

Date: July 1, 2008

Reporters from www.usmnews.net have obtained audio of new the introductory address given by Albert B. Collins, new CoB dean, to his CoB faculty at the first faculty meeting of the new year. The transcription of the address appears below.

“Good afternoon. I am Albert B. Collins, new dean of the College of Business. I have met a few of you who were part of the Dean Search Committee, but I have not met any of you socially, and I intend to keep it that way. I know that July 1st is an unusual day to have the first faculty meeting of the year, but it is necessary. My sources affiliated with USM have told me that there are major problems in this college and, after doing quite a lot of research, I have concluded that Southern Mississippi is the most rotten business school I have ever seen or even heard of.

“Consequently, I have brought in my own Associate Dean, and I will introduce him now. Dr. David E. Foster will be the college’s Associate Dean. Dr. Foster and I have known each other for 15 years, and we are of one mind with respect to how a college should be run. Dr. Foster will handle all financial affairs in the college and will have authority over all administrative decisions made by department chairs. From now on, department chairmen will make suggestions to Dr. Foster on schedules, travel funding, service assignments, etc. If the department chairs’ suggestions are inappropriate, Dr. Foster will discuss the problems with me, and we will arrive at a solution that is best for the long term health of the college. Department chairs are now interim chairs and are simply advisory to the dean’s office.

“From my research, I have found that the college is deeply divided. We have selfish people and we have altruistic people. We have good teachers and we have those who couldn’t care less about students. We have scholars and we have those who haven’t published a refereed article in the 21st Century. I’m not going to ask you if you’re good or not, if you like to teach or not, or if you do research or not. I’m going to let your actions tell me what you are.

“From this point, each faculty member in the CoB will teach three courses. This year, there will be no extra reductions for new faculty members, for research output, for class size, for graduate load, for seniority, or for any other reason. Dr. Foster and I have reworked the fall schedule so that each faculty member will teach 3 courses and will teach on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; Mondays and Wednesdays; or Tuesdays and Thursdays. All faculty members will have one night class. Schedules will rotate in the spring semester. At the end of this year, Dr. Foster and I will make determinations regarding next year’s schedule. Highly productive researchers (based on this year’s productivity) will receive two day per week teaching schedules for the entire 2009-2010 year. Those who are not productive will receive three day per week schedules for the entire 2009-2010 year.

“Those faculty who fail to produce research during the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 years -- those who are in the bottom 20% of their respective fields within our college --- will be given 4 courses per semester on a 3 days per week schedule. Those faculty who are highly research productive --- the ones who are in the top 20% of their respective fields within the college --- will receive 2 courses per semester on a 2 days per week schedule. All others will remain on a rotating 2/3 day schedule with 3 courses per semester. Teaching loads will be reevaluated each year.

“Quality of research will be judged by the journal ranking lists constructed in 1995. These ranking lists are the last official journal lists approved by CoB faculty. Journals not on the lists will be evaluated based on Dr. Foster’s and my professional judgment.

“Teaching will be evaluated via student evaluations and grade distributions. Those who give away grades will receive low evaluations. Those who fail to serve students will receive low evaluations. This is primarily a teaching institution, and we’re going to start fulfilling our primary mission.

“Service assignments will be distributed soon. Service will be assigned without regard for academic rank or years service at USM.

“My agenda for the fall 2008 semester is

1. Construct a real handbook. That piece of garbage currently in place is a joke. We will have a transparent evaluation system, and we will have it soon.
2. Construct a proper journal ranking list. The current list is outdated. The new list will be sent out to Tier II institutions for review. The new journal ranking list, when finalized, will go into effect immediately.
3. Revamp the undergraduate curriculum. The current curriculum is weak. It lacks rigor. We won’t even consider new programs until our old programs are in proper condition.

“I know this is a shock to many of you. That’s good. For too long, too many people have lived off the public trough at USM. Now, I don’t want you stopping by to discuss your personal lives, how long you’ve served at USM, or what you can do for me. I’ll tell you what you can do for me. You can teach, you can research, and you can do service. When you prove to me that you are willing and able to do these things, then I’ll trust you and respect your opinion. I have the full support of the president and the IHL in my mission to straighten out the CoB. I’ll let you know when I want to meet with you.

“And yes, Dr. DePree, vitas are public information. My secretary will be putting together a vita book for publication within the college and for posting in our website.

“You are dismissed.”