

Enterprising Educator



Shiv Gupta, D.B.A.

Teacher, Leader, Entrepreneur, Innovator and Legend

By Brianna (Martin) Patterson '03, M'07

Shiv Gupta, D.B.A., professor of marketing and economics, is by nature a businessman.

Gupta joined then-Findlay College in 1969 as an assistant professor of business after being recruited by Dr. William Templeton, who was then chair of the Division of Business, at a conference in Chicago. Gupta was working at the University of Dayton (UD) at the time.

A native of New Delhi, India, Gupta brought with him 15 years of international business experience. He received a bachelor's degree from the University of Punjab, India, and worked as a vice president of merchandising for the Federal Government Co-Op Department Stores in India until he and his wife and children moved in the late 1960s to the United States so Gupta could pursue a master of business administration degree from UD.

While he was teaching at Findlay, Gupta also was pursuing further education – including extensive postgraduate work at the University of Cincinnati – and his business interests.

For many years, Gupta was co-owner of a manufacturing plant in Sandusky, Ohio. He also acquired a facility on Lake Erie, which was turned into an upscale restaurant, night club and banquet hall, where he serves as consultant. In addition, Gupta buys and sells real estate in India and visits India twice each year to “keep pace with the development of the IT sector and foreign investments.”

All of that experience has enabled Gupta to bring added value to his classroom, where he instills entrepreneurial and leadership qualities in his students, as he has done since he began teaching at Findlay.

In 1977, Gupta introduced the Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE)

program at UF, which he continued to advise for 15 years. His SIFE teams won regional championships 14 times, competing against other teams from much larger institutions such as The Ohio State University, Kent State University and Bowling Green State University, and national championships five times and took second place many times.

Gupta viewed the experience as a good academic challenge and said, “SIFE is to prepare the student body to act like business leaders, to be entrepreneurial, to be risk takers and to be successful in life.”

He noted that one presentation in the mid-'80s in Memphis, Tenn., was so impressive that a gentleman offered to give \$100,000 to a team of students interested in starting a business. Three students initially took the challenge, and the resulting business, Gifts in Time, remained in operation in the city of



Gupta introduced the SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise) program to Findlay, served as adviser for 15 years and led teams to national championships five times.



Many alumni make it a point to connect with Gupta, a beloved mentor and teacher, when they return to campus. Last fall, Ed Urbaniak '78 and Gupta reunited during an impromptu meeting in the Cave.



Former students, friends and family established two endowed funds honoring Gupta in fall 2006: The Shiv K. Gupta Business Scholarship and the Professor Shiv Kumar Gupta Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Findlay until it recently was sold and now operates under a different name.

Gupta was inducted into the National SIFE Hall of Fame in 2000 for his contributions to the field of free enterprise systems in the U.S.A.

Gupta also has used his knowledge to help students beyond the University. In 1973, he published an innovative simulation game that teaches students about teamwork and risk-taking in starting a small business. "Popcorn with Pizzazz" was used in the United States and internationally. A second simulation game, "The American Business Challenge," was published in 1981 as a classroom tool to develop entrepreneurship among undergraduate students.

He also created teaching units for grades K-12, which were used by approximately 30,000-40,000 elementary and secondary students since 1986.

For his creativity and innovation, Gupta twice received the Leavey Award for Excellence in Private Enterprise Education from the Freedom Foundation of Valley Forge, Pa.; received the George Washington Honor Medal for Excellence; and was recognized by the National Federation of Independent Business Foundation, among many other awards.

As Gupta's teaching career progressed into the 1990s, he was instrumental in curriculum development within the College of Business. During the five years he was director of the business program, Gupta changed the undergraduate business curriculum, bringing it up to date. Those changes still are relevant for today's students. Later, Gupta helped develop the University's master of business administration program by providing a basic framework and content for many core courses, that are still taught today.

Gupta, who teaches both traditional and online courses and uses the new technology available to professors, continues to academically challenge his students and himself. In 2007, he chaired a session for a conference in Chicago, along with five MBA students, and chaired a session for a conference in Las Vegas with another five students. In 2008, Gupta presented a paper on profit maximization and corporate citizenship at an international conference in Chicago. In 2009, he presented papers at international conferences in Mumbai, India, Las Vegas and Chicago.

"I work with the students and learn from them," said Gupta. "We underestimate the ability of the student body. They are very intelligent and hard working. The only thing is, you have to bring it out. As an instructor, that is my job. That's what I enjoy."