

Doty's Darkest Days

Part II

The first part of 2007 was the final Act of former dean Harold Doty's administration of USM's College of Business. These were Doty's darkest days. The CoB's AACSB efforts over the 1998-2007 period resulted in failure during the first few days of February 2007. CoB faculty were exiting the CoB in what appears to be record numbers. Faculty grievances regarding administrative malfeasance in the CoB were mounting, and staff members were filing out of the college at almost the same pace as faculty. And on 9-April-07, Doty would himself file out of the CoB's dean suite, resigning, along with his associate dean, Farhang Niroomand, under a cloud of rumors and suspicion.

This is Part II in a new mini-series that examines heretofore unseen documents and other evidence from "inside" the corridors of USM's central administration that were recently uncovered in USMNEWS.NET's vast library of information on USM's College of Business. In Part II we examine the nature of some of Doty's correspondence with USM's central administration during Doty's final days as CoB dean.

Recall that in Part I of this series we got to see an "inside document" showing that the USM central administration was quite displeased, as late as the latter part of February of 2007, with Doty's continued mismanagement of the CoB. That "inside document" consisted of a late February-07 letter from USM Provost Jay Grimes to Doty informing Doty that he (Doty) was to address USM's Executive Cabinet (on 5-March-07) in order to bring the EC up to date on (1) the CoB's floundering search for a new SAIS Director, (2) the campaign to support the CoB's fashion merchandising program, (3) the apparent demise of the CoB's tourism management program, and (4) the status of the CoB's efforts to develop a hybrid or digital MBA program.

Grimes was clearly concerned about USM's business school. Other than a quick e-mail query to perhaps gauge the interest of the CoB's AACSB Peer Review Team leader (for accounting) Ed Arrington in the SAIS Directorship, Doty appeared to be doing very little, if anything, to address Grimes' concerns. Doty was, however, incessantly sending bizarre e-mails to USM officials such as Grimes and Becky Woodrick, USM's EEO officer. One of these was sent by Doty to Grimes on 2-April-07, copying Woodrick. It contained the bizarre subject line: "Potential bias and racism in college." This is shown in the insert below.

----- Original Message -----

From: Harold Doty

To: 'Dr. Jay Grimes'

Cc: 'Rebecca Woodrick'

Sent: Monday, April 02, 2007 2:44 PM

Subject: Potential bias and racism in college

A few days later, on Thursday, 5-April-07, Doty sent an e-mail to Grimes and other USM administrators with the subject line: "Mental health concerns (sic)." Grimes forwarded a copy of Doty's e-mail to Woodrick, USM Counsel Lee Gore, and USM Human Resources Director Russ Willis the following day, on Friday, 6-April-07, which was just three days before Doty resigned. Evidence of this action is inserted below.

From: "Dr. Jay Grimes" <Jay.Grimes@usm.edu>
To: "Lee Gore" <lee.gore@usm.edu>; "Russ Willis" <russ.willis@usm.edu>; "Rebecca Woodrick" <rebecca.woodrick@usm.edu>
Sent: Friday, April 06, 2007 7:50 AM
Subject: FW: Mental health concerns

These communiqués from Doty to high-ranking USM officials were so bizarre that Grimes took to using the phrase "The latest word from Dr. Doty" when forwarding these messages to others in the USM administrative structure. In doing so, Grimes and the other USM leaders seemed to be laughing at him (Doty), not with him (Doty). With the failure of the Doty-Niroomand administration of the CoB to achieve a clean re-accreditation stamp from the AACSB in the spring of 2007, some would argue that Doty had no option other than to resort to theatre of the bizarre. To that sources indicate that the Thames-Grimes administration of USM had only one option themselves, and that was to "resign" Doty from his post.