

31st & Pearl

On Carter's Head

The recent CoB reorganization developed by new CoB dean Lance Nail was no surprise to many in the CoB. Rumors have been circulating for weeks about such a plan, and the October meeting wherein the details were made public did not *really* shock anyone in attendance. Given all this time, some had already been thinking about what parts of the new organization might mean for the CoB, and for current CoBers as well. One aspect of the plan -- the merger of economics and information systems into the new Department of Economics and Decision Sciences -- has likely been at the front of the minds of many CoBers who are in the process of working out (in their heads) all of the reorganization's ramifications.

There is little doubt that come 1-July-09 current EFIB chairman George Carter will not be holding the reins of the new EDS department. That is, come 1-July-09 the new "EDS" department will not be the new "ED'S" department, as it would be under Carter's leadership. With a forthcoming change of leadership in economics, don't think Carter and his economics cronies aren't in the planning stages of their own response(s). One prong of their response will likely be an effort to vote in a 3-person faculty governance committee, and one not to include whoever holds the reins of EDS. As ironic as that would be -- a faculty governance *committee* supported by *Carter* -- it is more than likely in the offing. Given this prospect looming over the horizon, a prospect that CoB economists would no doubt like to use to effect a transfer of wealth (future raise monies) from DSers to ECOers, it is not too early for those DSers who are leery of a Carter-led faculty governance committee of economists (keep in mind that the economists outnumber the decision scientists) to begin planning their defense or counter-offensive, whatever the case may be.

I would suggest the following line of thinking for the DSers and Nail. Recall that on "Black Tuesday" Carter used the argument that he was very uncomfortable sharing confidential faculty personnel files with non-administrative CoB faculty. As a result of this discomfort, Carter resigned from the duly elected 3-person governance committee (in Sept-06), voiding that option in the process. Well

here's some food for thought. When (if) the narrow majority of CoB economists votes to set up a 3-person faculty governance committee, the CoB's DS faculty would be wise to pen their names to a joint letter to Nail indicating that they take issue with the fact that, as a result of the faculty governance vote, 3 or (possibly) more CoB non-administrative faculty (presumably ECO faculty) will have access to their confidential personnel files. Upon receipt of such a letter, which would be one that points toward problems of individual rights to privacy, conflicts of interest, and all the rest, Nail will be forced to act.

What action would Nail likely take? Well, if he is prudent he will offer to have the DSers' annual evaluations done under the auspices of CoB associate dean Joseph Peyrefitte's office, or at least something akin to that. In doing so, Nail will be providing those CoB DS faculty with something like proportionality in outcome, at least as far as faculty governance is concerned. Nail will also be championing privacy rights *and* rectifying potential conflicts of interests in the process. It is these aspects of the issue -- i.e., covering the DS faculty -- that will ultimately provide Nail cover as well.