

Williams' Fall '07 Proposals Fall Flat

by Duane Cobb

During the Fall 2007 CoB faculty meeting, Interim CoB Dean Alvin Williams told CoB faculty and staff that he (Williams) would see to it that everyone in the CoB had a personal webpage at www.usm.edu, and that each person's individual web page would house that person's vita. Williams also urged CoB departments to mirror the EFIB's efforts to establish and continue a seminar series of some sort. Now we are about six months beyond that fall meeting, and the promised personal web pages do not exist, and CoB faculty vitae are as secret today as they were on that fall 2007 day. Not only that, the only CoB department currently running a seminar program is the EFIB, and, according to sources, the heart of the EFIB isn't really into its own attempt at developing a scholarly culture.

Sources tell *usmnews* reporters that when Williams promised the personal web pages with faculty c.v., accounting professor Roderick Posey asked why it was useful to have CoB c.v. on the web, accessible to the modern world. Williams gave an adequate explanation -- something to the effect that having public vitae lets the CoB's constituents, and other academics far and wide, easily see what the CoB's best and brightest are up to on the scholarship front. One would think that Posey, a CoB professor with "more than 100 publications," would've already had a grasp on the importance of posting a faculty vitae for all to see. Assuming

Posey didn't understand the importance before posing his question to Williams, let's hope he understands it today, after hearing Williams' eloquent response. However, something tells me Posey doesn't understand, and that his query of Williams was actually a protest, albeit a mild one, of Williams' idea for personal web pages and open vitae.

Maybe what the CoB needs now is a weekly seminar series wherein business school administrators from Tier I and II universities come to Hattiesburg to explain to CoB faculty the merits of having open c.v. Maybe a simple majority of the CoB's faculty could be convinced by these administrators before the list of 130 or so Tier I and II colleges/universities is completely exhausted. Again, something tells me that's a very big "maybe."

Now, six months later, Williams' two main fall 2007 proposals are as flat as a week-old soda that has been left uncapped. There are no personal web pages, and won't be soon. CoB faculty vitae will remain under seal, marked "confidential," and guarded by Pileum. After all, letting the Marvin Albin's *real* research and service records fall into the public domain would pose a serious threat to national security.