

31st & Pearl

The Kaetsu Chair Goes Round and Round, Round and Round, . . .

With Interim CoB Dean Alvin Williams' departure for South Alabama looming, it's not too early to begin speculation about the fate of the CoB's Kaetsu Distinguished Chair of International Business, a goodie Williams now holds despite being a marketing professor (i.e., not IB) and the Dean (i.e., not a regular-line faculty). Conventional wisdom would say that three individuals are front runners, and, by "CoB wisdom" only, the CoB's sole IB professor, John Lambert, is not among them. These are former CoB Associate Dean, Farhang Niroomand, whose digital (e-mail) signature will become so long if he gets it that he'll need an additional page just to handle all of the titles, etc. The other two (of three) are economists Akbar Marvasti and Sami Dakhli, the bizarro-world Batman and Robin of the CoB (who are fighting against merit wherever they encounter it).

As long-time readers of USMNEWS.NET are aware, conventional wisdom takes a backseat to "CoB wisdom" more often than not. Don't be surprised if Williams works to keep the Kaetsu out of EFIB for another block of time, perhaps hoping to eventually pull it from EFIB clutches permanently. To that end, an obvious choice would be Michael Wittmann, if not for the fact that Wittmann is an *assistant professor* who already holds the CoB's *most prestigious chair*, the Max Draughn Chair in Healthcare Services (or something like that) Marketing. But, we should heed "CoB wisdom," which does not preclude someone like Wittmann from holding two chairs. If he did, and someone like Bill Smith questioned it, Smith could simply be fired, plain and simple.

I would also advise against counting out a wildcard in this deal. That would be assistant professor of management, Jennifer Sequeira, who is now likely on the verge of leaving the CoB. Something like the Kaetsu could keep her around, and at the same time keep the Kaetsu in the MGT & MKT suite. The more one ponders this, the more it seems like the ticket for Williams. Go for it, Alvin, and soon.