

Robert O. Harris, Jr.

PROFILE

With feet planted squarely in both Texas and Thailand and a heritage that includes membership in the Cherokee Nation, Professor Robert Harris brings a one-of-a-kind perspective to the classroom, the lecture circuit, and the world of business.

Harris, who holds a BA from the University of North Texas and who earned an MLA (MLS) at Southern Methodist University currently teaches at the University of North Texas at Dallas. He retired in 2014 from Northwood University and was named Associate Professor Emeritus. For many years, he chaired the Arts and Sciences Division, and he was Director of Summer in Asia and the Latin American Study Tour. He is a recipient of the school's coveted highest academic honor, the "Excellence in Teaching Award." In addition, he has received the "Innovation Award" for his creative use of technology utilizing Video Teleconference Distance Learning and On Line instruction. In 2012, he received the Sam Marotta Ethics Award which was voted by the graduating class to the professor who had most inspired students to think beyond themselves, considering the role of God in their lives and the consequences of their actions. Harris has also taught literature at Southern Methodist University in the MLS program.

In addition to his academic interests, Harris travels to Asia frequently, and has consulted on a variety of businesses in Thailand, including the vacation and resort property JHL Golf Villas and Homes located within the beautiful and acclaimed Burapha Golf Club. He was a founding partner in Thailand's unique American curriculum International School Eastern Seaboard.

An avid collector of books, letters, and other literary memorabilia, Harris is an expert on Walt Whitman, Robert Frost, Emily Dickinson, Theodore Roethke, Tennessee Williams, and William Jay Smith. Part of his Library has been exhibited at the DeGolyer Library at Southern Methodist University and the Bridwell Library, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University.

Harris has written extensively. His essay, *Charles and Robert, A Literary Friendship*, was published by the DeGolyer Library at SMU. In addition, the *Southwest Review* published a previously unknown poem, "How Lovely Wetness Makes the Flesh" by Tennessee Williams, from his library. Another unpublished poem by Williams, "Advice to a Poet," was also published in the *Southwest Review*. He is currently working on a new book, *The Poet and the Collector: Selected Letters of John Ciardi and Charles Feinberg*. A new Harris poem, "The Performance," was recently published in *Space and Time*.

Appearing regularly before business, civic and academic audiences, Harris speaks on a variety of subjects, including the joys of collecting, mentoring, and the ways in which literature and inter-disciplinary studies continue to enrich the human experience.