

# CoB News, 10 August 2009

## The Bad Column

The recent USMNEWS.net report, "Another Nail Pal in the Bad Column," reporting on CoB dean Lance Nail's decision to hire Brian Lee from UAB, indicated that Lee's *Rate My Professors* score was an underwhelming 2.9 (out of 5). This finding followed on the heels of reports that the previous Nail hire, Arthur Sorochinsky (also from UAB), has an even worse *RMP* score of only 2.6. **CoB News** is following up on these stories by listing the 10 worst *RMP* scores across current CoB faculty. The "bad column" data are shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1**  
**10 Worst Rate My Professors Scores Among Current CoBers**

Name	Unit	Rate M Professors Score
Drake, Erin	Fashion Merchandising	1.0
Chen, Kuo Lane	Decision Sciences	1.8
Fennell, Wanda	Management	2.1
Lloyd, Dolly	Marketing	2.2
Nissan, Edward	Economics	2.5
Sorochinsky, Arthur	Accounting	2.6
Lambert, John	International Business	2.8
Lee, Brian	Finance	2.9
Klinedinst, Mark	Economics	3.0
Marvasti, Akbar	Economics	3.2
Simmons, Valerie	Accounting	3.2
Smith, Robert	Accounting	3.2

Note: Some scores come from previous institutional affiliations.

As Table 1 shows, the only CoB faculty below 2.0 are FM's Erin Drake (at 1.0) and DS' Kuo Lane Chen (at 1.8). Chen's struggles with teaching, and tenure, have been the subject of numerous reports here at USMNEWS.net. Drake's poor performance will likely add some fuel to speculation that FM is a target of Nail's efforts to cut \$2 million from the CoB's 2009-10 budget.

Two of the 10 worst CoB scores come with Nail's hires, Sorochinsky and Lee. As reported previously, Sorochinsky is a finance-trained hire who will teach *accounting* in the CoB (beginning in 2009-10). Lee is a finance guy who will live in the new CoB Honors House with 12 male CoB majors and 12 co-eds from the CoB. The HH will be located in the old Kappa Sigma house on fraternity row. Interestingly, there are a

number of *instructors* among the 10 worst CoB teachers. These are Wanda Fennell, Dolly Lloyd and Valerie Simmons. While this news could put them on a cut list as individuals, none is from an academic unit thought to be in jeopardy at the moment. ECO, on the other hand, has three on the list above – Edward Nissan, Mark Klinedinst and Akbar Marvasti. These three faculty are paid about \$290,000 (combined) in salary alone (per year). With benefits, the total rises to about \$350,000, which is certainly a lot of money for relatively bad teaching performers.

## **Budget Cutting can be an Opportunity** by *Victoria Tyler*

Engage anyone from the local community in a discussion (debate) about MS higher education and you're almost certain to hear that Mississippi has *too many* 4-year public universities. The argument, which says that MS is too poor to spread its few resources across so many institutions, is a sound one. It stands to reason, then, that within any of these public universities, there are too many academic programs. So when one reads the [driveling blog](#) about the budget cuts by College of Health dean Michael Forster, wherein the CoH's academic programs are likened by Forester to children who are too precious to be harmed in any way, one sees just why the non-academic communities in MS are often exasperated by those in higher ed. According to Forster, cutting CoH programs amounts to an "unspeakable act" because they are "vital to the health services system of the state." The reality of the situation is that there *is* some fat in CoH, just like anywhere else. What USM needs to do at this moment in time is to become the leaner institution it once was, back when it competed more effectively with the likes of Ole Miss and Mississippi State. For the CoB that probably means cutting the economics program. And since the \$1 million in savings that will result from that cut cover only half the \$2 million tab, other programs will have to go as well. But, as the CoB's resources ultimately grow from this low point in its history, there will be fewer programs around to feed. As a result, the remaining programs will have a fighting chance to achieve a level of regional and national acclaim that could really benefit the CoB, and also USM. If this budget-cutting season passes with no real thought given to the possibilities that come with it, then CoB dean Lance Nail will have missed out on a real opportunity to make a positive change.

## **The Beginnings of *Nail's* CoB**

The news item above highlights the teaching quality of two of CoB dean Lance Nail's recent hires. Having been at the helm of the CoB only since 1-July-08, Nail has not yet

had the opportunity to make many hires. Only three are now on campus. These are noted in the insert below:

**Nail's New Hires (by Unit)**

Kirby "Skip" Hughes	Accounting
Brian Lee	Finance
Arthur Sorochinsky	Accounting

The CoB's School of Accountancy was arguably the division of the organization that most needed Nail's attention. After about 14 months of Nail's leadership, sources tell USMNEWS.net that it is not altogether clear whether Nail has improved the division or made it worse through the hiring process. While it can be argued that the addition of Hughes was a plus, the Sorochinsky hire may have undone that plus, and then some.