DONNA DAVIS' ROLE AS SEDONA COORDINATOR
Deconstruction of a USM Forum --- No Quarter Message Board *Post*

During the week of July 17, 2006, many CoB faculty were surprised to read that Donna Davis, Professor of MIS, is the official SEDONA Coordinator for the College. That revelation was made by Professor Davis herself on the USM Forum --- No Quarter Message Board. Her post also contained a number of other notable lines. Below we deconstruct each and every one of them as they appeared. Her original post was captured and is included as an Appendix to this document.

Sentence 1: "I, and I alone, am responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the information on the SEDONA database."

Many CoB readers of the Forum must have been surprised to read this. It is somewhat contrary to the now well-known e-mail from Doty to the CoB Chairs, instructing them to remind faculty that SEDONA would be the only source of information for the 2006 annual evaluation process. We are told that one CoB chair even used the phrase "it behooves" to forcefully bring the point home that CoB faculty are responsible for having their SEDONA files complete and accurate by the Spring 2006 process. Some readers of Davis' post were not surprised to read that she was claiming to be responsible for SEDONA's contents. Rumors have been circulating in the College that, not only was she Doty's appointed SEDONA Coordinator, Davis was receiving a 1-course release from her usual course load to "manage" the SEDONA endeavor. Not only that, some claimed that Davis was to be invited to sit in on the actual merit raise evaluation meeting with the CoB administrative team.

Sentence 2: "This is 'work in progress', and does not have enough information on it to be used for any decision making progress."

This statement is quite amazing. Not only does it go against the "warnings" from Doty and the chairs that SEDONA was to be the only way, it supports our belief that CoB administrators were flippant in their attitudes toward allocating about $250,000 in faculty raises. To use a database that Davis admits was incomplete at the time, and that usmpride.com has shown to have countless inaccuracies, omissions, or worse, is astounding.

Sentence 3: "At faculty evaluation time, the decision was made to use the SEDONA interface to enter that data which would be normally put on the yearly faculty productivity report."

One question: why? Was this the same person or persons that made the HVAC decisions? After everything that has come out about merit raise processes in the CoB, business faculty should be under no illusion that the process was "clean" (see prior report on this website) even when paper copies of faculty productivity reports were in use.

Sentence 4: "This was an effort to help faculty become comfortable with the process and remove redundant reporting."

Of course, the effort to help faculty become comfortable came only after CoB administrative staff were put under enormous pressure to meet an arbitrary early January, 2006, deadline to have everyone's SEDONA files completed --- one that came even before the SEDONA developer visited USM to train them and CoB faculty.

Sentence 5: "No data other than the current year research efforts were utilized in the yearly evaluation process."

First, how does she know that? Did she sit on the executive team meeting? Second, this site has provided information that several research items in that database were inaccurate at the time of the evaluation meeting.

Sentence 6: "Much of the other data was entered by secretaries and grad assistants from existing documents."

A number of comments here. It was pointed out on usmpride.com earlier that secretaries may take the fall for SEDONA follies. We hadn't counted on the grad assistants. Are these the same secretaries who were being pushed to work on SEDONA files before they had been trained? We think so. Maybe the existing documents were inaccurate, just as we suspect and indicated just above in this report.

Sentence 7: "No review has yet been done as to the completeness or accuracy of this data."

First, given the Dean's warning this statement is bizarre. Second, since Professor Davis is responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the SEDONA database (see **Sentence 1** above), it looks like she'll be busy this Fall, and may have to work over Christmas break even.

Sentence 8: "For an example, look at the paper presented in 'Hong Kong, Japan', which appeared on the vita as 'Hong Kong' and the person entering the data assumed 'Japan'".

We aren't sure whose vita Professor Davis is referring to here. We have to assume it's her own. If so, she is saying that the person responsible for SEDONA records (Davis) delegated SEDONA duties to a graduate student. *If SEDONA records are confidential, as some in the College may claim, why allow CoB graduate students access to them?* Wouldn't it be reasonable to assume that SEDONA's contents have already become conversation fodder in the Mahogany Bar? And, who will be responsible for SEDONA records in 2006-07 and thereafter when all CoB grad students are gone?

Sentence 9: "The **ONLY** reason for not yet making the data available in a publicly accessable form is that it is incomplete."

We are especially fond of this one. Davis is saying in an **open forum** that the type of data contained in the CoB's SEDONA database belongs in an **open forum**, although she prefaces this by saying **ONLY** after it is thorough and accurate. We have little doubt that Doty and the CoB chairs take issue with Davis' sentiment here.

