

Already One of Them

How Coming to USM has Transformed SoA Director Skip Hughes

As many reports here at USMNEWS.net have revealed, new CoB School of Accounting Director Kirby E. "Skip" Hughes II came to USM (from LSU) with a notable research record. However, shortly after arriving he went on the record stating that he would not necessarily commit to important pieces of the CoB faculty handbook – *Enhancing Faculty Productivity*. This transformation was not new; others have transformed similarly. It also did not shock many CoB faculty, as the pages of USMNEWS.net are covered in similar revelations involving others.

Recently, however, USMNEWS.net reporters have uncovered a piece of information that starkly contrasts CoBers like Hughes with others who play by the rules. That information comes via a piece of academic research that Hughes produced since coming to the CoB. The cover page of that effort is inserted below.

**STUDENT EVALUATION OF TEACHING (SET):
STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF FACTORS AFFECTING THE SET RATING PROCESS**

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Abstract

Although the results of numerous studies have challenged the validity of summative SET processes, educators continue their widespread reliance upon this student-generated survey data to evaluate classroom teaching performance. We use the same survey methodology as employed in SET processes, focusing on student perceptions of the relative importance of factors that might affect their SET ratings decisions. By doing so, we attempt to further illuminate student motivations and beliefs that color this process and the usefulness of its information. Surveying 931 accounting student enrolled at twelve public and private colleges and universities, we provide evidence of the following. First, students appear to be grade-driven, those attending public universities more so than those attending private schools, and this factor potentially affects the SET process. Second, although students are capable of discerning "good" teaching attributes from others, they may view their participation in the SET process as a "game." Third, we observe that racial and gender differences do not affect the SET rating process. Fourth, students may respond to valid teaching techniques, such as "cold calling," "pop quizzes," and requiring significant homework, by reducing SET ratings. Lastly, we observe remarkable stability among those factors deemed important by student respondents in making SET rating decisions, both over time and student mix.

Keywords: Student evaluation of teaching. Student perceptions. Rating process.

Thematic Area: Management Accounting

As insert above shows, Hughes has co-authored a research paper with former LSU colleague Larry Crumbley. The title and abstract clearly indicate that the paper is about student evaluations of teaching. Thus, the article would fall under the heading of pedagogy. However, note that Hughes and his coauthor state that the paper fits under "Management Accounting." Is that accurate? If so, would (or will) Hughes allow other CoB accountants to do the same? If not, then Hughes should re-consider his own classification of this pedagogical article.

Of course, the questions above are instructive in the sense that USMNEWS.net has evidence that Hughes is not counting such research as something like "Management Accounting" for others under his charge. As more evidence like this is transmitted to USMNEWS.net, it will be provided here. Be sure to check back often.