

31st & Pearl

Saunders Said "Cut," Not "Move"

Amidst all the stinging comments the CoB's economists are now making about CoB dean Lance Nail and other members of the USM administration, it seems that they've come up with an alternative to the USM plan that has them all gone, along with the CoB's three economics programs. Interestingly, their proposal – to move the economics department into the CoAL – is not original. Nail and CoAL dean Denise von Herrmann had this idea several months ago. The problem is that the economists opposed it, as did von Herrmann's faculty in the CoAL. It would seem this alternative is a non-starter, and needs to go back into the drawer from whence it came.

Even if there were more of a welcoming attitude among the CoAL faculty, the new solution being trumpeted by the CoB's economists would still face a major hurdle. USM president Martha Saunders said earlier that the institution needed to *cut* \$12 million from its budget, not simply *move* that dollar amount around. How is taking the economics department, along with its \$1 million price tag, over to CoAL going to save USM any money? It will not, but that can be seen by even the least sophisticated among the USM family. If ECO were moved, then Nail would have to find another \$1 million cut, which would likely mean that either management or marketing would have to go. Do you see that happening? Of course not.

It's of their own making that the ECOers find themselves in this position. They've selected the very worst of chairs (e.g., Carter, Mark Klinedinst), made questionable hires (e.g., Susan Doty, Akbar Marvasti), and followed the advice and directives of the least capable among themselves (e.g., Charles Sawyer, William Gunther) for so long now that it's difficult to imagine the situation being any better for them than it is now. So, all the rest of the CoB is left to watch, and wince, as the economics faculty try to pull the rest of the organization down the road to nowhere. It seems like only yesterday that former CBA dean William Gunther was saying "[w]e're going to get some collegiality back in here." My how time flies, and things change. Perhaps those CoAL faculty who rejected ECO months ago should be thanking their lucky stars, or their good judgment.