

Special Report

Classic CoB Mismanagement

Why Carter's "Literature Presence" is Bad, Yet Once Allowed, How it Could've Been Beneficial

As far back as the summer of 2006 USMNEWS.NET (formerly USMPRIDE.COM) has been reporting on George Carter's nebulous "literature presence" faculty evaluation metric. As it goes, Carter rates his EFIB faculty, in part, on the basis of [literature presence](#), or their ability to maintain a "presence" in the literature comprising their respective disciplines. In Carter's EFIB, this includes economics, finance, international business and real estate. However, as reports and [editorials](#) here at USMNEWS.NET have demonstrated, Carter is in no position to judge the literature presence of the EFIB he governs. His own record is too weak, and too highly dependent (co-dependent) on the assistance of economics professor Edward Nissan to make the kinds of assessments one would supposedly make using a *literature presence* standard.

It is for these and other reasons that USMNEWS.NET columnists have argued against the CoB's use of Carter's *literature presence* standard on a wider basis. Some editorials, such as the one linked above, have called for the EFIB's discontinuation of the standard for the reasons stated above. With the resignation of CoB Dean Harold Doty on 9-April-07, sources say that some faculty in the EFIB became optimistic that the standard, which was adopted by Carter and *supported by* Doty, would go away. Shortly after the elevation of MGT & MKT's Alvin Williams to Interim CoB Dean on 10-April-07, word began to leak that Williams was opposed to the standard and was working behind the scenes to jettison it and various other administrative practices that had gone on during Doty's administration of the CoB from 2003-07.

Though some felt that *literature presence* might disappear under Williams, it was actually [codified by revisions](#) to the CoB faculty handbook as part of a revision process that Williams tasked the CoB's Handbook Committee, under the direction of chairman Mark Klinedinst, to complete. As such, what so many words posted to USMNEWS.NET sought to expose as a potentially dastard evaluation metric ultimately became an official part of the CoB's administrative lexicon. There have been so many instances where Carter's *literature presence* criterion has been either misapplied, inconsistently applied, or even ignored when the metric may have added some value to the evaluation process that there is not enough space in this report to cover them all. However, and in the spirit of "making lemonade out of lemons," there is one recent case that illuminates the opportunity for Carter's *literature presence* category to have made a difference,

only it wasn't enforced by Carter and Williams as it could have, and perhaps should have been. That case, strangely enough, involves the recent departure of assistant professor of *marketing*, Talai Osmonbekov.

As reported previously by USMNEWS.NET staffers, Osmonbekov has accepted a new post on the faculty at Northern Arizona University. That post begins in August of 2008, and Osmonbekov's departure comes at a time when he may have led the CoB into the 2008-09 academic year as the hottest scholar on the faculty. That was not to be, as the **Breaking News** staff at USMNEWS.NET informed the CoB community in [its report](#) of 19-Feb-08. That report rehashed the data supplied to readers of USMNEWS.NET from an [earlier report](#) that demonstrated how Osmonbekov's 2007 "merit raise" was inexplicably *well below* that awarded to Michael Wittmann, the *Draughn Assistant Professor of Healthcare Marketing*. This disparity existed even though Osmonbekov's research credentials are miles beyond Wittmann's.¹ Table 1 from that report, which is revisited below, really drives that point home.

Table 1
Journal Publications for Osmonbekov & Wittmann, 2001-Present

Year	Osmonbekov	Wittmann
R&R	Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science	Industrial Marketing Management Journal of Purchasing & Supply Management
2007	Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science	Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing
2006	Journal of Business Research	Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management
2005	Marketing Theory Journal of Business Research	Int J of Physical Distribution & Logistics Mgt
2004	Industrial Marketing Management Journal of Interactive Advertising	Journal of Marketing for Higher Education Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing
2003		
2002	Journal of Marketing Channels Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing	Journal of Relationship Marketing
2001		Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing

Source: CoB SEDONA vitae (spring 2007 versions). "A" journals (see CoB journal ranking list) shown in blue font. R&R = revised & resubmitted.

