

Best & Worst

A Look at Teaching Quality in the CoB

Researchers at USMNEWS.NET have compiled some teaching quality data from the popular website www.ratemyprofessors.com (compiled in 04/2007). Data were gathered on “Overall [Teaching] Quality” (1 to 5 scale, from low quality=1 to high quality=5) and “Ease” (1 to 5 scale, from 1=hard to 5=easy) for all CoB professors listed on the site who had more than one rating. Data for 22 CoB professors were used in Table 1 below, which ranks teaching quality in the CoB using the “Overall Quality” statistic for each professor.

Table 1
Teaching Quality in USM’s College of Business

Rank	Name	Unit	Ratings	Overall Quality	Ease	Ease Rank
1	Jordan, Charles	ACC	2	5.0	2.5	13
2	DePree, Marc	ACC	8	4.8	3.5	5
3	Salter, Sean	FIN	12	4.5	2.9	10
	Sawyer, Charles	ECO	5	4.5	3.6	4
5	Green, Trellis	ECO	14	4.4	2.5	13
	Munn, Patricia	ACC	4	4.4	4.5	3
7	Mixon, Franklin	ECO	3	4.3	2.0	17
8	Bushardt, Stephen	MGT	3	4.2	3.0	6
	Duhon, David	MGT	3	4.2	4.7	2
	Smith, William	MKT	9	4.2	1.9	19
11	Sevier, Amy	MGT	10	4.1	3.0	6
12	Babin, Barry	MKT	4	3.9	1.5	22
13	Carter, George	ECO	4	3.6	2.8	11
14	Vest, Michael	MGT	5	3.1	1.8	20
15	Klinedinst, Mark	ECO	7	3.0	2.2	15
16	Monchuk, Daniel	ECO	4	2.9	2.8	11
17	Nissan, Edward	ECO	2	2.8	3.0	6
18	Babin, Laurie	MKT	2	2.5	2.0	17
	Henderson, Jim	ACC	4	2.5	1.8	20
20	Lewis, Stanley	MIS	11	2.4	2.1	16
21	Chen, Kuo Lane	MIS	3	1.8	5.0	1
22	Osmonbekov, T.	MKT	3	1.5	3.0	6

As the data in Table 1 above point out, the top three instructors in the CoB are [1] Charles Jordan (professor of accounting), [2] Marc DePree (professor of accounting), and [3] Sean Salter (assistant professor of finance) and Charles Sawyer (professor of economics). One of these, Sawyer, is retiring at the end of 2006-07, and another, Salter, was recently handed a terminal letter, the year before his tenure application was to be submitted, by former CoB Dean Harold Doty as part of a process led by Doty, former CoB Associate Dean Farhang

Niroomand, and EFIB Chair George Carter to silence dissent in the College. Carter is the only one among these three listed in Table 1 above, falling in the bottom half of the group in terms of instruction quality.

The table above also indicates that the three worst instructors among the 22 are [22] Talai Osmonbekov (assistant professor of marketing), [21] Kuo Lane Chen (assistant professor of MIS), and [20] Stanley Lewis (professor of MIS and Interim Director of SAIS). Two of these three are *untenured* assistant professors, while the third is currently a CoB administrator. In fact, the third is the Interim Director of SAIS, the separately accredited CoB Department that has come under fire from the CoB's AACSB Peer Review Team concerning a number of quality-control shortcomings found during the February of 2007 AACSB Maintenance of Accreditation Review.

One final piece of information is noted from Table 1 above. Despite being the second worst instructor among the 22 CoB faculty listed above, Kuo Lane Chen is also the easiest professor among the group of 22. In terms of "easiness" she is followed closely by David Duhon (professor of management) and Patricia Munn (instructor of accounting). Readers of USMNEWS.NET will recall that Duhon is the professor of management who secured that title through a now *infamous* "letter of agreement" from former CoB Dean Doty.

