

# Dr. Michael Jeffrey Farrar



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On January 11, 2021 Dr. Michael Jeffrey Farrar, 64, passed away at North Florida Regional Medical Center. He was surrounded by love from his family. He is survived by his wife of over 40 years, Debra; son, Greg; daughter, Lauren, her partner Tom McMahon, and their children, April and Gus; his sister, Kathy Bernier, her son Taven and many beloved cousins.

Jeff was a professor in the psychology department at the University of Florida, where he led the cognitive and development lab. Prior to coming to UF, he received his doctorate from Emory University's program in Cognition and Development in 1985, and then completed a 2-year NIMH post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Denver. His research focused primarily on the relationship between language and cognition development, with a particular interest in children's development of "theory of mind," i.e., the understanding of others to be intentional actors with independent thoughts and beliefs.

In addition to his research, he was also a teacher in the truest sense. He was a compassionate mentor who cared deeply for his students. A nurturer by nature, Jeff was at his happiest when engaged in guiding others to success.

Family has always been very important to Jeff. He grew up in Atlanta, GA and was especially close to his cousins Jimmy Burton and Mike McWhorter who instilled a love for fast cars. Jeff was also a wonderfully selfless and devoted husband and father who loved his children with all his heart and was absolutely smitten by his two grandchildren who he could not get enough of. He also enjoyed football, especially when that meant getting together with his long-time neighborhood cul-de-sac friends to watch the Gator games every Saturday.

Time and again, when others needed him most, Jeff offered choice words of wisdom and encouragement as only he could. He was a rock, providing a steady, unshakable foundation to the lives of many. His calming and compassionate presence is already sorely missed by those who knew him. Memorial service arrangements are still being planned and will likely include a virtual component and will be updated here online. In lieu of flowers donations can be made in Jeff's honor to the Psychology Department at the University of Florida: [https://www.ufl.edu/give-now/?fund\\_id=005915&appeal=AA1K](https://www.ufl.edu/give-now/?fund_id=005915&appeal=AA1K)