

31st & Pearl

Niroomand's Statements on "Early P&T" Miss the Mark

Throughout his recent political campaign in support of the 2007-08 P&T files of second-year CoB economists Sami Dakhliya and Akbar Marvasti, former Associate Dean and economics professor, Farhang Niroomand, made a number of faulty and contradictory statements about the merits of the two cases. On one hand, Niroomand stressed that these two had been in academia about eight and 24 years respectively, and therefore there was nothing at all "early" about their promotions. To stress the point, Niroomand told a number of CoB faculty that both Dakhliya and Marvasti wanted to be promoted in their first year at USM, but were instead going up for promotion (to associate and full, respectively) in their second year at USM. However, when pressed as to why the two did not execute applications for promotion in their first year, Niroomand explains that he (Niroomand) would not allow it. Want to know why? According to Niroomand, that was *too early*.

Niroomand put things differently when he told some CoB faculty that, because they had eight and 24 years in academia already, both Dakhliya and Marvasti could already be associate and full, respectively. However, if that were true Dakhliya would not be employed by USM. He would instead be ensconced in the University of Alabama, where he held the position of assistant professor of economics prior to coming to the CoB. What happened there? Apparently the economics faculty told Dakhliya that, even though he had put in the requisite six/seven years on the tenure track, his (Dakhliya's) record was not good enough to warrant a promotion to associate professor. So, Dakhliya was denied that rank in Tuscaloosa. According to the faculty at Alabama, time is not all that matters.

This whole episode leaves me wondering what then-Associate Dean Niroomand would have said to a struggling CoB student who dropped by the Dean's suite to inquire about getting a degree, simply because he had been enrolled in the CoB for five years. Wait a minute . . . isn't that what former CoB Dean Harold Doty's so-called "secret degree" plan was for? Now it all seems to make sense.

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