

Does EFIB Chair George Carter Follow the Rules?

Many long time CoB faculty have historically been under the impression that EFIB Chair George Carter is the “details bureaucrat” who knows all of the rules, and follows them to the letter. Recent events have shaken that belief in many, and another episode has appeared that supports a new view of Carter. This episode involves Carter’s push to move economics and finance courses online. Consider the email below, sent by Carter to the finance faculty in October of 2006:

Tom, John, Sean, Stephen, Matthew, Jenny:

We plan to offer FIN 380, Financial Analysis, on the Coast in the Spring Semester 2007 with Jenny as the instructor. Linda has tried to schedule the section, but has not been able to work out a time period that works for the students who need FIN 380 there. The course has to be an 8W2 course, and even a Saturday offering was tried, but to no avail. Jenny, Linda, and I would now like to offer that course as an online course as the only feasible way to meet the students’ need for the course.

Online offering of a course is a change in mode of offering. Consequently, the finance faculty, CoB Undergraduate Programs Committee, and Academic Council must approve the new mode of offering. Donna Davis tells me that we can go on and schedule the class for the Spring as an online class as long as it gets approved by the end of the Fall Semester. I therefore request that the six of you, the CoB finance faculty, approve this offering by replying to this e-mail. If you do not approve, please let me know the reason(s) so we can address the concern(s). If you, the finance faculty, approve the offering, then I will submit the Proposal to Modify Course paperwork to Mike Vest, the chair of the CoB Undergraduate Programs Committee.

Jenny, please complete the questions in the attachment. They are required for submission of the completed Proposal to Modify Course form. If any of the other finance faculty members have input on the questions in the attachment, please e-mail Jenny.

Thanks,
George

The e-mail above indicates that Carter wanted to move quickly to have FIN 380 taught as an online course in the spring of 2007 (to be taught by Jenny Shi). According to Carter, an online offering was **the only way** that the course would fit the students’ schedules at USMGC. Thus, Carter wanted the finance faculty to vote, via a reply to the e-mail, to approve the offering. A few things to note:

1. The e-mail was addressed to only the finance side of EFIB
2. The e-mail was not also sent to Ernest King, part of the finance faculty
3. Carter didn’t ask the finance faculty to *consider* it, he asked that they **approve** it
4. Compounding point 3 above, Carter asked that they respond, via an e-mail vote, to him (Carter) – no anonymity, and five of the six addressees are **untenured** faculty

Sources tell USMPRIDE.COM that the finance faculty began drafting a letter to respond to Carter. The finance professors approved an offering of FIN 380 for online delivery during spring 2007 **only**. Carter then forwarded the decision to CoB Undergraduate Programs Committee Chairman Mike Vest for consideration.

Vest responded with the e-mail pasted below (from October of 2006):

George,

As a reminder, the CoB UPC policy requires that department curriculum changes must be voted on by the entire department, not just the discipline making the change. Thus, all EFIB department faculty must vote on the change.

Mike

Vest's e-mail indicates that Carter, a CoB department chair, did not follow the proper procedures by excluding other EFIB faculty (the EIB portion of EFIB) from consideration of the online section of FIN 380. Carter failed to recognize the existence and significance of the CoB's organizational structure in the process of modifying a course/curriculum. The CoB was fortunate, in this instance, to have a quality gatekeeper in Professor Vest.

To the EFIB Faculty,

We need to offer FIN 380 as an online course in the Spring as explained in the e-mail thread below. The finance faculty recognize the problem and are agreeable to FIN 380 being online for the spring only in order to address this problem. As you can see from Mike's e-mail, the EFIB faculty must address the issue, not just the finance faculty. Consequently, I am calling a department meeting for Tuesday, November 7, 2006 during the dead time of 12:15pm-1:00pm in room JGH 302. The agenda will be:

Online offering of FIN 380 for Spring 2007 only.

Written proxies (e-mail is considered written) will be recognized so Farooq and Jenny can weigh the cost of a trip against such a short agenda.

George

The e-mail above (November of 2006) shows Carter's response to Vest's "correction." Carter set up a departmental meeting and invited the EIB faculty to join the F faculty for an EFIB meeting to discuss the online version of FIN 380.

If you believed Carter knew all of the rules, you might still be right. If you thought he always followed them, you might want to reconsider.