

CoB News, 19 October 2009

Things are Bad

In the “things are bad” file, CoB faculty are urged to attend future meetings of USM’s faculty senate if they are interested in just how disastrous the Mississippi budget situation will be in 2011 and 2012 for USM. Doing so may be the only avenue to gaining adequate information, especially given who represents the CoB on that body (e.g., Mark Klinedinst). USM provost Robert Lyman usually presents an updated situation report on the budget crisis, and some of his recent comments have been quite chilling. Meanwhile, ECO’s Klinedinst has spent the past two meetings urging faculty senators to set up a faculty body that will mediate any proposed faculty terminations that result from program eliminations. Klinedinst appears to believe that faculty bodies of this sort can prevent USM administrators from terminating tenured/tenure-track faculty like those in economics and education technology. Of course, if there is any legislative movement on this front, USMNEWS.net will provide an extensive report for readers.

The Firm

The former CoB tourism management duo of Tanya Ruetzler and Jim Taylor are continuing to light up the board at Ole Miss. They recently co-authored an article for the *Journal of Foodservice*.



Meanwhile, it appears as though editorialists at USMNEWS.net were correct about another former CoB TMer, Zaher Hallab, now with California State University at *East Bay*. Since departing from USM in 2007, what existed of Hallab’s research program has fallen off of the proverbial table. Long-time readers of USMNEWS.net will recall that a number of reports and editorials showed Hallab to be the recipient of unwarranted annual raises from the failed Harold Doty/Farhang Niroomand administration (2003-07) of the CoB.

Hurrah for Lai

It appears that MIS' Fujun Lai is now the *McCarty Distinguished Associate Professor of MIS*. Lai, who also won the 2009 Louis K. Brandt Faculty Research Award, has been the subject of numerous editorials here at USMNEWS.net that have questioned why the most recent holder of that professorship, Chang-Tseh Hsieh, continued to hold the honor despite having long since been passed by Lai on the research ladder. Now, that apparent injustice has been rectified, even though all of USM's distinguished professorships are currently *underwater* in the *financial sense*. And as recent reports indicate, things are still great for Hsieh, who was named (in Sept-09) one of only four University Distinguished Professors by the Martha Saunders administration. It is believed that Hsieh's new award is accompanied by a financial stipend, representing another slap in the face to Lai. Finally, if there is a downside to Lai receiving the *MDAP* in MIS it is in the fact that Lai is only an *associate* professor. In that rank he joins Michael Wittmann, the *Draughn Distinguished Associate Professor of Healthcare Marketing*, as "junior" professors who hold so-called distinguished professorships. This outcome shows just how thin the CoB is in senior-level talent. Many expect another junior professor, Mary Morgan, to soon pick up a distinguished professorship in accounting.