It is likely that the ease of one's course affects the students' ratings of the overall quality of one's instruction. To account for that, researchers at USMNEWS.NET created an index of quality equal to the "Overall Quality" scores in Table 1 above divided by the "Ease" scores in Table 1. The resulting "Teaching Quality Index" is used to produce the rankings below in Table 2.

Table 2
Adjusted Teaching Quality in USM's College of Business

Rank	Name	Unit	Ratings	Teaching Quality Index
1	Babin, Barry	MKT	4	2.60
2	Smith, William	MKT	9	2.21
3	Mixon, Franklin	ECO	3	2.15
4	Jordan, Charles	ACC	2	2.00
5	Green, Trellis	ECO	14	1.76
6	Vest, Michael	MGT	5	1.72
7	Salter, Sean	FIN	12	1.55
8	Bushardt, Stephen	MGT	3	1.40
9	Henderson, Jim	ACC	4	1.39
10	DePree, Marc	ECO	8	1.37
	Sevier, Amy	MGT	10	1.37
12	Klinedinst, Mark	ECO	7	1.36
13	Carter, George	ECO	4	1.29
14	Babin, Laurie	MKT	2	1.25
	Sawyer, Charles	ECO	5	1.25
16	Lewis, Stanley	MIS	11	1.14

17	Monchuk, Daniel	ECO	6	1.04
18	Munn, Patricia	ACC	4	0.98
19	Nissan, Edward	ECO	2	0.93
20	Duhon, David	MGT	3	0.89
21	Osmonbekov, T.	MKT	3	0.50
22	Chen, Kuo Lane	MIS	3	0.36

According to the “Teaching Quality Index” in Table 2 above, the top three instructors among the 22 CoB faculty included here are [1] Barry Babin (professor of marketing and Chair of the Department of MGT &MKT), [2] William Smith (assistant professor of marketing), and [3] Franklin Mixon (professor of economics). The top instructor, Babin, is departing the CoB to become a departmental chair at Louisiana Tech University. As was the case with Table 1, the data point out that the quality of instruction in the CoB may take a significant blow beginning 2007-08.

Table 2 also shows that the worst instructors among the 22 are [22] Kuo Lane Chen (assistant professor of MIS), [21] Talai Osmonbekov (assistant professor of marketing), and [20] David Duhon (professor of management). It should come as no surprise that Duhon, who needed to secure a “letter of agreement” to reach to rank of professor, is one of the worst instructors among the 22 above. Also, the reappearance of Chen and Osmonbekov, two *untentured* assistant professors, is interesting.

The rankings in Tables 1 and 2 above were used to produce a composite ranking of the 22 CoB professors who have more than 1 student rating at www.ratemyprofessors.com. That ranking is presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Composite Ranking of Teaching Quality in USM’s College of Business

Rank	Name	Unit	Average Ranking, Tables 1 & 2
1	Jordan, Charles	ACC	2.5
2	Green, Trellis	ECO	5.0
	Mixon, Franklin	ECO	5.0
	Salter, Sean	FIN	5.0
	Smith, William	MKT	5.0
6	DePree, Marc	ACC	6.0
7	Babin, Barry	MKT	6.5
8	Bushardt, Stephen	MGT	8.0
9	Sawyer, Charles	ECO	8.5
10	Vest, Michael	MGT	10.0
11	Sevier, Amy	MGT	10.5
12	Munn, Patricia	ACC	11.5
13	Carter, George	ECO	13.0
14	Henderson, Jim	ACC	13.5
	Klinedinst, Mark	ECO	13.5
16	Duhon, David	MGT	14.0

17	Babin, Laurie	MKT	16.0
18	Monchuk, Daniel	ECO	16.5
19	Lewis, Stanley	MIS	18.0
	Nissan, Edward	ECO	18.0
21	Chen, Kuo Lane	MIS	21.5
	Osmonbekov, T.	MKT	21.5

Charles Jordan, professor of accounting, comes out on top in the composite ranking. He is followed by four faculty who are tied for second. These are Trellis Green (associate professor of economics), Franklin Mixon (professor of economics), William Smith (assistant professor of marketing), and Sean Salter (assistant professor of finance). These four are followed closely by Marc DePree (professor of accounting), Barry Babin (professor of marketing), Stephen Bushardt (professor of management), Charles Sawyer (professor of economics), and Michael Vest (professor of management).

