

JULIUS SMULKSTYS
May 27, 1930-April 12, 2010

Julius Smulkstys was born in Kaunas, Lithuania in 1930 and came to the United States with his parents as a refugee in 1949. He grew up in Chicago. He received his BA and MA degrees in Political Science from the University of Illinois, Champaign/Urbana, and completed his Ph.D. at Indiana University-Bloomington in 1963.

In 1959, Julius started teaching at what was then known as the Indiana University Center. He was the founder of the Department of Political Science, first on the IU Fort Wayne campus and then at the Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne campus. He was instrumental in developing the program and hiring new faculty. He served as chair until 1978.

He served as Acting Dean of the School of Arts and Letters from 1978-79 and 1980-81. He became Dean of the School of Arts and Letters from 1981-87 and then Acting Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences from 1987-89 in the first year that the new school was formed. He rejoined the department as a full-time faculty member in 1989. He retired in 1995 at the rank of Associate Professor of Political Science/Emeritus.

Julius was committed to faculty governance and spent much time setting up not only the Department of Political Science, but also the emerging university in Fort Wayne that eventually combined the services offered by Indiana University and Purdue University in northeast Indiana.

Julius' main academic contribution was his book on Karl Marx, published in New York by Twayne Publishers (World Authors Series) in 1974. He also wrote on Lithuanian politics. His teaching focus was on Marxist theory, totalitarian systems, and East European politics.

His love for his homeland never abated. Following the end of the Cold War he became active in the democratization and liberalization of Lithuania. He visited Lithuania in order to observe their activities firsthand and to meet and interview a variety of the emerging class of political entrepreneurs and leaders. His own knowledge of the recent history of the country was broadened and deepened by documentary research he did at the Library of Congress and through his extensive network of sources within the Lithuanian-American community. Following his retirement Julius spent a lot of time in Lithuania. In 1998 he became advisor to Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus. He was presidential liaison on Lithuanian-Jewish relations. He also served on the International Commission for the Evaluation of Crimes of the Nazi and the Russian Occupation Regimes in Lithuania. For his services to his Lithuanian homeland, in February of 2010, he was awarded the highest civilian recognition offered by the Lithuanian government, that of the Cross of the Commander of the Order of the Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas.

Survivors include his wife, Isabel; daughter, Inga Smulkstys and her husband, Christopher Klose, of Washington, D.C.; a son, Linas Smulkstys and his wife, Katie Smulkstys, of Chicago; grandchildren Noah and Lina Klose; and his brother, Liudas Smulkstys of Lemont, Ill.