

31st & Pearl

Unstreetable Kettle & Pot

The recent USMNEWS.net reports and editorials on William Gunther's opining, in his official capacity as director of the CoB's Bureau of Business & Economic Research, for \$800 billion economic stimulus proposals has us pining for the days when former CBA dean Tyrone Black closed up the Bureau the first time around. Black knew what former CoB dean Harold Doty didn't, and what current dean Lance Nail appears not to, and that is that any business bureau in USM's b-school is a use (waste) of resources meant only to cushion the existence of favored CoBers. In this case it's Gunther, and his associate Ed Ranck. (At least Ranck has, however, been virtuously silent on matters macroeconomic.)

As reported elsewhere, Gunther is cheering on the stimulus and bailouts like he's auditioning for the role of Sparky Polastri in *Bring It On*. One might *actually* think he *is* auditioning for a spot in the current administration, and he would make for a good candidate assuming those vetting for the administration could get beyond Gunther's "not academically qualified" status. Given recent cabinet-level appointment fiascos, they wouldn't want to waste more capital on someone as, to use Gunther's own description of other CoBers, "unstreetable" as "big government" Gunther, even if he does have "spirit fingers" for bailouts and spending.

It's interesting to note at this point that a review of USM's course schedule guides for the 2008-09 academic season reveals that Gunther has taught exactly *zero* sections of principles of macroeconomics (ECO 201). Those sections have instead gone to John Lambert, an assistant professor of *international business*. On the one hand, this may be a good thing. Amazon.com currently lists the university edition of the *DSM-IV*, a likely supplemental text for a Gunther-taught section of ECO 201, at \$129.99 new. USM students are already strapped for cash given the current economic climate, and a supplement to a traditional macroeconomics text used only to cover the psychosis of recessions might push their financial situations over the edge. On the other hand, CoB students can't be learning much more about recessions from John Lambert, the CoB's soon-to-be-in-MGT IB instructor who holds online degrees from Phoenix and Grenoble.

Once again, in USM's CoB it's damned if you do and damned if you don't. There is one safe bet, however. That is to close down the CoB's *Bureau* once again. Consolidate the Center for Economic Education with the Center for Financial Services, and save some money in the process. In doing so, Nail would be making music to the ears of USM provost Robert Lyman. For the CoB at least, how sweet would that be?

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