

Remembering Professor Gil Schmidt



Dr. Charles G. "Gil" Schmidt passed away on Sunday, 22 November 2015. Dr. Schmidt was a member of the Geography & GIS faculty from 1991 until he suspended teaching after an accident in 2008.

Gil's family invites you to join in a service upstairs in the church parish hall. This will take place on Saturday, December 12th, 2015 at 10:30am:

Bethel Lutheran Church
328 Walnut Street
Windsor, CO

Pizza was Gil's favorite food; it will be catered from Krazy Karls restaurant in Fort Collins.

Dr. Schmidt's Legacy (thanks to Dr.Phil Klein)

Gil Schmidt was an administrative leader, chairing 9 different UNC institutional task forces, search committees, and assessment groups between 1991 and 1999. From 1995-98, he was project director of the Educational Technology Improvement Project, a \$550K grant-funded project to provide faculty with training in emerging technologies, including distance education.

Since 1999, Gil was a full-time faculty member in the Department of Geography, teaching 3 courses per semester, advising students and serving on numerous committees, and returning to active scholarship in urban and economic geography, with China as a regional specialty.

Dr. Schmidt received his doctorate in Geography from the University of Washington in 1973. During his career, Gil authored or co-authored more than 30 refereed articles in quality journals such as

Urban Geography, Environment and Planning, Annals of Regional Science, Economic Geography, and Asian Geographer. In addition, he published another 20+ book reviews, working papers and technical reports and made annual presentations at regional and national meetings of the Association of American Geographers and the Western Regional Science Association. At the time of his injury, he was developing research into the relationships among population growth, land annexation, and urban fiscal expenditures in Weld County, and had just published an article in *Urban Affairs Review* about urban growth problems along the Front Range, working with his departmental colleague, Dr. Katherine Johnson.

As a faculty member, Dr. Schmidt continued his dedicated service to the department and college on many committees, often as chair. He led the Geography Department/Program Evaluation Committee for many years and served on faculty search committees. His legacy of community service is also impressive. Before coming to UNC, Gil had served on program committees for the Great Plains/Rocky Mountain Regional Meetings of the AAG, as technical advisor to the Denver Economic Development Planning Program, and as a member of the planning commission in the City of Westminster. While at UNC, he assisted with planning the AAG's 2005 international conference, held in Denver.

Gil loved teaching. Indeed, following his injury, it was the prospect of returning to the classroom that motivated him to work hard to recover. At UNC, Gil regularly taught both large LAC courses ("World Geography" and "Human Geography") and smaller upper-division courses for Geography majors and students from related programs ("Urban Geography," "Economic Geography," and "East Asia"). He also frequently led our "Senior Seminar" capstone course.

Nobody worked harder at encouraging his students to seek out assistance when they were struggling; ... Gil provided them opportunities to succeed by incorporating technology into his courses much earlier than did many of his colleagues.

Fortunately, when Gil became exasperated, he would regale his colleagues with the tale in a wonderfully satirical way. The other Geography faculty members miss his presence, especially at faculty meetings, where he could be counted on for some pointed, and funny, commentary about the minor aggravations of the academic environment. We have had a difficult time finding someone to assume his role as Department Curmudgeon (although Drs. Diggs and Collins have certainly made a noble attempt to fill Gil's shoes in this essential task).