

31st & Pearl

It Ain't Martyrdom

Operating on the premise that many USM faculty do not know how budget cut preparations are being made in colleges other than their own, if even then, it's time to shine some light on one of the practices that CoB administrators have employed in order to shelter *certain favored faculty* from termination. For example, many USM faculty are aware that the CoB's information systems program has been eliminated. As a result, two tenured associate professors – Kuo Lane Chen and James Magruder – have reportedly been informed that their USM employment will end after the 2010-11 academic year. In preparation for this program elimination, CoB dean Lance Nail moved IS chair Donna Davis into the accounting school. Additionally, assistant and associate IS professors Barry Cumbie and Fujun Lai, respectively, were moved into management. Davis and Cumbie are Nail favorites, while Lai's research program is invaluable to the CoB's depleted AACSB portfolio. Other stories indicate that Davis even moved to "secure" the future employment of Dale Lunsford, a recent Davis hire for IS, before disbanding the unit.

Calling Cumbie and Lai "management professors" saved their jobs. It's too bad for Chen and Magruder that they did not get the same consideration. Similarly, former tourism management chair Cherylynn Becker was moved into management months ago. One of the programs that may face some sort of consolidation during the FY 2013 budget cutting process is rumored to be TM. Thus, the preemptive move of Becker may likely one day save her own job in USM's b-school. If TM instructor Evelyn Green is moved into marketing or finance in the coming weeks, we'll know that TM is truly doomed. Of course, it's not likely surprising to long-time readers of USMNEWS.net that a good portion of those CoBers saved in this way are former administrators.

Is any of this inequitable behavior going on in other colleges? One would think so . . . it's practically "the USM way." With another \$10 million in budget cuts expected in FY 2013, some believe this kind phenomenon will only grow in popularity. If so, it's *not* likely that those who will find themselves in shoes like those Chen and Magruder are now in will regret having but one faculty line to give for their university.

31st & Pearl is a series housed at usmnews.net that features commentary on aspects of life in the CoB from a variety of columnists.