

31st & Pearl

Pardon Our Progress

It has been almost three months since the CoB's AACSB Peer Review Team departed Hattiesburg and the CoB is still grappling with what to call the PRT's finding. *Usmnews.net* called it "probation," but former CoB Dean Doty denied that claim. Later, on 4 May 2007, Interim Dean Alvin Williams not only nixed the use of the term "probation" to describe the CoB's AACSB predicament, he also took away the phrase "continuing review," choosing instead to refer to it as "sixth year review." Let's crunch the wording: this is year 5, and we had a review. Next year is year 6, and there will be a review. The reviewing will continue through next year. Continuing to review. Continuing review.

Though a similar process could reduce "continuing review" to "probation," there's no more time for semantics exercises. One-fourth of the CoB's 12 months is done, and it's time to get to work on really fixing what is wrong in the CoB. Step 2: put a sticker on the window of the old Internet server closet that says "Assurance of Learning," or some such. Step 2a: House a bunch of paperwork there. Wait a minute. Are you getting the sense that nothing is really being done yet, that nobody has a clue what to do?

Three more months have passed and none of the junior faculty can tell you what it takes to get tenure and promotion to associate. One quarter of the year is done and the accounting department is still woefully short on scholarly production, though former SAIS Director Roderick Posey is not to blame for that (he has more than 100 publications). 90 days used up and the CoB's mission still only says "Developing careers." It's all very reminiscent of the situation in late summer last year, when Doty spoke to the CoB's faculty about all of the AACSB maintenance meetings that the CoB's management team and others participated in over the summer of 2006, to which one of the participants in those meetings, Laurie Babin, asked: "Is that what those [meetings] were?"

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