

31st & Pearl

Now is the Time for Martyrdom?

Whether or not the ECO group's plan to save the four untenured professors will work, and that is by sacrificing the tenured professors through retirement, remains to be seen. One thing is certain – if former CoB associate dean and economics professor Farhang Niroomand were still around and on the block, he never would have gone for it. Judging by the documents available in USMNEWS.net's library, Niroomand hated "martyrdom," and surely would have opposed Mark Klinedinst's plan to send five, or six with Niroomand, ECO faculty into forced retirement so that four others could continue their USM careers uninterrupted. We can see the e-mail's subject line – "Now is not the time for martyrdom!"

With that, of course, the plan would have likely died. With Niroomand working against it, the others would have likely abandoned it. No, Niroomand would have had some other angle up his sleeve that would probably have resulted in saving all nine at the expense of nine faculty from some other quarter, CoB or otherwise. The fact that Niroomand's home boy, Akbar Marvasti, is in the "saved" category, attests to much, if not most of these views. Marvasti introduced himself on "Black Tuesday" 2006 by berating, in a very public way (i.e., in a contentious department meeting), his new, senior colleagues for not accepting him and/or his antics. Now the king of pop, or the pop-off, is stepping on the careers of five of his colleagues just so his own lackluster career in academia can continue.

The whole episode makes clearer every day that the CoB's economists have been a drain on USM for so many years now that it's difficult to fathom the true costs. They've treated their colleagues (and their colleagues' work) with disdain. They've dominated the CoB's administration for far too long. They've long thought their presence at USM is owed. Even in this final act they behave as if they hold all the cards . . . and the moral high ground.

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