



THE MARKETING NAVIGATOR

Betsy Gelb, the Larry J. Sachnowitz Professor of Marketing at Bauer College, started her career in journalism, but after moving to Houston, she earned her MBA and Ph.D. and focused on the world of academia.



MARKETING PROFESSOR BETSY GELB'S LEGACY INCLUDES 40 YEARS OF SERVICE TO BAUER

Story by Amanda Sebesta • Photo by Nicki Evans

What is a four-letter word that means tenacious, knowledgeable and dedicated?

G-E-L-B.

Marketing professor Betsy Gelb exemplifies that description. From the start of her career at WWL-TV in New Orleans to a four-decade tenure in Bauer College's Department of Marketing & Entrepreneurship, Gelb has a breadth of experience that makes an impression.

Gelb earned an undergraduate degree in journalism from the University of Missouri and worked at WWL-TV and then in public relations for the New Orleans Philharmonic Symphony. From there, she and her husband moved to Houston.

"After we moved to Houston, I worked for the anti-poverty agency here, first as research director, then as delegate agency coordinator, a contract compliance job for legal services for the poor and Head Start," Gelb said.

As she continued her work in Houston, she soon realized that she would need to further her education to succeed in her career.

"Overseeing organizations when you have nothing but a bachelor's degree is less than ideal," Gelb said, "So I decided to get an MBA, and did, here at UH. Then a couple of faculty members said, 'You should get a Ph.D. and become a college professor.' I believed them, so I did, also here at UH. Turns out, they did me a huge favor, and I think more MBA students should consider this career path."

Since getting her Ph.D., Gelb has taught at Bauer for 40 years, impacting thousands of students' lives.

"Once our college received the Bauer gift, everything changed—the faculty and what aspirations we have now for our college, and the students' perceptions that they are indeed at a top-tier

institution and college of business," Gelb added. "But I will say, I have two degrees from this college before the gift, an MBA and a Ph.D., and it was quite a special place even then."

When she's not doing *New York Times* crossword puzzles, Gelb focuses on research interests that include healthcare marketing, advertising and marketing, and public policy.

"My research focuses on the many areas that intersect legal issues, especially intellectual property, public policy and strategy," she said. "Anybody involved with marketing encounters legal issues very quickly, and often executives realize that they want to influence the policy-making that creates those issues. Even a small business will join with others in their industry to try to do so. That's where research comes in; sensible people want to know the effects and possibly the unintended side effects of what's happening or might happen in the legal realm. And overall, I like doing research that has practical applications."

Gelb's most recent research published in *Business Horizons*, an Indiana University management journal, marks a special achievement. This was Gelb's 23rd piece published in the journal since 1972. The publication honored Gelb for her outstanding contributions with the first-ever "Navigator of Business Horizons" award.

Gelb accepted the honor with her trademark humility.

"The current editor of that journal invented that title because I have published so many articles in *Business Horizons*," Gelb added. "I think he just enjoyed the idea that longevity should be recognized."