

Crank up the School Bells, not Carter's "Factoids"

by Duane Cobb

Junior faculty may have noticed the school bells on the walls of Joseph Greene Hall. What they and others might not know, however, is that the bells were in use up until the arrival of Bill Gunther (as CBA Dean) in the late 1990s. They rang every hour, and at 10-till the hour, on MWF. On TTh they also followed the appropriate class schedule.

Thinking back on those ringing bells represents more than simply remembering the past, and from where we came. It seems now that these bells might play a useful role in restoring the CoB to its better days. And the CoB *has* seen better days, despite anything that its current Dean, D. Harold Doty, might profess.

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In those days, AACSB affirmation was a snap, and students behaved in class. These days, with AACSB being the bear that it is for Doty and his minions to secure, those bells symbolize the CoB's transition to something like the Pearl Street Attendance Center. It's time to restore those bells to their past function -- crank them up, I say. The CoB needs a daily reminder of just how far things have "spiraled down" (to use a phrase from EFIB Chairman George Carter) under Doty's leadership.

While we're addressing the bells that Gunther turned off, we would be remiss if we didn't also suggest that the CoB remove something Gunther put up: The "Mississippi's Business School" banners. If a dose of "telling the truth to ourselves" is what we need, let's take it all the way. The Dr. 90210 "look good on the outside, not on the inside" routine is not doing the CoB -- its students and alumni -- any good. It never was.

Of course, telling the truth to ourselves doesn't mean the CoB administrative team should adopt Carter's "factoids" idea. For those of you out of the loop (i.e., not close to Barry Babin), over the

summer of 2006 EFIB Chairman Carter proposed that the Dean's Office send out (via e-mail) a daily "factoid" about a random CoB faculty member. He suggested coupling that factoid with a daily AACSB-related item of interest. The hope was to get CoB faculty all "pumped up" about the 2007 AACSB Peer Review visit.

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Of course, like Gunther's banners, this is simply window-dressing stuff. However, the punch line of this story is that the examples that Carter brought to meetings were reportedly riddled with errors and inaccuracies, just like much of the other shoddy work that comes from the CoB's current administration. Though many website readers would have loved to see reports on Carter's "factoids" exercise, it would have been detrimental to the cause, like much of the other "work" that went into the 2007 campaign.

Given the "Black to Fade" *31st and Pearl* column, and everything else we've seen on this website, we can't help but think that the Black era may have been the CoB's isthmus of quality, separating two eternities of something less. Perhaps we'll learn more about that possibility over the coming probationary year and the time that follows. In the meantime, we need daily reminders of low things have sunk -- this may be the only way out of the doldrums.