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FOCUS ON . . .
ED KELLY

Here's a riddle for you: what does accounting have to do with organic chemistry? The answer: Absolutely nothing...unless you happen to be Ed Kelly. You see, long before he became Dr. Kelly the accounting (and other business-related courses) teacher at Delaware Tech's Wilmington campus, he was known as Dr. Kelly, chemistry and math teacher at A. I. duPont High School.



Ed Kelly

And there was more that happened before, and much more that has happened since. As Ed himself puts it, "I've done a little bit of everything, so my perspective is from a variety of viewpoints."

What does "every-thing" include? Well, for starters, how about a doctorate from M.I.T.? In organic chemistry. (Most of us probably recall having nightmares about just passing—at the undergraduate level—a *single course* in organic chemistry!)

Of course in 1968, the year Ed completed his doctorate, there was a war going on. Having signed up for R.O.T.C. while in college, Ed fulfilled his obligation by serving as a captain in the Army in Vietnam.

After teaching high school chemistry and math for a while following the service, Ed went back to school and, in 1975, earned his M.B.A. from the University of Delaware. Following that, having earned his C.P.A., for six years he taught accounting as an assistant professor at Delaware, as well as at the Wharton Business School at University of Pennsylvania and Franklin & Marshall in Lancaster. He even managed to squeeze in a stint at Hercules.

Then, sometime in 1986, he began to teach accounting at Delaware Tech. Over the years since then he has taught, in addition to Accounting I, II and Intermediate Accounting, Introduction to Business, Business Ethics, and Principles of Management.

According to Ed, the greatest challenge he has faced as a teacher has been "the ability to show patience to each and every student, regardless of their situation." He sees this as an instance in which he brings to bear a distinctive ability—his patience. He has found it essential to get time off periodically during the year in order not to run out of patience. For this reason, he embraces the idea of instituting a mid-semester break in the fall semester, comparable to the spring break in the spring semester.

When I visited Ed recently for this interview, he was poring over a new edition of one of his texts. He showed me a reference it made to Enron and "chaos in the business environment." (This was written before revelations of Enron's collapse came fully to light.) "This is nothing new," he declared. There's always "chaos in the business environment." Given Ed's interest in science, chaos as a scientific and mathematical phenomenon may just become the object of his attention, should he decide some day to once again change careers.