

COB

Confidential

A number of items have arisen for discussion in this issue of *CoB Confidential*, one of which is a major point of emphasis at usmpride.com as we write. A line-by-line response to Donna Davis' recent post at USM Forum --- No Quarter Message Board brings up a couple of interesting items for us to reflect upon regarding this issue.

First, Professor Davis indicates in her message that graduate students in the CoB did much of the work of inputting information into the SEDONA faculty files. As the line-by-line response asks: If CoB administrators insist that SEDONA data are confidential, why were CoB G.A.s tasked to do the input work? Of course, SEDONA data are typical vitae information, the type of information that is often displayed on university webpages, as our first issue of *CoB Confidential* demonstrated using the case of South Florida. We were pleased to read that, in her own post, Professor Davis takes the same position we take here at *CoB Confidential* --- that SEDONA-type information is not confidential in any *real* way.

Another interesting bit of information related to our mission here at *CC* was relayed to us by an attendee at the CoB 2006 Spring Faculty Meeting. Laurie Babin, Professor of Marketing, went into deep detail in describing a situation involving academic fraud (plagiarism) committed by CoB graduate students during the Spring semester of 2006. Professor Babin was encouraging other professors to use "turnitin.com," a website devoted to detecting plagiarized work. According to Babin, USM maintains a paid license to use the web-based service, and she explained that it was useful to her in capturing the miscreants. As she described, she gave the turnitin.com password (for USM) and a stack of written work from her **graduate class** to her **GA**, and she asked her **GA** to examine the

turnitin.com scan results and report to her with any information concerning the likelihood of plagiarism. We can't help but wonder how this passes muster using the CoB Administration's definition of confidential/not confidential. Perhaps an investigation is in order.

This issue of *CC* concludes with an interesting episode of "confidentiality" involving CoB Dean Harold Doty. If you've examined the USF-visit webcast in great detail, as we have at *CC*, you will certainly recall the story that Doty recounted to the USF faculty (and the whole world) about the "terminal letter" that his former graduate student (whom he mentions by name in the talk) received about two years before his USF visit. By "terminal letter," he meant "termination of her employment," as we are sure the USF faculty understood at the time. He used that story of her difficulties to convey his dedication to, and support of, quality research. As he stated, she (his former GA) found a happy ending when the two of them (GA and Doty) got a paper accepted by the *Journal of Business Research*, and the decision conveyed in her original letter was overturned.

Until next time.