Once again, current chairs George Carter (professor of economics) and Stanley Lewis (professor of MIS) fall in the bottom half of the list, as do David Duhon (professor of management) of “letter of agreement” fame, and Edward Nissan (professor of economics), the CoB’s resident world traveler who is often away from his teaching and service duties back at USM.

Table 4 below provides an alphabetical listing of the seven CoB professors who show up among the top 10 in both Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 4
Instructors Consistently Among the Top 10

Name	Unit	Rank in Tables 1 and 2, Respectively
Bushardt, Stephen	MGT	8 th & 8 th
DePree, Marc	ACC	2 nd & 10 th (tie)
Green, Trellis	ECO	5 th (tie) & 5 th
Jordan, Charles	ACC	1 st & 4 th
Mixon, Franklin	ECO	7 th & 3 rd
Salter, Sean	FIN	3 rd (tie) & 7 th
Smith, William	MKT	8 th (tie) & 2 nd

The “Consistently Top 10” group above includes two from ACC (Jordan and DePree), two from ECO (Green and Mixon), one from FIN (Salter), and one each from MGT (Bushardt) and MKT (Smith).

Table 5 below provides an alphabetical listing of the seven CoB professors who show up among the bottom 10 in both Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 5
Instructors Consistently Among the Bottom 10

Name	Unit	Rank in Tables 1 and 2, Respectively
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Babin, Laurie	MKT	18 th (tie) & 14 th (tie)
Carter, George	ECO	13 th & 13 th
Chen, Kuo Lane	MIS	21 st & 22 nd
Lewis, Stanley	MIS	20 th & 16 th
Monchuk, Daniel	ECO	16 th & 17 th
Nissan, Edward	ECO	17 th & 19 th
Osmonbekov, T.	MKT	22 nd & 21 st

The “Consistently Bottom 10” group includes three from ECO (Carter, Monchuk, and Nissan), two from MIS (Chen and Lewis), and two from MKT (Babin and Osmonbekov).

Commentary by Duane Cobb

This is another interesting report on teaching quality in the CoB. There are some words of caution with this report that should be made clear. First, this report uses data from www.ratemyprofessors.com, a database that does not require registration and other protocols that ensure quality data. Other reports on grades and teaching quality here at www.usmnews.net make use of data from www.pickaprof.com, a website that has such registration and other protocols. Second, some of the ratings numbers in the tables above are small. The report explains that only CoB professors who have more than one rating are used. This method still includes three professors with only two ratings, and a handful with only three.

Having voiced these cautionary words, one can only work with the data that are available, and www.ratemyprofessors.com is one publicly available source of teaching quality data. Thus, investigators at www.usmnews.net are making use of it, along with data from www.pickaprof.com. As long as CoB administrators keep teaching quality data locked away in a vault, along with faculty vitae and other records of committee service, etc., these and other sources of information will continue to be primary sources of information about teaching quality in USM’s College of Business.

One thing that is interesting about the teaching quality reports that are appearing quite regularly at www.usmnews.net is that they all point to the same general conclusions. For example, Nissan and Carter, two CoB faculty consistently ranked in the bottom 10 here, are also highlighted in some of the reports about grade inflation in the CoB. Other reports available at www.usmnews.net indicate that Carter spends much of his class time preaching to students about how to live their lives, rather than instructing them on the principles of economics or elementary statistics. When the weight of evidence is pointing in a single direction, any shortcomings in a particular data source diminish in importance.

Duane Cobb