“Requiem for a Railroad: The Collapse of the Rock Island”

Thursday, Oct. 6, 2011
3:15 – 5:00 pm

Location:
Kellogg School of Management
Donald P. Jacobs Center, Room G45
2001 Sheridan Road, Evanston

Requiem for a Railroad will survey the collapse of the Rock Island Railroad from the early 1960s until its bankruptcy in 1975 and liquidation in 1980. It is a requiem in three acts—merger, bankruptcy, and liquidation, focusing on how the Rock Island was victimized by governmental ineptitude on the part of the Interstate Commerce Commission and the railroads themselves (who refused to allow the Rock Island to merge). It tells the story of how the Rock Island was "one railroad too many" in the Midwest and allowed by Washington politicians to die while the larger Penn Central was "too big to fail." It will shed light on how the Trustee and the Federal Court tried to keep the railroad alive for five long years before finally consenting to its liquidation, which turned out to be one of the more successful corporate liquidations in American history.

Speaker Bio: Greg Schneider is a Professor of History at Emporia State University in Kansas. He is the author of four books on the history of American conservatism, including Cadres for Conservatism: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of the Contemporary Right (NYU Press, 1999) and, most recently, The Conservative Century: From Reaction to Revolution (Rowman and Littlefield, 2009). He has published essays and opeds in a wide variety of publications including The Weekly Standard, National Review Online and The Washington Times. For five years he was a senior fellow with the Kansas Policy Institute working on health care reform. His current project, Requiem for a Railroad: The Collapse of the Rock Island, is under advanced contract with the University Press of Kansas. He is a native Chicagoan, receiving his PhD from the University of Illinois at Chicago and he lives in Topeka with his wife and two children.