

CoB Flashback: Duane Harold Doty's First Day as Dean

In January of 2003, former USM President Shelby Thames fired all seven of USM's Deans. He did so without any warning, and he did so as part of restructuring the University. Thames trimmed seven colleges into five, and reorganized USM's College of Business Administration so that what emerged was a new College of Business and Economic Development. Thames then set out to hire five new Deans in just six months, a feat most USM faculty believed would be difficult to accomplish.

Thames accomplished the feat, in part by bringing in the chair of the management department at Syracuse University, Duane Harold Doty, to lead the new CBED. Doty took charge of the CBED during the summer of 2003. Even on his first official day in office, Doty reportedly had two appointments, bright and early. Former Economics & International Business department chairman, George Carter, reportedly had an 8:00am scheduled appointment with Doty. One doesn't have to stretch the imagination to know that Carter wanted to speak with Doty about the "culture" of the business school at USM. Carter undoubtedly told Doty who the power brokers in USM's business school were, and who the potential dissenters were. Doty probably took notes. Carter may have also spoken to Doty about the kinds of things that USM's b-school administrators often used against one another to maintain cohesion within the group. There is little doubt that Doty got what at least amounts to a primer on what management professor Stephen Bushardt refers to as the "heroes and storytellers" of USM's business school, and how "rituals" can maintain the "culture" (and, to use Alvin Williams' term, its "nuances").

At 9:00am, Doty reportedly had a second appointment. This one was with MIS professor Donna Davis. There is little doubt that Davis used the occasion to speak of new paradigms in business school management and in business school curricula. She may have also taken the opportunity to "rat out" some of her MIS colleagues. Undoubtedly there was a lot of what Farhang Niroumand calls "self-promotion" going on during the Davis-Doty meeting that morning. After just a few minutes with Davis, Doty must have felt that he needed some sort of academic RosettaStone just to keep up with all of the jargon and academe-speak spewing from Davis' mouth. Those who have spent a lifetime (it seems) sitting through a 20-minute AACSB Assessment presentation by Davis understand what must have been going through Doty's mind that summer 2003 morning.

Fast forward to now, May of 2008. Doty is out as the business school's dean. Carter is back on top of the economics, finance and IB department. Davis is now the AACSB Assessment Coordinator *and* the Director of Graduate Programs. The old adage about the early bird and the worm really is accurate.