

Editorial

They Are Educators, Aren't They? The Curious Case of Provost Denis Weisenburg

We would expect that anyone who believes that copying others' words and ideas "without proper citation" would publicly make the case that it is not plagiarism and would advise others of the boundaries of proper copying for the benefit of all students and faculty and administrators at colleges and universities and beyond. We should also expect administrators to publicly support knowledge of boundaries of proper copying and citation requirements. And in an education environment like a college or university, we would most certainly expect instruction. And, given the status and self-professed ethical guidance of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditor, which was the recipient of the copied documents from USM, unknown to them at first, we would expect they would most certainly participate in the educational process for the benefit of USM and all colleges and universities that seek to abide by their policies and continue or gain accreditation.

Why didn't that happen? Why didn't the administrators at both the University of Southern Mississippi and the AACSB educate all of us that then-Dean Harold Doty and Professor Charles Jordan's "benchmarking" and copying "without proper citation"—phrases used by Doty and Jordan to describe their copying others' words and ideas without citing the sources—acted properly? That their copying "without proper citation" wasn't plagiarism? And why? We had asked repeatedly to explain their behavior.

Why have other administrators, when advised of the conduct—like Lance Nail, Skip Hughes, and Denis Weisenburg—joined previous administrators accepting Doty's and Jordan's conduct without educating all of us? That their behavior was ethical and approved for us, too? They are educators, aren't they? And they didn't have anything to do with the original conduct of Doty and Jordan. But they chose not to educate all of us about the acceptability of copying others' words and ideas "without proper citation." You might ask, why should they? It's simple. The College of Business website still shows one of the copied documents "without proper citation": its Academic Integrity Policy that was copied from Syracuse University. In fact, the only portion of Syracuse's Academic Integrity Policy not copied was the extensive citations Syracuse University gave for the words and ideas of the original authors. Syracuse University thought copying the words and ideas in its Academic Integrity Policy warranted citing the original authors' words and ideas. But Denis Weisenburg and other administrators have chosen to participate in and support of Doty's and Jordan's conduct of copying Syracuse University's Academic Integrity Policy by continuing to represent that the Academic Integrity Policy as his on USM's website.

The curious case of Denis Weisenburg is that he could act ethically and still can. He could have, and still can, advise the AACSB to notify one and all that copying other AACSB accredited member schools' documents, like their Academic Integrity Policy, "without

proper citation” is unethical. Or he could publicly provide reasons why the copying “without proper citation” is an exception to plagiarism and why.

Why shouldn't other schools have the same privilege USM has taken? Why shouldn't students have the same guidance and privilege as Doty and Jordan and USM's College of Business?

For details of then-Dean Doty's and Charles Jordan's behavior, collected from Mississippi Open Records requests, court documents, and depositions, see [Testing Social Reality Parts 1 and 2](#), available at Amazon.