Lowell Busenitz teaches what he knows and loves. Growing up around his father’s successful farm and watching four of his brothers build their own farms, Busenitz enjoyed the entrepreneurship of small business. He also had owned his own construction business for five years before deciding to teach others about his passion for entrepreneurship.

Busenitz grew up in Kansas, the youngest of six brothers and one sister. He pursued his undergraduate degree in business administration from Emporia State University, only the second in his family to get a college degree. “Given my parents’ grade school level education, I thought I was doing pretty well to get a bachelor’s degree,” says Busenitz. “Upon completing my undergraduate degree, I figured I would never enter the doors of a classroom again.”

He didn’t know how wrong he was. Busenitz’s first job after graduation was working with college students through Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. With this organization, he trained staff, led conferences and workshops and mentored student leaders on multiple campuses for six years including two years as the state director. He then worked in the construction industry and soon started his own business. After growing restless, he began to reconsider his career and realized his work with students, his experience teaching and his love of business and entrepreneurship could be combined.

With entrepreneurship just starting to be taught at the university level, Busenitz moved his family to Texas and began his graduate work at Texas A&M. After completing the PhD program in 1992, he taught at the University of Houston, predominantly in the area of strategic management, for the next six years until the opportunity arose to come to OU.

In 1998, Price College only occasionally offered an entrepreneurship class or two, not a degree program. Several years after Busenitz’s arrival at OU, he started building the entrepreneurship program from the ground up. He teaches entrepreneurship classes like New Venture Development at the undergraduate, MBA and PhD levels. One of the things Busenitz is most proud of during his time at OU is the development of a growing and nationally ranked entrepreneurship program here at the college. He also cites a highlight of his career in seeing Price College graduates putting their entrepreneurial skills to work in building their innovations within existing and new ventures. He states, “Working with students to build their business plans while in our program and then watching them go on and work in this area is very rewarding.”

Many of these business plans Busenitz refers to were presented and won at the annual Donald W. Reynolds Governor’s Cup Collegiate Business Plan Competition. In the past four years, he has helped coach nine graduate teams and five undergraduate teams to first, second or third place in the competition. Busenitz also has earned high honors in being awarded four teaching awards and five research awards including the University of Oklahoma Merrick Foundation Teaching Award in 2005 and the Best Empirical Paper Award from the Academy of Management, Entrepreneurship Division.

Along with coaching student teams in the Governor’s Cup Competition, Busenitz also mentors doctoral students. He says watching them publish important articles from their dissertation work and going forward with their own successful careers as professionals has been gratifying during his time at OU. Busenitz enjoys Norman as does his wife, Ruthie, whom he met while they were students at Emporia State University. They were married after graduation and will celebrate their 35th anniversary this summer. They have three children, Michelle, Amy and Nicholas, and six grandchildren.