

31st & Pearl

FINito

With the departure of Sean Salter, and with him the CoB's real estate program, the finance unit's final chapter appears to be in press. What has transpired along the southern corridors of Greene Hall over the past 2 years goes to show, once again, that what takes years to build can be brought down virtually over night. The CoB's finance group was once a proud bastion of scholarship and teaching rigor. Its recent alumni now span the country, from Texas Tech in the west to the North Carolina -- Wilmington in the east. The list also includes Louisville, Ole Miss, Roger Williams, the New Jersey Institute of Technology, and now Middle Tennessee State. It's all really a testament to the mentoring done by FIN's senior professors, particularly Tom Lindley. However, in a thumb war pitting construction versus destruction, Lindley, or anyone for that matter, is no match for the destruction skills of individuals like former CoB Dean Harold Doty and EFIB Chair George Carter.

FIN is now down to Lindley and less than a handful of junior professors. If the CoB hangs on to Lindley for another year or two, consider it luck. One could argue that FIN is done, *finito*, now. It's not hard to do. But, when Lindley goes there will be no argument about -- FINito it will be. Like most teardowns in academia, this one was a dark spectacle. It had everything you could ask for, if you're a fan of this sort of thing. A malevolent dean, a compliant chair, money-grubbing faculty eager to move out of one yard and into a greener one, and a form of passive betrayal.

The last ingredient above is arguably the most disheartening. While Lindley spoke out against actions taken by Doty and Carter (and others) against Salter, John Clark, who was brought to USM from a not-so-good situation at another institution by Salter's FIN search committee, sat virtually silent throughout the whole ordeal. The CoB, and particularly the EFIB, is a *male-dominated* institution. Sadly, for the institution, the loss of Salter means the loss of one of its few *men*.