

# HELMUT VEITH (1971–2016)

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My friend and colleague Helmut Veith<sup>1</sup> died on Saturday, 12 March 2016. His death is a great and shocking loss to his family and friends, and the logic community, especially in Austria.

I've known Helmut since we were undergraduates in computer science at Vienna Technical University in the early 1990s. We shared a passion for theoretical topics in computer science, a love of Robert Musil; we took many courses together. In fact, we liked logic so much that together we created a specialized course of study (a *studium irregulare*) in computational logic. At the time this still required approval by the federal ministry of science and research, and it was a lot of work, but we got it approved. It has since morphed into a standard stream in the computer science curriculum at the TU Vienna, and more recently a doctoral program, all in no small part due to Helmut's tireless organizational work. I was a year ahead of him, but he was the better student. He literally had straight *As* throughout high school and university. In Austria, that earns you a doctorate *sub auspiciis praesidentis*, and the president of the republic himself hands you your diploma. His *Diplom* was on finite model theory; his dissertation on the complexity of database query languages (supervised by Georg Gottlob). Helmut had a stellar career: appointments at TU Munich, TU Darmstadt (two of the centers of computer science in Germany), and finally a full professorship at our alma mater in 2010; add to that an adjunct professorship at Carnegie Mellon. Not only was he the better student, he had the better sense to stay in computer science, and to do something useful with logic. He was one of the leading experts in computer aided verification, especially model checking, with over 120 papers to his name. After his return to Vienna, he was instrumental in getting the Vienna Center for Logic and Algorithms<sup>2</sup> off the ground, led the organization of the Vienna Summer of Logic<sup>3</sup>, and helmed the Austrian doctoral program on logical methods in computer science<sup>4</sup>. Helmut wasn't just an outstanding researcher, he was also

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<sup>1</sup><http://forsyte.at/people/veith/>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.vcla.at/>

<sup>3</sup><http://www.vsl2014.at/>

<sup>4</sup><http://logic-cs.at/phd/>

passionate about improving undergraduate education in logic and computer science (he served on the ASL's Logic Education committee, and we co-organized a special session at the 2014 Logic Colloquium), about diversity in the field, and about science policy.

We need more people like him. I miss him.