Rajiv P. Dant
Helen Robson Walton Centennial Chair in Marketing Strategy and Professor of Marketing

Rajiv Dant considered India his home through his mid-20s. He was born and raised in the small town of Chapra in eastern India. Until the age of 10, Dant was home schooled by his father, now a retired professor and scholar in literature, and his mother, also well educated. He then attended St. Xavier’s High School, a Jesuit boarding school in Patna. Dant earned both a bachelor’s degree in economics and statistics and an MBA from the University of Bombay. He then worked for SmithKline & Beecham Group for three years before venturing to the United States.

Dant and his wife, Neelam, whom he met at the University of Bombay, came to the United States so that he could earn his doctorate in marketing from Virginia Tech. He says his interest in marketing and distribution channels is attributable to his work in product and sales management functions while at SmithKline & Beecham. Later in his career, Dant became interested in franchising by a chance opportunity. “When I was an assistant professor, I was invited to write a paper for the inaugural International Society of Franchising Conference. I quickly realized that franchising accounts for approximately 40 percent of all retailing in the U.S. and is an American invention that has been cited as one of the fastest-growing U.S. exports to the world,” Dant said. He subsequently was inducted as a founding member of this society.

Prior to his current appointment at Price College as the Helen Robson Walton Centennial Chair in Marketing Strategy, Dant taught at five universities, including the University of Mississippi, Boston University, MIT (while on sabbatical) and, most recently, the University of South Florida, where he served as the Frank Harvey Distinguished Professor of Marketing. He became interested in the opportunity here at OU when Dean Ken Evans, with whom he had previously collaborated on research projects, contacted him about a possible position. Dant admits that Norman was not on his radar screen initially, but it took just one visit to convince him and his wife. He began teaching at OU in January 2008.

In just the past few years, Dant has accomplished a great deal while at Price College, especially in his role as co-editor of the *Journal of Retailing*. During his tenure, the *Journal of Retailing* has consistently climbed in stature and is now ranked as the second most highly cited journal in marketing. He teaches the undergraduate and graduate Marketing Research courses, and the doctoral Seminar in Marketing Theory and Thought. Serving as the doctoral coordinator for the Division of Marketing and Supply Chain Management allows him to mentor and collaborate with the college’s gifted doctoral students as well. He is on the editorial board for many scholarly publications and has received numerous awards for his research, including the 2011 Louis W. Stern Best Article in Marketing Channels and Distribution Award, co-authored with Robert Palmatier, Dhruv Grewal and Kenneth Evans.

He lives in Norman with his wife, who currently works as an editorial assistant. After earning two graduate degrees, Neelam taught literature courses at several universities until the birth of their daughter, Trisha, who is graduating from Carnegie Mellon this May with an undergraduate degree in biological sciences. Trisha will begin at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, this summer to pursue her doctoral degree in immunology and genetics. The Dants have a passion for travel and use every opportunity to visit exotic places around the globe.

Rajiv, Trisha and Neelam at the Capilano Suspension Bridge in Vancouver, Canada.
Dan Ostas grew up in Indianapolis being encouraged by his father to pursue his education every step of the way. In the oil business, his father originally met his mother in Albuquerque, N.M., after their families had immigrated to the United States through Ellis Island. After Ostas’ mother passed away when he was a child, he and his older sister learned a lot from their father’s work ethic. This took Ostas to Purdue University, where he developed a love of learning.

After originally deciding he wanted to become a bush pilot in Alaska or East Africa, Ostas discovered economics and earned his bachelor’s of science degree with honors in three years. He immediately went into law school on his father’s advice, and graduated from Indiana University with his juris doctorate in 1980. After that he practiced law with Legal Services north of Indianapolis. Ostas specialized in poverty law because he enjoyed helping people who couldn’t afford an attorney to represent them in court.

Ostas joined OU in 1999 after spending 11 years at the University of Maryland, where he had earned tenure. He became interested in Price College when Rick Cozier, dean of the college at that time, contacted him about the possibilities at OU for him. The potential for him to live in a small midwestern town, along with other opportunities the college offered, assisted him and his family in the decision. Ostas has taught many classes, including Ethics and Law in Business and Legal Environment of Business, in both the undergraduate and graduate programs during his past 12 years at Price College.

During his time at the University of Maryland and then OU, Ostas has been recognized for his exceptional teaching and research numerous times. Some of his teaching honors include the Outstanding MBA Professor Award, the Bruce Magoon Master Teacher Award, the Harold E. Hackler Award for Outstanding Teaching, the Alumni Teaching Award and the Master Teacher Award. Ostas currently serves as editor-in-chief of the Southern Law Journal and reviews for various other scholarly publications. He previously served as editor-in-chief of the American Business Law Journal and on the editorial board of the Journal of Economic Issues.

He lives in Norman with his wife, Andrea, and three sons, Theodore, Milan and Joseph, all in their teens. Ostas and his wife are looking forward to celebrating their 23rd anniversary this year and they enjoy traveling to Indiana to visit family and friends. Ostas swims daily and enjoys chess and reading.