

Sylvia E. Furner
Biographical Sketch

Sylvia Furner (nee Sylvia Eisenstein) was born in St. Louis, Missouri on June 11, 1945 to Albert and Barbara Eisenstein. She was the second of five children (3 boys and 2 girls) and spent her entire youth in St. Louis. She met her husband, Jim Furner, in early 1967 and they married in October of that same year in Carbondale, Illinois where they were both students. They left Carbondale in June 1968 and moved to Syracuse, New York where Jim attended Graduate School at Syracuse University.

They eventually settled in the Chicago suburbs and raised their children. One the children were in school, Sylvia returned to college and finished her bachelor's, masters and doctoral degrees graduating in June 1987 (at the age of 42) with a PhD in Public Health Sciences majoring in Epidemiology. (She joined her three brothers in having a PhD). Sylvia was hired as a tenure track Assistant Professor at the School of Public Health at the University of Illinois – Chicago. She remained a faculty member until her retirement in 2011. She was a devoted teacher and mentor, teaching predominantly graduate level students, and she pursued research in the field of aging, in particular, factors associated with functional limitations in the older population. Sylvia had an affinity for academic administration and thus she dedicated over 14 years to academic administration serving 12 years as Senior Associate Dean and 2 years as Interim Dean.