

A Novel Approach to Improve Learning in BA 301/303

As has been reported here at USMPRIDE.COM, Accreditation Team Chair George Carter believes that there are learning deficiencies in business statistics courses, so he proposed that the CoB begin to use Minitab in its business statistics courses (i.e., BA 301/303). Of course, long-time faculty in the CoB know that Minitab has been part of the CoB's statistics offerings for quite a while. There is nothing new about using Minitab as part of instruction in BA 301/303.

We believe, however, that there is a straightforward, perhaps novel, approach to improve learning in the CoB's business statistics courses: Have the statistics instructors hold/meet their classes. As USMPRIDE.COM readers are aware, for the second time in the last four Fridays, statistics instructor (and Chair/Professor of Economics) George Carter has cancelled his BA 301 classes, reportedly for personal reasons. Previous reports and commentary available at USMPRIDE.COM show that another statistics instructor, Professor Edward Nissan, misses enormous blocks of time each semester, traveling around the globe to attend various conferences, have "consultation" with universities, etc. Sources have also indicated that Nissan's travels, particularly to London, often have him away from Hattiesburg for long stretches of time – in some cases 2-4 weeks. Without instructor-contact minutes, students in business statistics courses will have a difficult time grasping the concepts. It is a daunting task for many students even with face-to-face contact, so classroom instruction is often crucial.

The situation involving learning deficiencies in business statistics courses that we describe above is supported by some of the numbers involved. For example, the most recent version of "CoB Travel by the Numbers" shows that Nissan has spent \$12,700 on travel in recent years, while Carter has racked up \$6,750 in his own travel expenses, even though USMPRIDE.COM investigators have only processed a few of Carter's vouchers. That's almost \$20,000 between the two of them, and many more vouchers await processing. Thus, these two are away from Hattiesburg quite often. In addition to these, other numbers are interesting here. For example, according to the "CoB Profitability Spreadsheet" Carter's annual compensation package exceeds \$149,000, while Nissan's extends beyond \$123,000. That comes to a total of about \$275,000 across the two of them, which is quite astounding.

Thus, the approach presented here seems to be superior to the artificial scenario that involves a Minitab panacea.