Dr. Norman Olsen joined the College of Charleston in 1972 as professor and chair of the Department of English. During his nineteen years as chair, he oversaw the significant growth of curriculum, programs, and faculty in the department. A specialist in American literature, Dr. Olsen taught courses in the colonial and nineteenth-century periods.

In addition to his administrative work in the English Department, he also served as director of Summer School. He won the Distinguished Service Award in 1992. Dr. Olsen retired in 1993 with the rank of Distinguished Professor Emeritus.

Dr. Olsen earned his degrees in English from Dartmouth College (B.A.) and Duke University (M.A., Ph.D.). Prior to joining the College of Charleston, he taught for nine years at Clemson University.

He died in 1996.