

31st & Pearl

Perfectly Played

Is it just us, or do you and other readers of usmnews.net see the genius in the way former CoB professors, Stephen and Dana Haggard, navigated the academic labor market from 2005-07? A dual hiring situation is always difficult, but the Haggards managed one in 2005, coming out of the University of Missouri and landing in USM's CoB. Then, after one year, they both moved up to Missouri State University, free and clear of the disaster that the CoB has become since 2003, if not before. Now at MSU, the Haggards are together with another former CoB job candidate, Doug Witte, who is on the Missouri State finance faculty.

Put simply, the Haggards' moves were perfectly played. They got a solid year of experience under their belts, worked on some research, and moved on. To be completely clear, however, it should be pointed out that their quick exit from the CoB was not without its catalyst. The CoB's management faculty never *really* wanted Dana, they simply accepted what they had to so that the EFIB could land Stephen. Of course, management's reticence to bring Dana aboard was born from insecurity, as usual. Dana's potential was evident on her c.v., so she would have been a threat to the raise trough that many in the management department have grown accustomed to having complete control over. They reacted to her presence in the usual fashion -- she was banished to a closet-sized office, with a teaching schedule that involved a drive . . . to the Coast, that is. These are the usual trappings of a CoB plan to isolate, and eliminate, an unwanted faculty member. Despite the obstacles, the Haggards persevered. Stephen managed to put together two A-journal research papers, and Missouri State will get the credit. Dana got a good start on her own research agenda, which, again, appears very promising. Perfectly played, for the Haggards *and* Missouri State.

Nothing in life is ever really perfect. There is one play the Haggards could have made that would have been better. Witte played it when he said "No" to the job offer from Harold Doty and George Carter. By doing so, Witte got to MSU without going through Hattiesburg. That's an even better outcome. Still, as mentioned earlier, the Haggards had *two* tickets to punch, not just one. From what we saw, they punched them very well, if not perfectly.