

Special Report

EFIB Groundhog Days

An Investigative Series on the Use of the CoB for Personal Gain


Usmnews.net recently received a copy of the following e-mail, sent (on 7-Nov-07) to all CoB faculty by the CoB's Alternative Learning Coordinator, Sonia Gaines-Littles.

Date: Wed, 7 Nov 2007

From: Sonia Gaines-Littles <sonia.gaineslittles@usm.edu>

To: cob-facstaff@usm.edu

Subject: [Cob-facstaff] EFIB Friday Seminar

Part(s):  2 DS-Health Care (Marvasti).doc application/msword 304.48 KB

A quick reminder that this Friday, Akbar Marvasti will be presenting "An Estimation of the Demand and Supply for Physician Services."

The paper is attached. (If the equations don't print properly, please ask Akbar for a hard copy.)

As always, see you at 11:45 AM *sharp* in JGH 300.

I also wanted to update everybody on the line-up for the rest of the semester:

Nov. 9: Akbar Marvasti

Nov. 16: Marco Castaneda (Tulane)

Nov. 23: THANKSGIVING

Nov. 30: Chris Garbacz (MS Public Utilities)

Dec. 7: OPEN

Finally, it is time to schedule speakers for next semester. If you would like to present or if you would like to invite somebody, please let me know.

Cheers,

Sami

As shown above, the e-mail was written by assistant professor of economics Sami Dakhli, and later forwarded to all CoB faculty by Gaines-Littles. As the e-mail explains, associate professor of economics, Akbar Marvasti, is scheduled to present his paper "An Estimation of the Demand and Supply for Physicians Services" at the EFIB's Friday Seminar Series, which is coordinated by Dakhli and affectionately referred to by the CoB's Administration as "EFIB Fridays" ([EFIB FRIDAYS - FACULTY RESEARCH SEMINAR SERIES](#)).¹

When a copy of the e-mail above hit our desks, our reporters almost immediately recognized the title of Marvasti's paper. A quick search through the stacks of paperwork

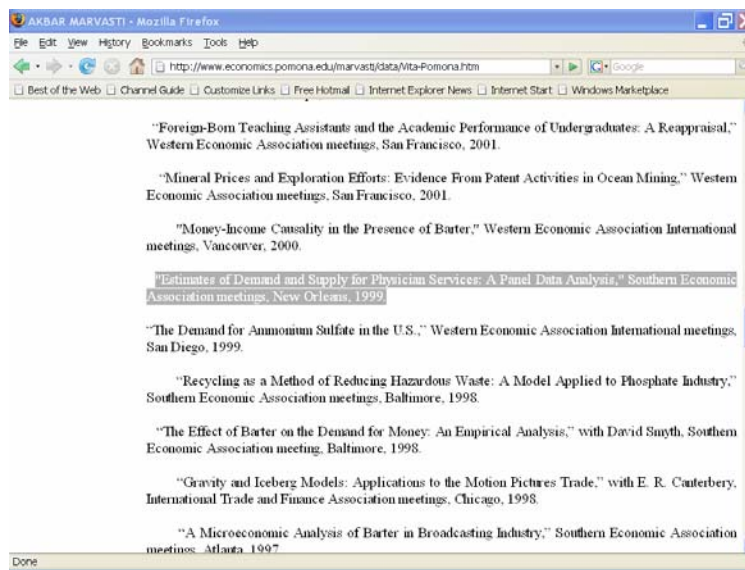
¹ The headline in parentheses is taken from the Fall 2007 issue of *Joint Venture*, the CoB's affinity magazine. For more on "EFIB Fridays," see http://www.usm.edu/business/news_and_events/joint_venture.pdf.

at usmnews.net revealed just why. That paper appears on the copy of Marvasti's vita located on the Pomona College website, where Marvasti (shown below) was employed through May of 2006.



Akbar Marvasti

The screen below, taken from Marvasti's "Pomona vita," shows that Marvasti has presented this paper before. And, that earlier presentation was at the **1999** Southern Economic Association Meetings in New Orleans – about 8 years ago!



