

Let's Take a Moment -- Nail Might be the One

by Duane Cobb

I realize that the reports and editorials here at USMNEWS.NET haven't been critical of CoB Dean candidate, Lance Nail. They have been critical of the process by which the CoB is conducting its business in this instance, and/or the ways in which the CoB's way of doing things will work to prevent candidates like Nail from receiving a fair shot. The process currently in place is sketchy. That's why I think it's important to speak for Nail, and early.

If you haven't visited USMNEWS.NET to see Nail's vita, you should. On the research end of things, Nail has the qualifications to lead the CoB's faculty to a higher level when it comes to research productivity. Based on reporters' conversations with others, Nail's publication record, which includes the *Journal of Financial Economics*, is quite commendable. Also, Nail's experience as department chair at UAB offers as much in the way of administrative qualification as former CoB Dean Harold Doty's role at Syracuse did.

Nail's record also hints at a much greater ability to engage, successfully, in fundraising endeavors than Doty's record showed prior to coming to the CoB (in 2003). Heck, Nail's potential in this area looks better than Doty's does even *now*. Nail seems energetic, which would be a nice departure for those old CBAers who grew tired of seeing former CBA Dean William Gunther sit

around and draw a nice paycheck. With Gunther now directing the CoB's Bureau of Business and Economic Research, old CBAers and new CoBers alike are still seeing Gunther sit around and draw a paycheck.

Want more positives about Nail's candidacy for CoB Dean? Here's one: there doesn't appear to be any *Susan Nail* out there who, though unqualified for such, appears ready to take some quasi-faculty position in the CoB. How's that for a nice departure from the recent past? I thought you might like (and agree with) that one.

Nail may, or may not, be the superior candidate. It's hard to say *now* given the secretive nature of the current CoB hiring process. (It's also difficult to know what to expect out of a *USM* search committee whose chairman is the Provost at the *University of Texas at Tyler*.) That being said, there is enough known about Nail to be encouraged about his candidacy. When more is known about the other finalists, a proper evaluation of the candidates' credentials will be possible. And, when that day comes you can expect that the various columnists here at USMNEWS.NET will be chiming in with their own criticisms and recommendations.