

31st & Pearl

The Rule of 72

With Donna Davis' retirement from the CoB's decision sciences group, the organization (the CoB) has now lost 72 faculty since the Harold Doty administration commenced in 2003. Here's a thought: If you've lost 72 faculty (in an academic setting as small as USM's CoB is) since 2003, there is something fundamentally wrong with the way the organization is being managed. Of course, it's not too difficult for those who experienced Harold Doty's leadership from 2003-07 to buy into this thought. It might be at least a little difficult for some of the Lance Nail-ites to do so, however.

Even though current CoB dean Lance Nail has been around only since July-08, the CoB's faculty brain drain has continued unabated. Though his policies are, for the most part, better than Doty's, they still are less than what an organization on the CoB's level should expect. The bad decisions that carried the day from 2003-07 seem to be continuing, as evidenced by the recent decision to name professor Chang-Tseh Hsieh a University Distinguished Professor (UDP). Hsieh currently holds the *McCarty Distinguished Professorship in MIS*, yet a growing number believe that title should now be held by Fujun Lai, an *associate* professor. So, the fact that Hsieh now holds both titles is inexplicable, even to veteran CoB historians.

The 2009-10 academic year will begin on 1-July-10, and the CoB will be without an economics major or department. Some are speculating that the CoB's economists are already planning and executing activities that will hasten Nail's demise, all as a result of his decision to eliminate their major and their nine faculty lines. Nail failed to rid himself of all nine – leaving behind the four mostly junior economists to work in USM's CoAL. Surely considering the personalities involved (e.g., Sami Dakhli), Nail's reputation around campus will continue to be muddied. Sources are already telling USMNEWS.net that his reputation has been sinking like a stone as a result of recent campus politics.

As a recent USMNEWS.net editorial explained, losing Davis will come as a serious blow to the talent-starved Nail administration. The Davis episode shows us all that the faculty flow that has continued unabated since 2003 is still capable of causing serious damage to the college and to USM.

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