

Moving Down by Moving Up?

October 23, 2006 marks the start of Zone 4 of the CoB's HVAC replacement project. Spring 2006 was marked (or, marred, depending on your perspective) by Zones 1 and 2 (north and south ends of the 1st floor of JGH, minus the large lecture halls), while Zones 5 and 6 consumed the summer months. Zone 3 was completed in the first 8+ weeks of the fall semester.

Work on Zone 4 means that the Dean's Office Suite (DOS) has been relocated. Last spring, the plan was for the DOS to be moved to the 3rd floor of College Hall to the suite that housed CoB faculty who taught in the summer term. At the beginning of the fall semester, however, word spread through the faculty that the DOS would relocate to JGH 313, the suite reserved for the Bureau of Business Research (BBR). One would think that such a busy entity as the BBR would utilize the entire suite in 313 and that displacing the BBR would halt productivity of that bureau. It now appears that the BBR will be able to relinquish its digs without seeing any reduction in activity.

On Thursday, October 19, 2006 DOS Executive Assistant Antoinette Butler distributed via email the new location for the DOS residents. The assignments are

Harold Doty JGH 200-E
Farhang Niroomand JGH 200-D
Antoinette Butler JGH 200-C

Melia Hartsfield JGH 207-B

Shirley Luse JGH 313
Jan May JGH 313-A
Emile Dieth JGH 313-B

Notable is that JGH 313 would have perfectly housed Doty, Niroomand, and Butler on the Third Floor of JGH, the floor that houses the bulk of the CoB faculty. Instead, Doty decided to house Luse, May, and Dieth in 313 JGH, leaving the only faculty members of the DOS (Doty and Niroomand) to retreat to the secluded Second Floor. Doty and Niroomand will probably concoct some lame excuse about needing to be near their real offices so they can retrieve important paperwork and information. There's probably a whole lot more to that decision, however, than the logistics of paper pushing.

Doty and Niroomand could have used this opportunity to mend fences with some of the CoB's less disaffected faculty. By working on the Third Floor of Greene Hall, they could have held out an olive branch to suggest that they are really faculty at heart who are doing administrative work to better the college. Faculty would have seen them keeping office hours, working on AACSB reaffirmation, and managing the CoB. None of these will occur.

Had Doty and Niroomand moved into JGH 313, they would have removed a barrier that has been carefully constructed during Doty's reign as dean – only college-level administrators and pertinent at-will employees are now allowed to reside on the Second Floor, which restricts access to the embattled duo and makes their movements and activities even more clandestine. Moving to the Third Floor would mean taking a step in the direction of the regular faculty, a thought that no doubt sends chills down Doty's spine – can anyone question the uncomfortable nature Doty's life would take on if he had to actually face on a daily basis some of the individuals he considers "beneath" him? No, sending Luse, Dieth, and May to the Third Floor preserves the concept that the Second Floor is the master's house while the Third Floor is for field hands – so what if a few house servants have to bunk in with them for a while?

It is quite surprising that Doty did not engineer a remote location for the DOS residents outside of Greene Hall, such as in the Cochrane Center or the International Building. That move would have ensured that none of the DOS members would have had to field a student question or a faculty complaint (other than the string of grievances that have and will be filed over the next few weeks/months) until January. Harold Doty and Farhang Niroomand are running scared, and every step they take is another step toward proving that they are unfit to lead the CoB.

And still, through it all, the HVAC project for Zones 4 and 7 (the large lecture halls) remains incomplete. With approximately 7 weeks remaining in the fall semester plus 3 weeks of inter-semester break, are we really supposed to have confidence that the job will be done on time? Maybe. Just don't forget that, even if completed by December 15th, the project will still be 4 months over schedule.