

Ghosts, Professorships, & Ghost Professorships

It's Time to Know What Happened to the Parham-Bridges & Williams

Over the last few days, readers of USMNEWS.net have been treated to reports and editorials discussing various CoB faculty "ghosts," a term used to describe those CoB faculty who are seldom seen in the corridors of Joseph A. Greene Hall. Everyone knows who these figures are – Mark Klinedinst, John Clark, Farooq Malik, etc. Other reports and editorials have discussed *who* should hold *each* professorship, from whether or not the *McCarty Distinguished Professorship in MIS* should be taken from Chang-Tseh Hsieh and given to Fujun Lai, to whether or not the *Morgan Distinguished Professorship in Accounting* should still be retained by Roderick Posey.

What hasn't received a proper degree of attention is the disposition of the CoB's "ghost professorships" – i.e., endowments for professorships that are known to exist, only the whereabouts of the funding remain mysteries. Of course, at the top of this list is the *Parham-Bridges Real Estate Professorship*, established long ago through the fundraising efforts of the late Charles Cartee, who served on the CoB's real estate faculty for many years. Substantial sums of money flowed into the USM Foundation to support this endeavor. It's the outflows, and least in a proper form, that haven't occurred. Now that we are hearing that EFIB chairman George Carter appears to have used improper means to fund Sami Dakhli's "EFIB Fridays," there is reason to fear that *Parham-Bridges* monies have been going to ill-advised uses. Add to that the funding for the new *Williams Distinguished Professorship in Minority Entrepreneurship*, which is held by no one at the moment, and we have the makings of a potentially fruitful little scavenger hunt.

Perhaps it's time the CoB establishes a faculty committee to oversee the disposition of its *distinguished professorships*. In addition to giving an effort at due diligence in the selection of *professorship* placements, this group could look into the whereabouts of *Parham-Bridges* and *Williams* seed monies and subsequent fund earnings. To continue to neglect this important issue is to neglect something at the core of the CoB's ability to move forward in the post-Harold Doty era. It seems imperative that the CoB move forward, and upward. Its students and other constituencies deserve more than they are getting these days.