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Drinking out of a half-gallon carton almost-expired chocolate milk Professor Kim Sharp was in his windowless office preparing to administer a test in one of his classes. Sharp, 65, is a visiting professor of international business and management here at Drake. This is his first year on campus, as noted by the sparse office in Albier Hall.

“My International business class gave me a worm farm to keep me company,” Sharp said pointing to a box on his top shelf.

But it’s his humor and credentials that make up for his office space. Sharp graduated from Brigham Young University with a B.A. and M.A. in Economics and Statistics. A member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, he also served a two-year church mission to the Northwestern States.

While being a student at BYU he leased a truck stop in Provo, which was by his account, his first business venture. He also was janitor for a drug store and a group of local doctors.

“The skills came in handy,” he said.

After graduating from BYU Sharp and his wife Jan moved to Ames , Iowa where he started to teach at Iowa State University until 1998 when he retired. But to supplement his income initially Sharp cleaned the local Sears store.

“They would literally lock you in at 9 pm and come back and let you out at 8 in the morning,” he said.

Sharp has always been a “jack-of-all-trades.” Since his move to Iowa he has owned a: home repair service, insurance agency, vending service, hauling service, leasing service, concrete business and car repair shop. Not all of these businesses are running anymore but he still has a few. His last job was being CEO of the Great Iowa Community Credit Union, which he resigned in 2004. He came to Drake because he needed a job.

“It was that simple,” he said.

And Sharp has a lot to offer Drake.

“I can teach in a lot of disciplines,” he said mentioning that he will be starting to teach a statistics course in the spring.

Teaching and his entrepreneurial spirit is what got him the job.

“He has quite a bit of business experience in various entrepreneurial endeavors and has also been the CEO of the Greater Iowa Credit Union,” said Dr. Brad Meyer, Associate Professor of Management and Sharp’s supervisor.

And Sharp says he has no plan on going back to the corporate world anytime soon. He said he’s happy right where he is and that teaching is just the icing on the cake.

“Yes, I like it here. I like that most of the student come prepared when you give them an assignment....they are more friendly here then at Iowa State,” he said.

Students enjoy his humor and how he challenges them to think “beyond the book.” He hopes to teach students life skills by taking what they have learned in other classes and applying them to real life situations,

“Academics stinks without application to real life,” Sharp said.

Students who attend his classes agree.

“Sharp does an excellent job in making the class fun, he brings in new ideas, and tells us funny stories. He also facilitates a classroom environment where everyone is free to put forth their input on certain issues we talk about. He challenges us to study in ways that are non-traditional and tries to challenge us in areas of current affairs especially in trying to incorporate the wall-street journal in our daily lives,” said Rahul Aggarwal, a senior and double major in finance and business management who is in Sharp’s International Business class.

But besides teaching students about real life, Sharp likes learning himself.

“Knowledge is a wonderful thing and I love reading,” he said.

Sharp said he reads over 10 magazines and newspapers a day. But it’s the students that keep him coming back day after day.

Aggarwal agreed. “Professor Sharp is a fun professor that tries to filter out things that are meaningless in real-life. He uses examples from his entrepreneurial achievements and tries to inspire us to grow. He is also very welcoming, he tries to encourage students to visit him during his office hrs and shares his snacks with us too,” he said.

Sharp’s colleagues said they’ve enjoyed working with him as well.

“I have enjoyed working with Prof. Sharp. He is cheerful and energetic. He stays up to date on the business world, and has a lot of good experiences to share with students. He's a good communicator and seems to get along well with students. He is also not afraid to challenge the students to put energy into their work, and that's good. We are very happy to have him on board this year,” said Meyer.

Besides his position at Drake, Sharp still runs the concrete business and repair garage. Sharp also said he is in the process of buying Triplett real estate a company in Ames.

“Kim Sharp is a very hard working guy. He puts in a lot of hours for his teaching here and still runs a concrete business in Ames. From everything that I can see, he is very energetic and put a lot of himself into his work,” Meyer said.

Some may wonder how he does it all...with a constant stream of students in his office and some of his other businesses calling him, Sharp says it all comes down to multi-tasking.

“The busier you are the more efficient you become,” he said. “I don’t like to eat either so that adds a few extra hours into my day.”

And for Sharp, that’s the way he likes it.

For Drake and Sharp it appears that they’ve both found their perfect match. Meyer has while Sharp’s contract runs only through the spring semester he has applied for a permanent position.

“We are in the process of recruiting for a permanent position. He has applied for the permanent position, but we are too early in the recruiting process to say much,” Meyer said. He also said that if Sharp doesn’t get the position that he would likely be put on their adjunct list. As for Sharp he sees it as a new learning opportunity.

“I love getting someone energized about learning, especially someone who has to take a course as a requirement, and having them come out saying they learned something,” he said.