

The Passing of Phil Grub, My Professor, Academic Advisor, and Friend

By Din Merican

I recently learned of the passing of my Professor, Academic Advisor and Friend, Phil Grub (picture) who succumbed to cancer on April 14, 2008. Phil was a unique American who had the ability to sport and develop talent, especially from the developing world. He took a particular interest in my education at the George Washington University School of Business, Washington DC.

He offered good advice and introduced me to a lot of contacts through his regular parties and social functions. Phil also exposed me to the American way of life and the generosity of the American people. A keen traveller and networker, he would make it a point to visit his former students in Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea and Japan. Phil had planned to visit Southeast Asia in October, 2008 and that was not to be. I kept e-mailing him but I never got any response last year. It was unusual for Phil not to reply. At least now I know the reason why.

Well, Phil (standing extreme left in picture), thanks for everything you did for me when I was your student from 1968-1970. It was my distinct honour to know you and exchange ideas and views with you in your capacity as my Academic Advisor. I had a challenging time with you when I was finishing my MBA thesis. Sincere friends like you are hard to come by.

God Bless and may you find eternal peace, knowing that your former students from around the world have benefited from your knowledge, lectures, tutorship and kindness. There is no doubt that you had a distinguished academic career

Tribute: Dr. Phillip D. Grub, 76, Aryamehr Professor Emeritus of Multinational Management, at The George Washington University School of Business, passed away April 14, 2008, after a long courageous bout with cancer.

Dr. Grub was born August 8, 1931 at the Grub homestead south of Medical Lake, Washington; he is survived by six brothers, numerous nieces and nephews, thousands of friends around the world and his loving friend and companion Pamela Petersen. “Phil had great wisdom, trust in the Lord and an enduring spirit true to the end,” said Petersen.

Dr. Grub’s connections to GW were longstanding. After graduating from Medical Lake High School, he went on to receive his B.A. in Economics (1953), and his B.Ed. (1953) from Eastern Washington University, with highest honors. He served two years in the U.S. army, returning to teach high school several years at Twisp and Mead. He received two Scottish Rite scholarships to attend GW; first for his M.B.A. (1960), and then for his D.B.A. (1964). Dr Grub was the Founding Director, of GW’s programs in International Business, which later became the GW Department of International Business.

Dr. Grub’s distinguished career included many honors, and his personal and professional travels took him to over 100 countries. He was named to the Aryamehr Chair in Multinational Management, established by the late Shah of Iran with a significant gift to the George Washington University, in 1974. On his trip to Iran, Dr. Grub and GW President Lloyd H. Elliott took along a baby lion cub as a gift to the Shah, which they kept in the hotel bathroom until the cub was accepted gratefully by the Shah. Dr. Grub held that endowed chair until his retirement in 1992, when he returned to Spokane and built a home where he resided until his death.

He was a Fellow of the Academy of International Business (AIB), and also served as President of AIB. He served as Honorary Professor, University of International Business and Economics, Beijing, China, since 1986. Dr. Grub held many visiting professorships in the U.S. and abroad stretching from Alaska to Ohio, and from China to Finland.

In the 1999 edition of “Who’s Who in International Business Education and Research,” Dr. Grub wrote: “At the onset of my career in academe in 1960, the ‘international’ focus was on exporting and importing,” but his focus expanded to encompass foreign investment and managing international operations. Within a

decade, "...global business had begun to change rapidly and my interests began to focus on foreign direct investment and its role in nation building, particularly in those nations transforming from communist to market-oriented economies." He concentrated on emerging Asian economies and regionalization, particularly within the Pacific Rim.

Dr. Grub considered his primary contribution to international business education; he wrote, "taking the lead in developing a strong program in international business at George Washington University at all levels; holding initial Academy of International Business meetings outside the USA in Egypt (1975) and Korea (1977)." Most of all in working with colleagues and students he strove to bring, "A healthy mix of pragmatism into the courses I teach, which could be applied in the real world and better prepare students to embark on challenging international business careers." His colleagues added that he tirelessly aided and supported students in professional and personal ways, helping many students obtain scholarships and land jobs, and ensuring that foreign scholars were hosted by local families at Thanksgiving and other holidays.

Dr. Grub's family requests that, in lieu of flowers, donations be made in his name to The Shriner's Children's Hospital of Spokane, P.O. Box 2472, Spokane, Washington 99210-2472 — or the charity of your choice. A memorial service will be held, Wednesday, April 23, in Cheney, Washington, at the Cheney Funeral Parlor. Contacts for condolences are: Carl B. Grub, P.O. Box 220 Medical Lake, Medical Lake, Washington, 99022 – or Pamela Petersen, 133 Olive Street, Los Gatos, CA 95030.

The GW School of Business established the Phillip D. Grub Professorship in International Business last fall in honor of Dr. Grub and in recognition of his outstanding and lasting influence on the School of Business; the Grub Professorship is built on the previously established Grub Fellowship, which was established by gifts from alumni and corporations upon Dr. Grub's retirement from GW. The Professorship will be one of the highest honors bestowed upon an outstanding faculty member. For more information contact: Cheryl Bratz at cbratz@gwu.edu.

This memorial was originally published at dinmerican.wordpress.com.