

Updated . . . See Below

Special Report

In Case You Missed It

An Investigative Series on CoB Faculty Research Credentials

Several days before the AACSB Peer Review team arrived in Mississippi to inspect the College of Business at USM, a staff member in CoB Dean Harold Doty's office sent an e-mail to all CoB faculty asking them to consider bringing samples of recent research (e.g., offprints, journal issues, books, etc.) to the Dean's office for inclusion in the CoB research display case on the second floor of Joseph Greene Hall. That staff member included basically a single instruction in the e-mail -- that research not older than 2006 be brought to the second floor for consideration. Just days before the Peer Review team showed up, the display case was "updated" by the CoB Dean's office staff. What was eventually included in that display case is the subject of this installment in the *Special Report* series.

One of the more interesting items among the SAIS collection in the display case is not an offprint, nor a book, nor an actual single issue from a refereed journal.¹ In fact, before getting to *what* it is, we should point out that the author of record of this item is not even a full-year faculty member in the CoB. That *author* is former Morgan Professor of Accounting Jim Crockett, and the *item* is a flier describing his forthcoming book about embezzlement in Mississippi. According to the flier, Crockett has a book in press with the University Press of Mississippi, the same publisher of his earlier book on county corruption in Mississippi entitled *Operation Pretense*.² Inclusion of this Crockett item is noteworthy for a number of reasons:

- Crockett is not a full-year faculty in the CoB
- Crockett's submission for the case is not a book, offprint, etc. -- it's a flier
- Another book on corruption by Crockett reminds usmpride.com readers of the evidence indicating that Crockett over-billed USM almost \$1,000 (and counting) over the years, as a result of padded expenses on "academic travel" that he engaged in while on the faculty in the CoB
- Another book by Crockett with the University Press of Mississippi makes usmpride.com readers wonder how many thousands of dollars in CoB/USM (i.e., taxpayers') funds were expended to cover the numerous requests for "subventions" from this organization (as evidenced by documentation at

¹ At the time of this report, the Peer Review team had already departed Hattiesburg. However, the arrangement of the display case was the same when this report was written as it was when the team visited Joseph Greene Hall.

² It is worth noting also that Crockett's first UnivPress-MS book, *Operation Pretense*, was housed in the JGH display case just a matter of days before the 2007 AACSB visitation, despite (1) the book's age, and (2) the fact that Crockett is no longer a full-year faculty member in SAIS.

usmpride.com regarding *Operation Pretense*)

- Although he's not an full-year member of the CoB, Crockett did serve as an independent consultant on the CoB's 2007 AACSB accreditation efforts

As expected, the EFIB section of the display case contained a number of noteworthy items. First, a paperback, Chinese language version of Charles Sawyer's international economics textbook is now housed in the second floor display case. A number of comments can be made here, for example:

- This textbook does not represent research
- This textbook is not that new
- Why the paperback, Chinese language version? The Peer Review team certainly had much more difficulty figuring out just what this item is than usmpride.com reporters

Of course, the remaining part of the EFIB section of the display case was dominated by items submitted EFIB Chair George Carter, CoB Associate Dean Farhang Niroomand, and economics professor Edward Nissan. Included in this group is an article by Nissan and Niroomand that appeared in the *Journal of Developing Areas*. Readers familiar with the **SEDONA Files** series may recall a controversy involving claims made by Niroomand indicating that he and Nissan had recently published two (2) articles in the *JDA*. Nissan claimed only one (1) publication by he and Niroomand in the *JDA*. A search by the **SEDONA Files** editor revealed only the article claimed by Nissan (one Niroomand also claimed).

Researchers at usmpride.com have not yet checked the inventory of the case against the CoB's journal rankings lists. However, after a quick look at the inventory list, there doesn't appear to be an A-level journal housed in the display case at the present time. A glance at the inventory also shows that items that pre-date 2006 were included in the final collection -- one meant for the eyes of the Peer Review team. Sources have informed usmpride.com that the Peer Review team was somewhat underwhelmed by the research profiles of CoB faculty. If the display case is any indication of what kind of "window into the CoB" they got, then the CoB's chances of a clean re-accreditation were likely doomed before the team ever touched down in Mississippi.

Updated, 2/12/2007

E-mail tips have already begun to arrive that comment on this story. One in particular indicates that Charles Sawyer's textbook is being counted as "research" (in the evaluation process) by the CoB's administrative team. Examination of the 2006 Merit Raises list available here at usmpride.com support this assertion. An evaluation of that list reveals that Sawyer received the 7th largest raise in the CoB (see below), a fact that our sources couldn't explain (other than to agree with the assertion above) when contacted.

2006 Merit Raises, USM College of Business*

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>2006 Merit Raise</u>	<u>Ending Salary</u>
1	Niroomand, Farhang	\$9,282	\$142,938
2	Clark, John	\$8,096	\$103,239
3	Carr, Jon	\$7,860	\$ 86,768
4	Zantow, Kenneth	\$6,163	\$ 73,421
5	Clark, Stan	\$5,977	\$ 99,230
6	Pate, Gwen	\$5,936	\$ 90,635
7	Sawyer, Charles	\$5,847	\$ 92,769

In addition to being the 7th largest in the CoB, Sawyer's 2006 raise was more than 13% larger than the second largest raise among rank-and-file economics faculty.