

# *31<sup>st</sup> & Pearl*

## **Doty is Afraid**

Harold Doty is afraid of the possibility of AACSB probation (Continuous Improvement). Harold Doty is afraid of some of his faculty. Most of all, Harold Doty is afraid of the truth. In one thirty minute faculty meeting held on August 25, CoB Dean Harold Doty showed the CoB faculty just how afraid he really is.

In a regularly scheduled faculty meeting, Doty told of how the HVAC replacement was on schedule. I guess he thinks the CoB faculty have all forgotten about the original schedule that had the entire HVAC replacement completed by August 15 – ten days before the faculty meeting that was held in an alternate location because work on the HVAC in the usual location is still not completed and will not be completed until December, just a few months over schedule. Doty lauded the fact that faculty were needing sweaters in their offices as if being really cold is better than being overly warm. I suppose that it will also be a good thing to see CoB faculty wearing shorts in their offices in January – hey, at least it's better than being cold in winter. Doty droned on and on about just how successful the project was, as if repeating it would make it true.

Doty eventually worked his way around to AACSB issues, but was very adamant that the CoB is ahead of schedule for its pending reaffirmation visit, all evidence to the contrary. Support from yes man Dave Duhon wasn't glowing, and Duhon readily admitted that there currently isn't any documentation of assessment processes in place. George Carter, glasses uncharacteristically removed, carried a blank look on his face as he added nothing to the discussion. Tom Lindley asked one pointed question of Doty – Who is in charge of the AACSB reaffirmation effort? After stumbling over his own words, Doty identified no fewer than eight individuals, though he could not remember everyone involved in the process. You read that correctly – the Dean of the CoB could not readily recall the principal players in his college's accreditation process. To newcomers, it must have seemed like an addled man who just has too much to remember. To old hands, it appeared to be what it was – a poor attempt to dodge a question raised by a critic.

Doty's parting shot was, however, a glowing example of his woefully inept nature. In a statement veiled only to those new faculty members, Doty addressed attempts by faculty to sabotage the AACSB process, a statement pointed at Marc DePree in specific and the contributors to usmpride.com in general. There was no effort to initiate dialogue with individuals who disagree with Doty's (and others') actions concerning AACSB reaffirmation. There was no mention of addressing concerns raised on usmpride.com or in other venues regarding accreditation processes. True to form, Doty made his statement in an attempt to quash dissent in the CoB. To his credit, DePree addressed Doty's charges head-on but not rudely, leaving Doty incapable of a response and looking ready to bolt from the room as soon as the meeting adjourned, again true to form.

Old hands sat at least slightly amazed at Doty's ignorance. Some new faculty looked dazed and confused. Why is the dean so flustered by a simple question from an elder faculty member? Why did the guy in the back challenge the dean's statement regarding sabotage? What's going on and why did Doty look so uncomfortable when faced with input and participation from the gallery? It doesn't take James Carville or Carl Rove to know that the smart thing – not to mention the politically astute thing – to do would be to have left the sabotage issue out of the meeting. However, Doty being Doty, he could not let it lie. In the end, his credibility took a hit and he looked a little like a scared kid trying to be a big bad bully, but his only success was in looking threatened by and afraid of some faculty who were merely sitting quietly in the meeting.

As a side note to this debacle, my department (Management and Marketing) had its departmental meeting prior to the college meeting, and we received a tongue-lashing from our chairman, Barry Babin, about just how unethical it is to "spread rumors" and "use innuendo". And that's how the CoB administration views dissent – as malicious attempts to damage them personally, when in fact dissent is a normal and valuable part of academia, although apparently none of the CoB administrators has any intention of ever actually being a real academic. Babin being Babin, however, apparently could not resist an opportunity to show his dean just how loyal he is and how much he can be trusted. Doty has apparently called on his department chairmen to stifle any objection to the manner in which the AACSB process is being handled, and the stifling officially began on August 25, 2006.

What is the need for the secrecy, the closed door policies, and the attempts to discredit critics? The answer is simple: Fear. Fear of the CoB faculty knowing

just how rinky-dink the AACSB preparation has been up to this date. Fear of being exposed as a fraud. Fear of having your impending failure follow you to every job interview you can scam between now and February. Most of all, it's a fear of having to spend the next twenty years at USM with everyone referring to you as the guy who lost AACSB, who lost his Dean's job, and who lost his academic career because he thought he was smarter than everyone else when it turned out that he was just too smart for his own good.

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*31st & Pearl is a series housed at [usmpride.com](http://usmpride.com) that features commentary on aspects of life in the CoB from a variety of columnists.*