The comparison of the research records of Osmonbekov and Wittmann did at least two things. First, and as pointed in "Memo to Osmonbekov," it went a long way toward showing how the CoB's so-called merit raise system fails to live up to what academics often refer to as "best practices." It completely failed in this case and in so many others (see footnote 1 for other examples). Second, it shows how Carter's *literature presence* standard often fails to distinguish between individuals, rendering it meaningless in many cases. Both Osmonbekov and

¹ A [separate report on merit raises in the EFIB](#) demonstrated that the CoB's 2007 "merit raise" process was little better than nonsense.

Wittmann would have, if former MGT & MKT chair Barry Babin had officially used the *lp* standard, received the same *lp* designation, despite the vast differences in their research portfolios. While the data on Osmonbekov is useful to show how the *lp* standard could be used for good, the comparison between he and Wittmann is not as useful in doing so. The necessary comparison in this case is one of Osmonbekov and associate professor of finance, John Clark.

The data from recent years on Clark come from the May 2008 *Special Report* entitled [Lance Nail and the Bama Boys](#). These are combined with the data from more recent years on Osmonbekov that come from "Memo to Osmonbekov," which is the report linked above. These are all summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2
Comparing the Recent Research Records: John Clark vs. Talai Osmonbekov

Year	Clark	Osmonbekov
R&R		<i>Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science</i>
2008	<i>Journal of Marketing Theory & Practice</i>	
2007		<i>Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing</i>
		<i>Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science</i>
2006		<i>Journal of Business Research</i>
2005	<i>Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science</i>	<i>Marketing Theory</i>
		<i>Journal of Business Research</i>
		<i>Industrial Marketing Management</i>

Note: "R&R" = revise and resubmit.

If we didn't know any better, we might think that (1) Clark and Osmonbekov are both marketing faculty, and (2) Osmonbekov is an associate professor and Clark is an assistant professor. Instead, we know that (1) Clark is a finance faculty, while Osmonbekov is a marketing faculty, and (2) Osmonbekov is an assistant professor and Clark is an associate professor. Put differently, Osmonbekov is an assistant professor of marketing with a really good marketing research record, while Clark is an associate professor of finance with a decent marketing research record.

With both 2006 and 2007 being merit raise years for university faculty in Mississippi, CoB administrators have had two recent opportunities to show they understand that Clark, who is a finance professor doing middling marketing research, should be behaving differently when it comes to his research program, and that Osmonbekov, who appears to be a rising star out of the CoB's management and marketing department, should simply "keep on keepin' on." However, as Table 3 below shows, CoB administrators not only wasted both opportunities, given the relative raises awarded to Clark and Osmonbekov, CoB administrators actually reinforced Clark's behavior and punished Osmonbekov's.

Table 3
Comparing the Merit Raise Records: John Clark vs. Talai Osmonbekov

Year	Clark	Osmonbekov
2007	\$7,439 (6th)	\$4,477 (21st)
2006	\$8,096 (2nd)	\$4,283 (24th)

Note: The positions in parentheses denote CoB merit raise ranks (of Clark and Osmonbekov) for the respective years.

Where proper use of Carter's "literature presence" might have made a difference in building a stronger College of Business at Southern Miss, given that Clark seems to have abandoned the finance literature, CoB administrators looked the other way and rewarded Clark's behavior.² The ultimate price was losing Osmonbekov to Northern Arizona University -- the institution that will, starting in August of 2008, reap the benefits of what sources call classic CoB mismanagement.³

² Another way to view this scenario is to consider the salaries of each of these two CoB faculty. Clark is earning \$110,678 per year while Osmonbekov earns \$92,057. As such, Clark, the middling-level marketing researcher, was paid **20.2 percent more than** Osmonbekov, the CoB's top marketing researcher, during the 2007-08 academic year.

³ One source tells USMNEWS.NET that, whether looked at through the lens of Table 3 (and surrounding discussion) or through the vantage point of footnote 2, the particular situation described in this report was one of the factors leading up to Osmonbekov's departure.