

Ethics Update, Sept-07

"Our tradition of excellence continues to reinforce our commitment to . . . a sense of ethical behavior."

Alvin J. Williams, Interim Dean, USM College of Business Administration, 2007

Niroomand Just Like Carter

A recent USMNEWS.NET report showed that EFIB chairman George Carter failed to follow the *USM Faculty Handbook* by allowing John Lambert to vote on the EFIB's faculty governance options for 2006-07. Because Lambert, then a visiting assistant professor of international business, was not part of USM's "Corps of Instruction," at the time, Carter's decision to allow Lambert to participate in the "Black Tuesday" 2006 re-vote appears to have been unethical at best.

Now we can add Farhang Niroomand's choice to bring Weihua Shi's proxy to the "Black Tuesday" 2006 re-vote to the pile of seemingly unethical conduct in the modern-day CoB. Shi, like Lambert, was a visiting assistant professor (of economics) on "Black Tuesday" 2006, a position Shi still holds today. However, unlike in the "Black Tuesday" 2006 re-vote, Carter did not allow Shi to vote at the 30-Aug-07 faculty governance vote in the EFIB because she did not fall within USM's Corps of Instruction.

Because two *disqualified* votes were counted in the EFIB re-vote of Sept-06, itself a questionable episode altogether, it appears that Carter's "chair only" option may not have actually won on that day. USMNEWS.NET reporters continue to look at that episode. Stay tuned.

Yeend's "Sticky Situation "

Near the top of the Agenda for the CoB's Fall 2007 Faculty Meeting, Assistant to the Dean for Career Services, Amy Yeend, took the floor (31-Aug-07) to warn faculty about the "sticky situation" wherein a former student or employer phones a CoB faculty with information about XYZ position at a company and asks for a recommendation (from the faculty) of a CoB student. According to Yeend, the former student/employer is basically asking the CoB faculty to hand pick someone for his/her company, and doing so can potentially put the CoB faculty in the middle of a lawsuit. To avoid this pitfall, Yeend instructed CoB faculty to have the former student/employer contact her (Yeend) so that the job opening could be made public and available to everyone. To handle "sticky situations" like this one, Yeend distributed copies of a 3-page document entitled *A Faculty Guide to Ethical and Legal Standards in Student Hiring*. Yeend emphasized over and over that CoB faculty needed to ensure that job openings they know about be made open to everyone. She even commented that announcing the opening to a single class does not go far enough to satisfy the requirement for openness.

It was near the end of her speech that Yeend completely reversed course by letting CoB faculty know that employers who do not want to make job openings available to everyone could still be accommodated by her (Yeend's) office. Yeend explained that she can quietly post the opening, keep it open for a couple of days without broadcasting it in any way, so that the opening is

"technically" available to all students. With these statements, Yeend completely undid every piece of advice about hiring ethics that she had summarized in the minutes leading up to these statements.

Faculty Governance Train Wrecks

Now that all of the faculty governance votes have been held, USMNEWS.NET reporters have learned that all four CoB departments voted on a "bad set" of options. Three departments -- SAIS, MgtMkt, and TM -- each voted on the following options:

- Faculty Committee not to include the Chair
- Faculty Committee to include the Chair
- Chair only

The EFIB voted for two options. These were:

- Faculty Committee not to include the Chair
- Chair only

The correct set of options, according to the *USM Faculty Handbook*, is:

- Faculty Committee
- Chair only

If the top option from the set directly above is selected, faculty are supposed to move to stage 2 in the voting process. In that stage, three faculty are to be selected from among the eligible faculty in the department. The department's chair may or may not be selected as one of the three governance committee members. So, though EFIB got close, none of the CoB's four departments faced a set of correct choices. This marks the second year in a row that the CoB's departments have failed to follow the *USM Faculty Handbook* with regard to faculty governance options. How's that for an ethics update?

"En Route"

At the beginning of the 31-Aug-07 CoB Faculty Meeting, Interim Dean Alvin Williams introduced many of the new CoB faculty. One of those is Babu George, a visiting assistant professor of tourism management from India. According to Williams, George was, at the time of the meeting, "en route" to USM. Thus, George's fall 2007 courses have either yet to meet, or they have been "covered" by some other CoB faculty over the two weeks 20-24, Aug, and 27-31, Aug. Stay tuned for more.

Sources have also told USMNEWS.NET reporters that economics professor Edward Nissan did not show for the first week of fall 2007 semester classes (i.e., 20-24, Aug). This type of behavior has become routine for Nissan, and at times has been much worse (e.g., fall 1996).