BEISER, EDWARD, DR

Dr. Edward N. Beiser

WARWICK - Professor Edward N. Beiser died on Friday, Sept. 4. He was born in New York on March 10, 1942, the son of Zelda and Herman (Hy) Beiser. He attended the City College of New York where he was a star debater and a member of the student council. He received his Ph.D. in political science from Princeton University. In 1965, he married Grace Fischer and began teaching at Williams College.

In 1968, he moved to Providence and joined the political science department at Brown University. The move to Providence, in part, was due to the existence of Providence Hebrew Day School, where he educated his three sons. At Brown, he became well known for his Socratic method of teaching. He was voted "best teacher" by graduating students several years in a row. His classes had a lasting impact on students, many of whom kept in close touch until his death.

While a member of the Brown faculty, he decided to pursue a law degree and received his J.D. from Harvard in 1977.

He became an associate dean at the Brown Medical School, focusing on the liberal arts education of undergraduate medical students in the eight-year program and conducting medical ethics sessions in the Brown-affiliated hospitals.

He was president of the Providence Hebrew Day School from 1981 to 1983 and was an active member of Congregation Beth Sholom, where he often led services. He was a largely self-taught Orthodox Jew who devoted considerable time and effort to helping build the Jewish community of Providence. His connection to Israel, where he visited often and took a year-long fellowship, was strong.

Suffering from early onset of Parkinson's, he was able to continue teaching at Brown with assistance from his physician, Dr. Joseph Friedman, Brown University and former students. In 2003, he retired from Brown and, for the past four years, he has lived at The Phyllis Siperstein Tamarisk Assisted Living Residence in Warwick.

He leaves three sons and daughters-in-law: Reuben and Tehila of Jerusalem; Joshua and Suellen of Sharon, Mass.; and Benjamin and Felicia of Jerusalem; and 10 grandchildren. He leaves his former wife of 38 years, Grace F. Novick of Providence, and his brother and sister-in-law, Richard and Diane Beiser of New City, N.Y., as well as several cousins.