Sentence 10: "To make any inferences about the College as a whole or any individual faculty member using this data would be foolhardy."

This is perhaps our favorite line. Correct us if we are wrong, but isn't an administrative team meeting wherein raises are allocated one about "making . . . inferences about . . . individual faculty" members? That has been our understanding for some time now. I guess the central administration in the CoB engaged in a foolhardy exercise in the Spring of 2006.

Sentence 11: "The timeline for having up-to-date and accurate info in the database is October of 2006."

This is interesting. We must retract our statement above, Davis will be working weekends through October of this year. Christmas is back on.
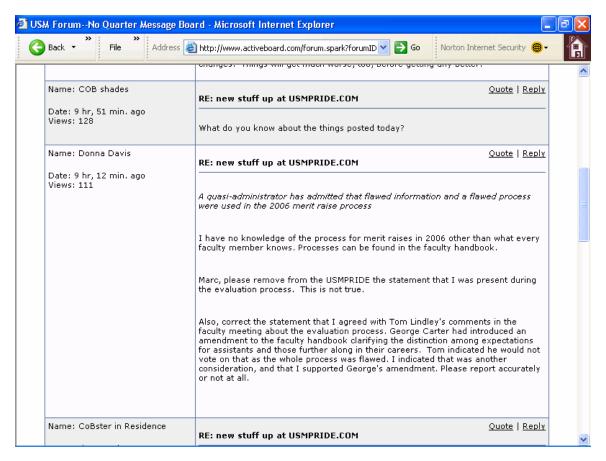
Sentence 12: "To use data that is known to be incomplete, as in not reflecting true conditions as they exist at the time, is clearly unethical under all professional codes of conduct."

This ends the post, and with a bang. When Tom Lindley criticized the CoB merit raise process in the CoB Spring 2006 meeting, calling it corrupt, Davis chimed in to say that she agreed with much of what Lindley had to say before offering her own caveat to that conversation. We agree here, the data should never have been used in the 2006 merit raise meetings.

Appendix: The Donna Davis Post

Name: Donna Davis

Date: 2 days ago
Views: 216

Quote | Reply

RE: USMPride

All of the readers and posters to this board: I, and I alone, am responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the information on the Sedona database. This is "work in progress", and does not have enough information on it to be used for any decision making process. At faculty evaluation time, the decision was made to use the Sedona interface to enter that data which would normally be put on the yearly faculty productivity report. This was an effort to help faculty become comfortable with the process and remove redundant reporting. No data other than the current year research efforts were utilized in the yearly evaluation process.

Much of the other data was entered by secretaries and grad assistants from existing documents. No review has yet been done as to the completeness or accuracy of this data. For an example, look at the paper presented in "Hong Kong, Japan", which appeared on the vita as "Hong Kong" and the person entering the data assumed "Japan". The **ONLY** reason for not yet making the information available in a publicly accessable form is that it is incomplete. To make any inferences about the college as a whole or any individual faculty member using this data would be foolhardy.

The timeline for having up-to-date and accurate info in the database is October of 2006.

To use data that is known to be incomplete, as in not reflecting the true conditions as they exist at the time, is clearly unethical under all professional codes of conduct.

On July 21, 2006, Professor Donna Davis responded to the "Deconstruction" presented above by way of a posted message on the USM Forum --- No Quarter Message Board. Rather than recount in our words what she wrote, we are including a screen containing her message as it appeared. See below.

changes. Things will get much worse, too, before getting any better.

Name: COB shades Date: 9 hr, 51 min. ago Views: 128	Quote | Reply **RE: new stuff up at USMPRIDE.COM** What do you know about the things posted today?
Name: Donna Davis Date: 9 hr, 12 min. ago Views: 111	Quote | Reply **RE: new stuff up at USMPRIDE.COM** *A quasi-administrator has admitted that flawed information and a flawed process were used in the 2006 merit raise process* I have no knowledge of the process for merit raises in 2006 other than what every faculty member knows. Processes can be found in the faculty handbook. Marc, please remove from the USMPRIDE the statement that I was present during the evaluation process. This is not true. Also, correct the statement that I agreed with Tom Lindley's comments in the faculty meeting about the evaluation process. George Carter had introduced an amendment to the faculty handbook clarifying the distinction among expectations for assistants and those further along in their careers. Tom indicated he would not vote on that as the whole process was flawed. I indicated that was another consideration, and that I supported George's amendment. Please report accurately or not at all.
Name: CoBster in Residence	Quote | Reply **RE: new stuff up at USMPRIDE.COM**

At least one other poster countered with a conflicting version of Davis' statement regarding Tom Lindley's comments at a CoB faculty meeting.