

## **Dennis W. Organ**

*Professor of Personnel and Organizational Behavior, Department of Management*

Our colleague and good friend Dennis W. Organ is retiring this year after joining Indiana University's School of Business in 1970. For 38 years Denny has been a valuable contributor to the research, teaching, and administrative missions of the Department of Management and the Kelley School of Business overall.

Denny received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of North Carolina (UNC), Chapel Hill in 1966 and a Ph.D. in organizational behavior from UNC in 1970. In September of the same year, he joined Indiana University's faculty as an assistant professor. Less than four years later, he was promoted to associate professor, and in 1980 he became a full professor. For the 1998–1999 academic year, Denny temporarily traded IU's cream and crimson for Wake Forest University's black and gold. He joined the Babcock Graduate School of Management as visiting research professor of management.

Denny has taught a multitude of management courses across all degree programs: Human Resource Management, Organizational Behavior and Leadership, Models of Job Motivation, the Herman Wells Honors Seminar, and Managing Business Functions for the Liberal Arts and Management Program (LAMP), on the undergraduate level; Management and Organizational Behavior, Organizational Behavior and Individual Performance, and International Organizational Behavior, for M.B.A. students; and Methods of Research in Organizational Behavior, Theories of Social Influence, and Advanced Topics in Organizational Behavior, in the Ph.D. program.

One of Denny's greatest contributions to our school and our profession is reflected in his service on over 85 dissertation committees. It is this combination of Ph.D. teaching and service that explains why he has had such a profound influence on the careers of so many academics and on the field of organizational behavior in general.

Denny has been a prolific researcher for nearly four decades, writing or editing four books and publishing more than 50 articles in many of the field's top journals, including *Academy of Management Journal*, *Academy of Management Review*, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, and *Organization Science*, among others. One area for which he is most recognized is his work on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). As pointed out by one new scholar, "It would be impossible to conduct research in the area of OCB without citing the groundbreaking work of Professor Dennis Organ." Moreover, according to his colleague, Professor Tim Baldwin, Denny not only studies the concept, "he embodies it."

In addition to Denny's own publications, he has contributed to the field by his service on the editorial boards of many top journals. From 1994 to 2004 Denny served as editor for

IU's journal *Business Horizons*. The hundreds of articles published during his tenure as editor were all shaped in part by his expert advice and insights.

Denny has been inducted into many honor societies, including Phi Beta Kappa, Beta Gamma Sigma, and Sigma Iota Epsilon. In 1990 he was elected a fellow of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology of the American Psychological Society, and in 1993 he received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from UNC's Kenan-Flagler Doctoral Program.

Dan Dalton, former Kelley School of Business dean, describes Denny as "the last of the Renaissance persons at IU." He is an expert photographer able to capture everything from landscapes to sports to animals. Some of his photographs have even graced the cover of one of our field's most prestigious journals, *Administrative Science Quarterly*. He is also an avid reader. Many colleagues have benefitted from his recommendations of "good reads." His eclectic tastes range from a Churchill biography to chronicles of the UNC-Duke rivalry to an academic murder mystery.

Denny is also a huge basketball enthusiast, and an especially loyal fan of both IU and UNC. The challenge comes when the two teams play each other, as they have from time to time. Perhaps even greater than his fondness for basketball is his zeal for baseball. As Dan Dalton noted, his passion for the Atlanta Braves resulted in "much suffering early on, but adoring later on, somewhere in the middle now. [Denny] probably knows more about Tom Glavine, Greg Maddux, and John Smoltz than their respective mothers do." This knowledge qualifies Denny as a true sabermetrician. (For those unfamiliar with this term, Wikipedia defines "sabermetrics" as "the analysis of baseball through objective evidence, especially baseball statistics. The term is derived from the acronym SABR, which stands for the Society for American Baseball Research." Dan Dalton's description of the term captures Denny's skill: "referring to Baseball-Reference.com is likely to be only slightly more illuminating than a discussion with Denny on the baseball data of interest.")

Professor Organ is more than just a sports fan, however. He still actively plays city-league softball, which he has done for more than 30 years. It has been suggested that "he runs as hard as he ever has; he just doesn't get there quite as fast." As noted by colleague Marc Dollinger, it was typical to see Denny's "cool unflappable image" on the softball mound at the annual Pic-a-Chic faculty picnic, "pitching with a soft rubber ball that must have weighed 16 pounds and tossing a variety of slow curves, parabolic smart bombs to bewilder the hitters and impress the spectators." Tim Baldwin added that "even in his sixties, Denny can still drop a single into right field better than anyone else on the team." Both Professors Dalton and Baldwin concur about Denny's pitching prowess noting that "his 'cradle pitch' [the equivalent of a knuckleball in slow pitch softball] has rightfully struck fear in opposing batters for more than 20 years," and "it is a brutal reminder to those younger and older who would underestimate its timeless efficacy." Denny's claim

that he wants to be in “good enough shape at age 65 to be able to score from second on a single” is certainly an achievable goal.

Denny is also nimble on a bicycle or dance floor. Starting with no background whatsoever 20 years ago, in a class that included Professors Phil Podsakoff and Tim Baldwin, he dedicated himself to learning ballroom technique. Today he is master of the foxtrot, swing, and waltz, and he is in the process adding the Argentine tango to his list.

Denny’s many interests are proof positive that he truly is a Renaissance man. The management department will miss his regular involvement in our activities, but we know he will remain a part of the fabric of our department and our school for many years to come.

*Idie Kesner*