

Help a Guy Out

10 Retirements that Would Make the CoB Better and Nail's Job Easier

by Duane Cobb

To hear some tell it, by accepting Martha Saunders' invitation to govern the CoB, new dean Lance Nail has walked into a snake pit-like situation. Though the problems in USM's business school are both vast and deep, they are not insurmountable. However, Nail's job would be made a lot easier if a number of CoB faculty who are thought to be in the "retirement window" would sign the necessary PERS acceptance papers and exit stage left. This essay lists the top 10 CoB faculty fitting this description. It provides some narrative as to why these ten were both chosen and ordered as they are here.

1. George Carter – the EFIB chair not only earns the second-highest salary in the CoB, coming in over \$130,000 per year, he also represents what so many would argue as one of the most contentious CoB faculty. And given his position as EFIB chair, Carter has the wherewithal to accomplish his many of his goals, which are often inconsistent with the status/prestige of the University. Sure, the recent departures of Stephen Bushardt and Charles Sawyer have weakened Carter a bit, he's still a force to be reckoned with as someone who can muster up a majority bloc on the controversial issue *du jour*.

2. William Gunther – the fight for number two is a close one. We went with CoB economist, and former CBA dean, William Gunther for a couple of reasons. First, at almost \$125,000 per year in salary, and with no recent academic research to show for it, Gunther is sitting on top of a lot of cash and the CoB loses virtually nothing from his absence. Second, Gunther has shown himself in recent years to be someone willing to participate in one George Carter scheme or another. Without this second part, Gunther is only about wasted money, and he's further down the list. With it, he's number two and holding firm.

3. Patty Munn – some readers of USMNEWS.net might consider this an intriguing choice. To others, it's not. Munn, an *instructor* of accounting, has shown a willingness to not only participate in one CoB shenanigan or another, she has also participated in the leadership of a CoB shenanigan or two. Many new CoB faculty are often slack-jawed by Munn's activities, given her relatively low rank and at-will employment position. But, she covers herself by working as a sycophant for one bad CoB administration or another, not against them. Nail, however, appears to be a straight-shooting outsider. As such, Munn could already be knee-deep in plots against him.

4. Charles Jordan – like Munn, Jordan comes from accounting. Unlike Munn, Jordan is a tenured professor. Years ago Jordan was poised to go down as one of the SAIS' top products. Now, not only years but a "without proper

citation” scheme later, Jordan may long be remembered as the CoB accountant who threw away everything he had worked for in an attempt to save the floundering AACSB efforts of a dean (Doty) many despise. None of it made any sense, but Jordan went through with it anyway, and for that he is in the top 5.

5. Edward Nissan – the selection of Nissan is simple, he sets a bad – no, a very bad – example for new CoB faculty (particularly new EFIB faculty) to follow. Just this semester Nissan “skipped out” on the first several days of class to remain overseas, as he has often done in the past. A retired Nissan not only means that this type of misconduct will cease to be the CoB’s problem, the CoB will also get well over \$100,000 in additional salary fund slack.

6. Farhang Niroomand – as with Jordan above, not long ago things would have been different for Niroomand – the former CoB associate dean and current professor of economics – vis-à-vis this top 10 list. However, months ago would have found Niroomand much higher up this food chain, not further down. Back in those days Niroomand was carrying illegal proxies to a departmental governance *revote* and traveling the globe to the tune of \$1,250 per *month*. Since April of 2007, however, “the ‘Hang,” as some refer to him, has seen much of his authority (to be bad) swept away.

7. Roderick Posey – at over \$100,000 per year, and with almost nothing worthwhile to show for it, Posey is a major drain on the CoB’s budget. And like the Energizer Bunny, Posey keeps draining and draining and draining . . . All isn’t lost, however, as we did get a nice federal court testimony from Posey just last month regarding how b-school administrators at USM mete out all sorts of “informal” (i.e., out-of-Handbook) discipline on business faculty. That one was priceless.

8. David Duhon – for someone the CoB might need to retire, USM’s stance vis-à-vis *new* interim management and marketing chair Duhon is interesting. Instead of phased retirement, Duhon is getting a \$23,000 bump to take over management of the CoB’s largest department. This is an amazing feat for a prof who only two years ago needed a “letter of agreement” in order to achieve a promotion to full. Duhon, the recent target of a verbal assault from EFIB chair Carter, also no longer clings so strongly to the “nice guy-in-residence” tag that at one time he was known so widely for. Maybe none of this gets you to the *top* of the list, but it sure does get you *on* it.

9. Mark Klinedinst – are we starting to see a pattern here? Nine people so far, and five are CoB economists. Klinedinst will forever be known by many as the stumbling EFIB chair from 2003-05. Newer readers at USMNEWS.net will think of him as the professor who hasn’t published in an indexed journal since 1998. Either way, there’s nothing good to think about in this case.

10. Donna Davis – the CoB is such a bizzaro world that nominating someone like Davis – a person who almost reached the summit reserved for “the greatest ever” researcher in MIS – for this list not only can happen, it has

happened. Sure, Davis has a number of publications in top flight journals, but she has since turned her professional life over to “the administration game” (to use Carter’s term). While once she may have been thought of for some solid research endeavors, now many think only of her as the neo-management speak conversation guru. As former interim dean, Alvin Williams, pointed out, the CoB needs research now more than ever. That’s certainly not a call for Davis, version 2008. Of course, getting back almost \$120,000 of the budget from a Davis retirement doesn’t hurt.