

Economists Release Appeal Presentation

More on the USM Budget Crisis of 2008-2010

The CoB's economists released last week details of the oral appeal that they made to USM president Martha Saunders and Saunders' executive cabinet. Those details are now [housed on](#) *The Student Printz's* website. Sources tell USMNEWS.net that the presentation, which is entitled "Cost/Benefit Analysis of the USM Economics Program," has the markings of associate professor Sami Dakhli throughout, particularly with regard to the unit's accomplishments. This conclusion supports much of what has been reported about the appeal and the surrounding discussion by USMNEWS.net since the drama began back in early August-2009.

As the display indicates, the appeal was made on 23-Aug-09, though the visual aid is dated 27-Aug-09. On page 2 of the appeal, the economists attempt to include the 39 seniors in international business among *their* students. Sources say that at most institutions the IB students are part of the business portion(s) of a business college, and not with the economists. On page 4 the economists counter that their scholarship is "internationally acclaimed." According to the professors, this acclaim is attested to by the **conferences** at which the work has been presented. Sources tell USMNEWS.net, however, that most economists attribute acclaim to *publication*, not *presentation*. Thus, the CoB economists' take on matters is somewhat unorthodox. Not only that, having what sources say is so little in the way of publication, the appeal presentation lumps "submissions" in with "publications" and "refereeing" in a way that is essentially useless to a discerning reader/examiner. The journal titles are also abbreviated, and the ubiquitous "etc." is used liberally.

On page 4 the economists argue that suspending professor William Gunther's Bureau of Business & Economic Research (BBER) saves the CoB \$0. There they also make the claim that Gunther's BBER website is a popular one for "economic development professionals." Sources say this claim is odd, given the way the economists derided (and still deride) USM's *economic development* faculty/staff while the two shared the College of Business & Economic Development (CBED) in 2003 and 2004. On pages 7-8 the economists counter the claim that the unit is *overstaffed*. In doing so they build the counter claim that the group is actually *understaffed*. Sources say this piece of architecture lives up to the "go big or go home" mantra of current times.

On page 10 the group argues that the losses of "(Sawyer, Mixon, Doty Niroomand)" have not been replaced. Sources say that both Deniz Gevrek and Yosef Bonaparte were hired after the losses of Sawyer and Mixon. As such, the claim appears to be a half-truth. To go further, Doty was an instructor, not a terminally-qualified faculty, and Niroomand spent 1998-2007 as an associate dean who avoided teaching (apparently at all costs). He was on reduced assignments of one form or another during the April-07 through May-09 period before heading west to the University of Houston-Victoria. Finally, under the page-11 heading "Bad Publicity for USM and Mississippi," the economists claim that some sort of "outrage" at the institution has existed on the part of various "distinguished university professors at leading universities." Half of those listed are with the alma maters of various CoB economics faculty. These leaders supposedly "called or wrote." Whom? or what? we do not know.