Welcome Dr. Teppo Felin

Jaime Caliendo

09/03/2021

Professor Teppo Felin has been named the inaugural Douglas D. Anderson Endowed Professor of Strategy and Entrepreneurship at Utah State University. The Anderson chair is one of five endowed professorships established in 2019 by the Jon M. Huntsman Foundation.
Professor Felin comes to the Huntsman School from the Said Business School, University of Oxford, where he served as Academic Director of the Oxford Diploma in Strategy and Innovation and academic area head in strategy, organizational theory, international business and marketing. He will be the founding director of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Study at Utah State University, which will develop cross-disciplinary thinking in business and societal questions through teaching and research opportunities with preeminent scholars from all fields of study. The Institute will create deep connections with Utah’s entrepreneurial, technology, and business communities.

Felin has spent much of his career engaged in interdisciplinary research, publishing extensively in biology, business, psychology, economics, sociology, philosophy, law, strategy, and entrepreneurship. He has won numerous awards for teaching and research and is a sought-after editor and commentator.

“I am thrilled to be joining the Huntsman School of Business and Utah State University as the Douglas D. Anderson Endowed Professor of Strategy and Entrepreneurship,” says Dr. Felin. “I am not only impressed by the students, but also extremely impressed with Dean Anderson’s leadership and vision, and the Huntsman family’s deep and ongoing commitment to the business school and Utah State University. I am excited to establish the Institute for Interdisciplinary Study, and the opportunities this will enable for research, teaching and engagement with the broader Utah business community.”

Douglas Anderson, Dean of the Huntsman School, said, “I am thrilled that Dr. Felin has decided to join us at the Huntsman School, and humbled that he has agreed to become the inaugural Anderson Professor. Nearly every year since 2013 Teppo has graciously agreed to teach our Huntsman Scholars in his Oxford classroom. I am excited that our students in Logan will now have that same opportunity.”

From early interactions with his graduate advisor, Nobel laureate Herbert Steinem, to exploring topics of science, arts, and humanities during High Table dinners at Oxford, Felin’s ideas have often come from unplanned interactions with scholars from all fields of study. “Casual conversations allow us to explore the ways in which different fields intersect, and that yields a deeper understanding of the world,” he says.

Felin continues, “A university education, at its best, is interdisciplinary and broad. It pushes us. It’s at the nexus interaction points where lots of interesting opportunities and insights come from. I want to provide an environment for that.”

Because many of the tools used in business and economics come from fields like mathematics, philosophy, and biology, interdisciplinary interactions allow individuals across different fields to find new ways to apply their tools. “Most disciplines are tightly interwoven, so there’s a natural linkage to think about how we can build common interests. That shared learning can influence how we think about business,” notes Felin, whose current research project applies insights from biology to decision making within organizations.

Dr. Jim Davis, head of the Department of Marketing and Strategy, notes the widespread enthusiasm among faculty at Felin’s hire.

*During his visit, faculty from every functional discipline throughout the School signed up to visit with him. It took three days to accommodate all of the faculty who wanted to visit with Professor Felin. I have never had a visitor energize faculty the way he did. I am confident he will help us achieve the level of excellence for which we strive.*

— Dr. Jim Davis, head of the Department of Marketing and Strategy

David Huntsman, President of the Huntsman Foundation, notes, “Attracting a professor of the caliber of Teppo Felin was precisely what my father had in mind when he set aside the funds that enabled us to establish the Huntsman Fund for Faculty Excellence in 2019. As this fund grows, we expect to create additional chairs and attract other world-class scholars to the Huntsman School Faculty.”