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Bruce Brown: Providing Emotional Support and Educational Guidance

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BRUCE BROWN

Providing Emotional Support and Educational Guidance

Bruce Brown's willingness to continually invest in his students' growth during his 33-year tenure at Furman is one of his greatest assets as a professor and mentor. Within the classroom, Dr. Brown taught a broad portfolio of courses in macroeconomics, growth theory, money and banking, financial institutions, business finance and personal

finance. Beyond Furman's campus, he facilitated study away programs in Brussels, Edinburgh and the British Isles that exposed students to the vibrant cultures and complex histories of these places. Most importantly, Dr. Brown has remained a steadfast presence in the lives of his students well after they complete his courses.

As members of the Brussels study away trip led by Dr. Brown in the fall of 2010, we had an opportunity to benefit from his intellectual curiosity, thoughtful mentorship and wry sense of humor. Many of our favorite memories from the trip center on the weekly check-ins hosted by Dr. Brown and his wife, Dr. Lynne Shackelford (professor of English). As we all crowded together into their living room, Dr. Brown and Dr. Shackelford would encourage us to share our experiences from the previous week. Together we discussed readings from our courses on European history and politics, shared stories from our internships and exchanged tips on our favorite travel destinations.

After our semester in Brussels came to an end, Dr. Brown and Dr. Shackelford helped our study away cohort stay connected by graciously welcoming us into their home to reminisce and share updates on our transitions back into campus life.

Several months later, when Fiona Bloom lost her father to cancer, she

was touched but not surprised when Dr. Brown and Dr. Shackelford attended her father's wake. Their willingness to drive hours to demonstrate their support during one of the toughest periods of Bloom's life is something she can never forget. After a heartbreaking summer, Dr. Brown and Dr. Shackelford's willingness to be present for Bloom and her family helped make her transition back to Furman possible.

At many happier occasions in later years, including Bloom's wedding, Dr. Brown has continued to serve as a source of support and guidance. In short, while Dr. Brown's professional accomplishments are impressive, perhaps the highest compliment we can bestow is this: He always shows up for his students.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The authors are both 2012 graduates living in Washington, D.C. Robin Lewis is a research analyst and associate fellow at the Brookings Institution. Fiona Bloom is an associate at Booz Allen Hamilton.

Two of Kirk's greatest legacies at Furman may be his leadership in the development of what is known as The Block, which meshed accounting, finance, marketing and operations into a single semester-long course, and his tireless efforts in making the analytics lab a reality.

His vision of making Furman's business and accounting programs excellent and enviable included the transformation of the business curriculum and the building of relationships with stakeholders who, through their

generosity, made the Business Analytics Lab a reality.

Kirk envisioned a program of study for the business major that would be recognized as unique, rigorous and grounded in the liberal arts and sciences. He always informed students on the first day of the block that "we are taking you out of college for a semester" as fair warning of the rigor facing them for 20 hours each week.

Now, the program is highly regarded by employers and graduate schools seeking Furman students. And its suc-

cess is the result of the creative disruption and innovation that Kirk brought to the department over a decade ago. Kirk was a wonderful colleague, mentor and teacher. Although we will miss his sense of humor, his creative energy and his dedication to Furman students, we wish him well in retirement.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Suzy Summers is chair and a professor of Furman's Department of Business and Accounting.