

Special Report

Was the 19-Jan-2007 AOL Meeting Really "MANDATORY"? **An Investigation into Possible Service Dereliction in the CoB**

On the morning of 19-January-2007, CoB faculty received the following e-mail message from Dean Duane Harold Doty's office:

Date: Fri morning, 19 Jan 2007
From: [Melia Hartsfield <Melia.Hartsfield@usm.edu>](mailto:Melia.Hartsfield@usm.edu)
To: cob-facstaff@usm.edu
Subject: [Cob-facstaff] AOL Seminar Reminder

This is a reminder that the AOL seminar hosted by Dr. Karen Tarnoff is MANDATORY for all who are not teaching during the hours of 12-2:30pm. At 2:30pm, we would like for members of the Assessment Committee, Curriculum Committee, Undergraduate Committee, Graduate Committee and any others who are interested to attend an information session on data management. This should last no longer than ONE hour.

Please contact Dr. Dave Duhon for details.

Thank you,
Melia Hartsfield

Melia Hartsfield's e-mail was a reminder to CoB faculty that the CoB's AACSB Accreditation consultant, Dr. Karen Tarnoff from East Tennessee State University, would be presenting a program on Assurance of Learning (AOL) under the new AACSB standards. It is noted in Hartsfield's e-mail that attendance for everyone not teaching from 12:00noon to 2:30pm that afternoon (1/19/2007) was "MANDATORY."

Hartsfield's Friday, 19-January-2007, e-mail came on the heels of another e-mail sent by her on behalf of Doty's office. This earlier e-mail was sent out on 17-January-2007, and it appears below:

Date: Wed, 17 Jan 2007
From: [Melia Hartsfield <Melia.Hartsfield@usm.edu>](mailto:Melia.Hartsfield@usm.edu)
To: cob-facstaff@usm.edu
Subject: [Cob-facstaff] Friday's AOL Faculty Meeting

Faculty,

Please join us this Friday, January 19, 2007, for our "Assurance of Learning Seminar" hosted by Karen Tarnoff. The seminar will take place in JGH 303 from 12-2:30pm. Lunch will be provided at 11:30am in the lounge next door.

Please contact Dave Duhon for details.

Notice that in the earlier e-mail, Hartsfield requested that CoB faculty "Please join us this Friday, January 19, 2007," for the AOL seminar to be conducted by Karen Tarnoff. The 17-Jan-2007 e-mail from Hartsfield followed other communication from CoB administrators and AACSB committee personnel indicating that attendance was indeed mandatory.

At the very least, communication regarding the AOL seminar was a bag of mixed messages. Researchers at usmpride.com have put together a list of faculty not in attendance at the 19-January-2007 AOL seminar by Tarnoff. The length of the list confirms our view that the whole process was marred by that mixed messages bag. The list of those CoB faculty not in attendance is presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1
CoB Faculty MIA for AOL Seminar

Marvin Albin
Barry Babin
Cheri Becker
John Brown
Wanda Fennell
Trellis Green
William Gunther
Jim Henderson
Ernest King
Mark Klinedinst
John Lambert
Tara Lopez
Farooq Malik
Daniel Monchuk
Patty Munn
Farhang Niroomand
Amy Sevier
Robert Smith
Sharon Topping
Jie Yang

EFIB MgtMkt SAIS TM

Commentary

As indicated by Table 1 above, after removing 4 absentees due to known healthcare issues, there were 20 CoB faculty who failed to attend for one reason or another. Given

the lack of teaching in the CoB on Friday afternoons, at least some of these 20 absences must have been unexcused. [**Speculation from a Source:** Whether the large number of absences from the EFIB has anything to do with Associate Dean Farhang Niroomand's own absence, and/or the battle lines regarding Niroomand's diminished administrative power in the CoB, remains to be seen. If there is a connection, then George Carter's presence at the meeting may have revealed his (Carter's) decision to side with the Doty faction of the CoB's administrative team.]

Other administrators, such as Barry Babin (Chair of Marketing) and Cheri Becker (Chair of Tourism Management), found something more important to do with their time on Friday afternoon (1/19/2007).

Regular readers of usmpride.com will recall the issue in the *Special Report* series headlined below:

Special Report

Doctors Beyond Borders **An Investigation into CoB Faculty Residency Data**

That report presented a table showing those CoB faculty who maintain residency in another state. The table from that report on residency is inserted below:

<u>Faculty Member</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Home Base</u>
Albin, Marvin	ACC	Florida
Gunther, William	ECO	Alabama
Jordan, Charles	ACC	Florida
Lambert, John	IB	Louisiana
Lopez, Tara	MKT	Louisiana

As Table 1 above indicates, only one (1) of the five (5) CoB faculty who live outside of Mississippi bothered to attend the "MANDATORY" seminar on AOL by Karen Tarnoff (on 1/19/2007). Thus, 80% of the CoB's "Doctors Beyond Borders" chose other alternatives. This shows the cost to the CoB of various residency choices; seen from the other side, however, it highlights one of the perks of being beyond the borders. As a recent series of reports shows, William Gunther's choice to remain in Josephine, Alabama, is not surprising. Why would we expect him to show up for an AOL meeting when his own Bureau of Business Research gets neglected on a weekly basis. (Sources tell usmpride.com that Gunther is paid about \$30,000 per course taught for USM.)

The breakdown of attendance (absence) by department is shown below in Table 2 (table does not include 4 faculty absent due to healthcare issues):

Table 2

	Attended	Did Not Attend
SAIS	12 (70.59%)	5 (29.41%)
EFIB	10 (55.55%)	8 (44.45%)
MM	21 (75.00%)	6 (25.00%)
TM	3 (77.77%)	1 (22.23%)
Total	46 (69.69%)	20 (30.31%)

The EFIB was easily the biggest offender in terms of absence from the AOL seminar, with almost 45% of its faculty absent. Behind EFIB was SAIS, followed by MM and TM. Even in TM there was an absentee rate of over 20%, and it is accounted for by an administrator.