor Emeritus Harry Steinhauer passed away at the age of 100. He is survived by his daughters, Judith Steinhauer of Portland, Oregon, and Esther Battle of Yellow Springs, Ohio; a grandson and two great-grandchildren. His wife Minnie died in 1995.

We are thankful for his outstanding contributions to the study of German and the humanities.