

Point/Counterpoint

Should David Duhon Have Been Promoted to Full Prof?

Bushardt's Point

Although CoB management professor Stephen Bushardt's opinion that David Duhon should have been promoted to full professor may not have been widely shared in the CoB, it is an opinion that Bushardt shared widely. Bushardt believed that Duhon's research had reached critical mass, and he (Bushardt) even informed other CoB faculty that Duhon's research agenda would have staying power. Bushardt also supported Duhon's "letter of agreement," a contractual-like relationship Duhon developed with former CoB Dean Harold Doty and former MGT & MKT Chair Alvin Williams.

It was clear to most CoB faculty at the time (2005-2006) that Duhon's application was shaky, at best. However, Bushardt supported his friend Duhon through what was expected to be a controversial decision by controversially recusing himself from the departmental vote on Duhon's promotion dossier, thus retaining the franchise at the CoB Advisory Council level.

After Duhon's dossier was later rejected by the University Advisory Council, Bushardt made the ultimate show of support by, as sources have stated, strapping on a suit and tie and making the short trip over to the Provost's office to explain to the Provost the err of the UAC's ways. Through his words and deeds, it's clear that Bushardt believes Duhon would, and does, make a fine full professor.

Carter's Counterpoint

If EFIB Chair George Carter's opinion of David Duhon's academic credentials were any further from Bushardt's, their opinions would be closer together. Carter has made it plain and clear -- and to the world -- that he (Carter) believes that Duhon *should have* been a lifetime associate professor, *and* that Duhon should be grateful for that, because even that title is a gift.

Although Carter believes, or so he says, that Duhon "is a great guy," he (Carter) also holds the view that CoB management faculty have always had a problem when it comes to the rigor of their research. As for Duhon, Carter has stated plainly that Duhon is "not a full professor," at least based on Carter's notion of academic qualifications. Carter has even gone so far as to say that, unlike Bushardt, "I [Carter] never would have written a letter to support his [Duhon's] promotion."

Though he disagrees, Carter also understands why Bushardt and others "went to bat" for Duhon's promotion. According to Carter, "They're (Duhon, Bushardt, et al.) just good ol' boys. That's what good ol' boys do. They take care of their own." Carter also seems to believe that Bushardt and Duhon aren't really at fault in the whole "letter of agreement" episode. That fault lies with former USM Provost, Jay Grimes. As Carter puts it, Duhon's friends told Grimes to override the UAC's decision. And, according to Carter, "Provost [Grimes], who's known for caving, caved."
