

And the Winner is . . .

How Much Faculty Governance is Occurring in the Selection of CoB Dept Chairs?

Reports coming out of USM's b-school indicate that an election of sorts between associate professors Ernest King and Francis Laatsch is occurring to decide who holds the reins in the CoB's new finance, real estate, and business law department. Those reports, coupled with the news that Donna Davis was recently "selected" to chair the new business economics and decision sciences department, lead one to believe that Davis won an election in that department. If there indeed was an election for the head of the BEDS, it's difficult to see how someone from the decision sciences end of it would have carried the day. To see why, examine Table 1 below, which lists the full-time members of each unit (economics and decision sciences):

Table 1
Full-Time Faculty in Economics & Decision Sciences

<u>Economics</u>	<u>Decision Sciences</u>
Carter	Chen
Bonaparte	Cumbe
Dakhli	Davis
Gevrek	Hsieh
Green	Lai
Gunther	Lunsford
Klinedinst	Magruder
Marvasti	
Monchuk	
Nissan	

As Table 1 indicates, in a straight, unit-line vote for a department chair between a candidate from ECO and one from DS, the ECO candidate wins hands down (58.8% to 41.2%). The only way for a DS candidate to win is to run unopposed, or to garner a significant share of the ECO vote. The animus between the ECO faculty and new CoB dean Lance Nail has grown so great since July-08 that an "unopposed" DS candidate seems highly unlikely. Sources tell USMNEWS.net that both Akbar Marvasti and Sami Dakhli would be willing to step up and run for the position so as to assist ECO in its plight within the Nail administration of the CoB. By this same line of reasoning, one would think that with an ECO candidate like either Marvasti or Dakhli the economists, under George Carter's guidance, would hold together firmly and support its chosen one.

Nail's choice of Donna Davis sounds more like the sort of *fait accompli* that carried the day in the EFIB throughout the Harold Doty administration of the CoB (2003-07). Given that, one might conclude that a little bit of "faculty governance took the day off" is just what the doctor order vis-à-vis the CoB's all-too-politicized economists. One can, and should, still hope, however, that Nail confines any faculty governance lapses to matters concerning the CoB's economists. If such a policy becomes widespread then CoB faculty will be left wondering just how much, and how good, the "change" being ushered in by the Nail administration really is after all.