

The School of Liberal Arts mourns the passing of Christian J.W. Kloesel, Professor Emeritus of English.

Christian chaired the Department of English for the last six years of his career. A scholar of philosopher C.S. Peirce and the writer John Gower, Christian built a distinguished scholarly record. Author, editor, or translator of more than twenty books, he was active in the World Congresses of Philosophy, the Semiotic Society of America, and the International Association for Semiotic Studies. He had lectured on Peirce in seven different countries, and had a hand in the publications of several volumes of Peirce's writings. His scholarly career involved a network of international scholars.

Christian began his career in Kansas, where he earned his PhD, and then moved to Texas, where he served as Assistant Professor of English at Texas Tech before coming to IUPUI in 1976. Hired as Assistant Editor of the Peirce Edition Project, he eventually became Director, rising also through the ranks to Professor of English. During his tenure at the Peirce Project, it received more than a half million dollars in NEH grants. Over the course of his career, Christian won a total of 16 grants, fellowships, and scholarships, and authored, edited, compiled, and/or translated 21 books. He also published 33 chapters, articles, review essays, notes, and reports as well as several poems. In 2005, he was honored by his Liberal Arts colleagues, who awarded him the Outstanding Distinguished Faculty Award.

The last part of Christian's career was devoted to serving the department and campus he loved. Tireless in his devotion to IUPUI, Christian never missed a graduation ceremony or turned down an opportunity to serve his colleagues and students, always striving to make the university a better place. Even in his declining health, he refused to take the time off that he so desperately needed, insisting that there was simply "too much to do." As department chair (2001-2006), as President of the Liberal Arts Faculty Assembly (2002-2004), and as a leader on the Faculty Council's Faculty Affairs Committee, he worked to make IUPUI a place where intellectual inquiry was wide-ranging, and where faculty could come together across ranks to encourage students. He was an eloquent advocate for the liberal arts in general and English in particular. His courses in early British literature, professional writing and editing introduced students to the joys of close reading and the delights of the well-chosen word.

Christian made many distinguished contributions to faculty governance at IUPUI. As committee chair or constituent, he lost no opportunity to ensure that resolutions, documents, and reports were phrased precisely and eloquently. He took delight in working with colleagues to find just the right expression for the work at hand. His contributions were many and diverse: over the course of his career, he served on committees dealing with the future of academic computing, faculty affairs, budgetary planning, academic advancement, and strategic planning. Even in the later years of his career, when his health had begun to decline, he sought out demanding service roles. He was President of the Faculty Assembly in 2002-2004, and one of his priorities was an editorial review of the Assembly's By-Laws. When he handed the presidential gavel to his successor, the By-laws were more clear, and the function of the Assembly and its

committees more focused. He was a passionate believer in faculty governance, and he led by example. He was particularly proud of his tenure on Resources and Planning Committee and other strategic planning bodies. With wit and intelligence, he helped move Liberal Arts toward a secure future.

Christian was a close reader of texts and people. As department chair, he prized the collegiality of the English department and the relationships forged among colleagues and students. Christian taught courses on Chaucer, *Beowulf*, Old English, Classical Greek, Peirce and Semiotics, The Epic and many other topics. His eclectic imagination and urbane style juxtaposed traditional works of British literature with modern literature—such as his beloved Italo Calvino—pushing students and faculty alike to consider how the modern world interpreted and transformed literary traditions.. As a colleague and reader, he looked to the details, ever seeking to find ways to transform details in order to transform the essence. In nominating Christian for the 2005 Outstanding Faculty Member Award, Peirce Project colleague Andre De Tienne said that an editor’s job “has the lofty goal of casting the fairest light on utterances so they receive the fairest interpretations...an art which can be applied to text and to selves, including his own.” As department chair, Christian worked to cast the fairest light on all the work done by his colleagues. He was a strong advocate for English faculty and staff, and he held himself and his colleagues to rigorous standards. His confidence in the department was a gift, and when he retired, he left behind a department whose growth had been prodigious, not the least due to his eloquent encouragement of its faculty.

Christian was truly a man of letters whose many accomplishments defy easy summary. In sum, he was a man to be noticed. His gruff and distinguished exterior never quite managed to hide his enormous heart. His graceful wit and sparkling eyes will not soon fade from our memory. His passion for liberal learning, his belief in the power of words and the beauty of texts, his interest in pursuing good are his legacy.

We miss him, and we join his family and friends in celebrating the life of a most remarkable man. He is survived by his wife, Kelly of Indianapolis; daughter and son-in-law, Alicia and Quentin Turchette of Boulder, Colorado; stepson, Roman Snow of Indianapolis; and many aunts, uncles, cousins, godchildren and stepsiblings in Germany. Christian’s career was devoted to what one colleague called “fighting against infelicities” and improving expression. He leaves our school enriched for his years of service to it. He is deeply, deeply missed.