Devilish and Daniel Webster

Professor Andrew King is one of the world's experts on the 19th-century lawyer and statesman Daniel Webster, but many of his students were never aware of this fact. "When you sit and talk with him," says Krista North, a former student, "he is completely focused on you, on getting you to think, and pushing you to find the right answer." North, who took King's legal writing class as a first-year student, and then worked as a teaching assistant, said his approach to legal writing was the most important ingredient in teaching her to "think like a lawyer.

King, who retired last spring after nearly 30 years on the faculty, was also legendary among students for his sense of humor. In his Property Law class, he used the famous 1805 New York Supreme Court case *Pierson v. Post*, in which two men argue over ownership of a dead fox: the one who pursued it with his hounds and the one who actually killed it. While he explained the argument, a raccoon puppet he smuggled into class would slowly creep its way up to the Professor's ear and whisper: "Who speaks for the fox?"

"I usually got a pretty big laugh," says King, who injected humor into his classes in other ways as well: donning robes for moot court sessions, wearing his Yankees batting helmet to class on baseball season's opening day. "I liked to be non-threatening and put students at ease," he says.

Daniel Webster on the other hand, "didn't have a sense of humor," says King. After receiving his law degree (Harvard, 1966) and a Ph.D. in legal history from the University of Wisconsin, King landed a job working on Webster's legal papers at the Harvard Law School Library. "It started as just a job, but turned into a dream job," he says. King ended up working on four volumes, producing the final two alone. He has also written several papers on Webster, including an entry in the *Yale Biographical Dictionary of American Law*.

While King's research has been impressive, his service to the school and its students will also remain a lasting legacy. In addition to teaching Property every year since his arrival in 1979, he invented and administered the Biography of a Legal Dispute (BOALD) orientation program—a favorite among new students because it involved the litigation of a small case in teams from the trial level through the court of appeals. As Chair of the Curriculum Committee, King earned the respect of his faculty colleagues for his deft handling of potentially divisive issues. "Andy effectively staved off the bad measures, adjusted to changed circumstances when necessary, and helped ensure that discussions, however intense, remained collegial and never descended into anger," noted Dean Karen Rothenberg at an April ceremony celebrating King's retirement.

Active in formulating the school's curriculum to teach legal analysis and writing, King was particularly popular among students in the evening program; in 2007, they presented him with an
award for his lengthy and crucial contribution to the program's core curriculum.

With retirement, King has found himself with newfound spare time; he has lately become "a part-time amateur caterer and chef." A few times a year, he puts on dinners for up to 80 congregants at his synagogue, the Ahavas Israel in Columbia. "I experiment with recipes at home and then translate them for a crowd," he says. Cooking on that scale is exhausting, he says, but can also be meditative: "I'm completely involved in what I am doing."

It's the same way that King focused his attention on his law students. "I always spent a lot of time preparing for classes," he says. "In my eyes, doing well for your students is the equal of any scholarship."

—Martha Thomas

Professor Andy King has mischievously donned the regalia of a different academic institution at each year's School of Law Hooding Ceremony since the early 1980s. Although Professor King has an L.L.B. from Harvard and a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin, his playfulness with attire is a nod to his undergraduate days at Antioch College, a school that has no robes or other regalia. This year, Professor King wore the robes of a University of San Diego Ph.D.