

## **CoB at a Crossroads**

### **PART 2**

Many followers of the trials and troubles of USM's College of Business believe that the institution has been forever relegated to bottom of the academic food chain. Others recognize the many problems, yet they still have hope that the organization can be turned around. However, even those in this group understand that if a turnaround is to succeed, it must begin with the hiring of the CoB's next Dean. This new series, "CoB at a Crossroads," takes a multi-part look at the many problems that the new Dean of the CoB will face as the 2008-09 academic year begins.

#### **The Doty Era: Hubris, Intemperance, and Farhang Unleashed**

The biggest influence on where the CoB is today, January of 2008, has been Duane Harold Doty's tenure as Dean of the College -- a period that ran from 2003-2007, and ended with Doty's shocking resignation on 9-April-07. Doty's first appearance in the business college at USM came during the Spring of 2003, when he was selected as a finalist for Dean's opening in USM's newly formed College of Business & Economic Development. The previous business Dean, William Gunther, had been fired by then-President Shelby F. Thames in January of 2003. Upon firing Gunther, Thames reorganized the business college, adding new departments/units, such as economic development, fashion merchandising, and tourism management.

During his campus interview, Doty paraded around Greene Hall displaying a sense of superiority over those employed at USM. Marketing professor, Barry Babin, questioned Doty's intentions during the faculty presentation portion of the visit. Babin even went so far as to tell Doty that anyone who applied for a position in administration at USM amidst the turmoils of the Thames Administration, as had Doty, should not be considered a quality candidate to lead USM's business school into the future. Doty's motivation seemed to be, as he put it, a willingness to escape the snow of the northeast.<sup>1</sup> Like the other candidates, Doty also stated, disingenuously as it turned out, that the insertion of economic development into USM's "b-school" provided a unique opportunity to develop some synergies that would move the USM business college upward in stature and importance.

Doty was hired shortly thereafter. According to sources, the hire was made without contacting any of Doty's references in order to investigate the quality of the fit. That would turn out to be a fatal flaw in the search process, given the destruction that would soon begin to be left in the wake of Doty's first attempt to lead a sizable organization. Not even a PhD in management from the University of Texas would save the CoB, and its faculty, from the harm Doty would cause during his 4-year reign.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Doty came to the CBED from Syracuse University, where he had been a department chair in SU's business school.

<sup>2</sup> Doty holds a PhD in management from UT -- Austin, and, according to sources, loves to talk about his top tier educational background.

Doty's earliest decisions as Dean of the CBED were some of his worst. First, he chose to retain Gunther's Associate Dean, Farhang Niroomand. Niroomand had already begun to use the CoB as his personal playground under Gunther's leadership. Under Doty, that would continue. However, Doty's acerbic personality, combined with his penchant for in-fighting, gave Niroomand an entry into a world he had not fully experienced under Gunther's leadership. While Niroomand ruled the CBA under Gunther, he would also have a freedom to harass and attack faculty, and sometimes even staff, under Doty that was, up until then, not seen in the business school. Niroomand used that freedom, and the CoB is now paying the freight for Doty's decision to provide him with it. Interestingly, Niroomand, in a surprise move, resigned his position as Associate Dean on the same day -- 9-April-07 -- as Doty vacated the Dean's office. Many in the CoB believe that Niroomand's antics may have sunk the both of them.

Doty also chose, early on, to elevate economics professor Mark Klinedinst to Chair of the EFIB. Klinedinst had become so removed from activities in the college by that time that some faculty in management referred to Klinedinst as "the ghost." According to sources, during his first departmental meeting, Klinedinst introduced the EFIB faculty to a new member of the department -- David Sharp. Klinedinst was immediately informed that Sharp was not only *not new*, he had already completed his third-year review in the business college by that time. It was Klinedinst's absence from the college's daily life that had led to such a glaring error, and that level of incompetence would, according to sources, haunt the EFIB for two more years.

Perhaps the highest profile error in judgment made in those early days by Doty was his decision to meet with his new faculty on a one-on-one basis. In these brief encounters, the ill-prepared Doty patronized, chastised and criticized the work and careers of his new "colleagues." In fact, Doty's performance was so disastrous during this period that many in the CBED believed that his fate, and theirs, was sealed. Doty had published in *The Academy of Management Journal*, and he let the CoB faculty know that each of them would be expected to publish in the top two or three journals in their respective fields. Little did the CoB faculty know at that time that Doty's own career appears to have come off the backs, and the names, of his co-authors -- Glick, Delery, and the rest.

Doty's reign went from bad to worse. His administration often pitted faculty against one another. And, Doty would often pit the CoB faculty against the central administration of USM, particularly in the fight over online course offerings. During that battle, Doty bragged to CoB faculty about his ability to thwart the aims of USM's central administration, all the while he let USM's central administration believe that faculty (forces) inside the CoB were working against the institution.<sup>3</sup> Also during that battle, Doty made use of a secret, *ad hoc* committee, consisting primarily of University support staff and compliant business faculty, to push through some significant expenditures on

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<sup>3</sup> During his Sept-2005 campus interview at the University of South Florida, Doty boasted to USF faculty and administrators that the USM central administration was so fractured it was unrecognizable. As one source put it, even during his "speech" to USF, Doty was implementing the first stages of his "human resource management strategies" on the USF family. Of course, USF decided not to hire Doty, just as so many other institutions have decided at various points between 2003 and the present.

electronic delivery (of "education") hardware -- hardware that, to date, has received only trivial use.

That battle fizzled away (into oblivion) later on in Doty's tenure as Dean, as did Doty's reputation and the stature of the CoB. The science-oriented central administration at USM eventually withdrew most of the graduate assistant support in the CoB, leaving the business school only a handful of graduate assistants. The administration also acquiesced to Doty's demand to have economic development removed from the CBED, turning the CBED into today's CoB. What Doty hailed as an "opportunity" for the CBED -- having economic development included -- he later described as an accreditation noose around the neck of the CoB. Doty's disingenuous comments from spring of 2003 had come full circle, and economic development was removed from the business school. A few years later, after becoming free and clear of Economic Development, the AACSB put the USM College of Business on a one-year probation, all because of Doty's *inability* to lead.