

Can a Dean Take a Sabbatical?

The 2007-08 Academic Year in the CoB may Provide an Answer

A little known fact in the CoB these days is that two (2) CoB professors – Alvin Williams and Catherine Price – were granted sabbaticals for the 2007-08 academic year. These leaves were approved by the IHL Board at its 18-Apr-07 meeting, as shown by the insert below:

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

April 18, 2007

SABBATICAL LEAVE

University of Southern Mississippi

Goertez, Christopher

Kuczaj, Stanley

Mitra, Amal

Price, Catherine

Torres, Jennifer

Williams, Alvin

These approvals continue the curious selection of faculty who are in their “PERS window” with USM. Sabbaticals are usually thought to be tools to begin the development of long-term research agendas. Williams’ selection is also interesting in that he was named Interim Dean on 9-Apr-07. Will Williams be able to take this sabbatical in the spring of 2008? Not likely, given that the CoB’s AACSB Peer Review Team must make a return (6th Year Review) visit around February or March of 2008.

Price’s application and selection is also significant, given the loss of faculty in the tourism management area over the past few years. That exodus continued into the summer of 2007 with the departure of Zaher Hallab, an associate professor of tourism management. With Price’s sabbatical, *Emerging Scholar* and associate professor of tourism management Cherylynn Becker will be the only PhD on staff in TM during either the fall 2007 or spring 2008 semester. Given the CoB’s floundering AACSB situation, Price’s sabbatical couldn’t have come at a worse time for the institution.

Just recently USMNEWS.NET re-ran its story entitled “Are CoB Students Getting Their Money’s Worth?” With the collapse of marketing and finance, and the depletion of tourism management, it’s virtually impossible to offer a “yes” at this point.