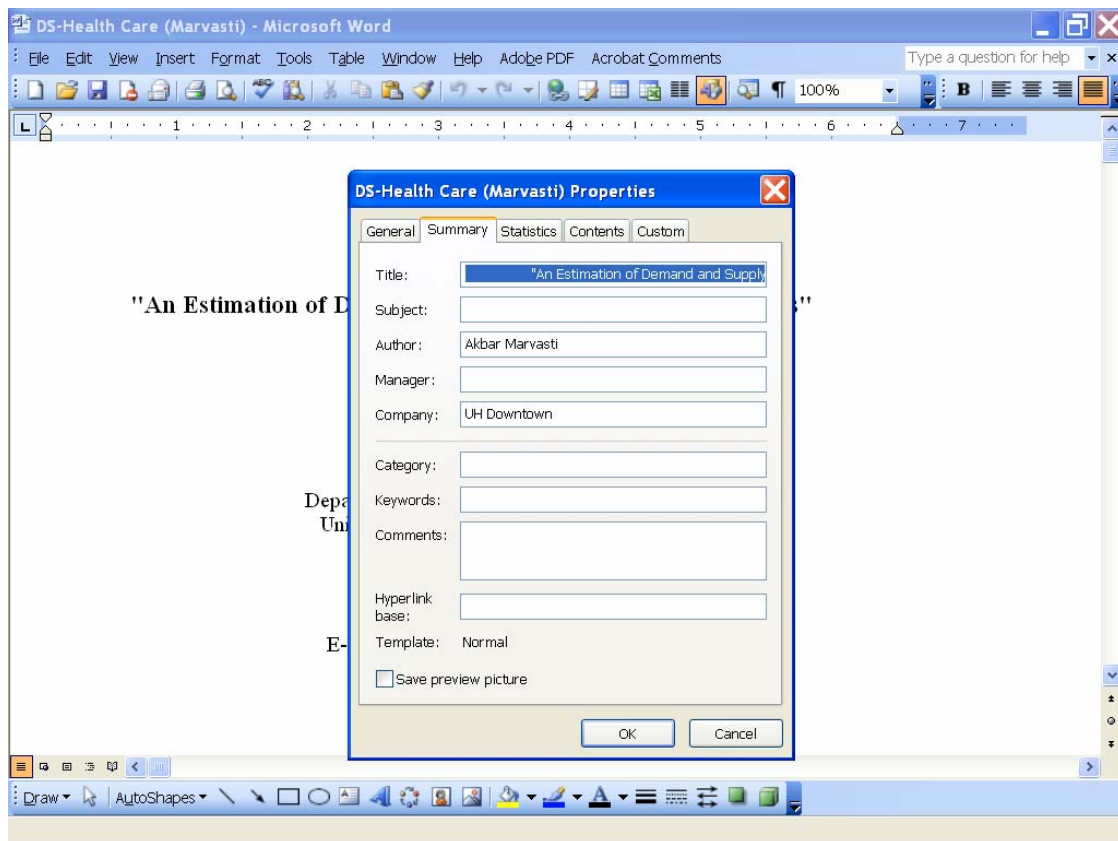
At this point, reporters examined the copy of the paper that was attached to Gaines-Littles' e-mail, paying particular attention to the data that Marvasti uses in his study. Just as our reporters suspected, the data for Marvasti's study *do not* cover any of the post-1999 period, the year in which Marvasti presented the study at the SEA meetings. As the insert below shows, Marvasti's data span the 1987-1997 and 1987-1994 periods.

3. Data

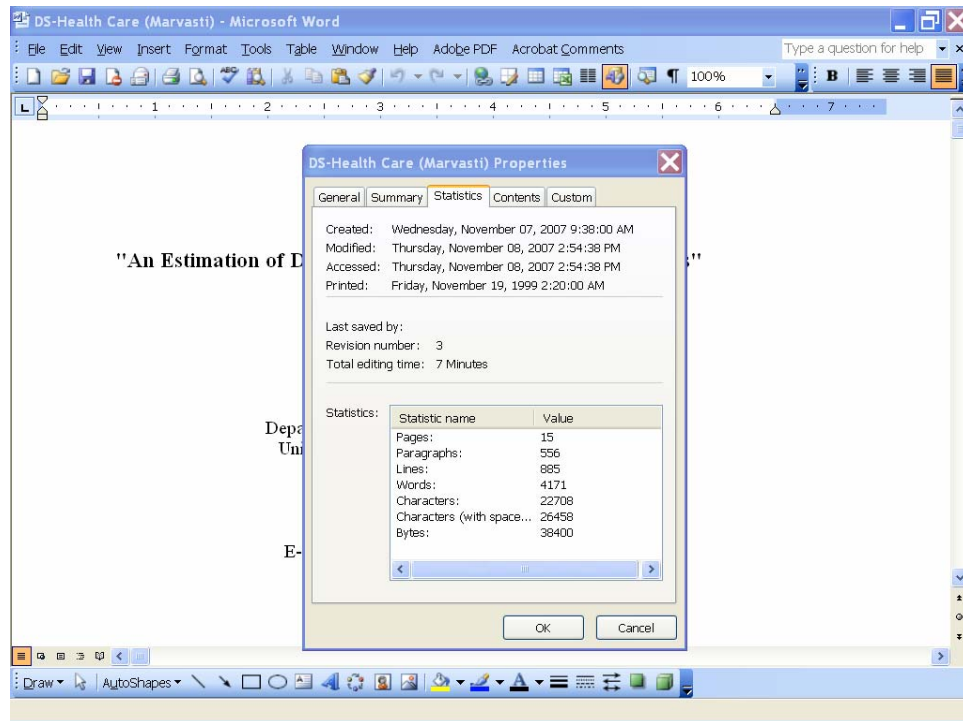
Statistical analysis in this paper is based on a pooled data set of annual regional observations for physician office visits during 1987-1997 period. Therefore, the number of observations for all variables is 99, except for hourly wage rate for registered nurses which is available only for the 1987-1994 period. Descriptive data for the variables are presented in Table 1. The dependent variable in both structural equations is measured by the mean number of office visits

While scrolling down Marvasti's study in order to find the data descriptions, reporters at usmnews.net noticed another oddity – none of Marvasti's references appeared to fall in the post-1999 period. The first several references encountered in the text are dated **1975** (p. 1), **1972** (p. 1), **1990** (p. 1), **1986** (p. 1), **1975** (p. 1), **1979** (p. 1), **1974** (p. 2), **1985** (p. 2), **1987** (p. 2), **1991** (p. 2), **1995** (p. 2), **1972** (p. 2), **1991** (p. 2), **1982** (p. 5) and **1985** (p. 5). The preceding sequence of dates takes the reader right up to the data description section at the middle of the manuscript. A check of Marvasti's reference section reveals that the latest reference is dated 1998, and that there are two 1995 references, the second most recent date in the list. If this Friday, 9-Nov-07, were actually Friday, 9-Nov-99, the references included in Marvasti's paper would look more appropriate. As it stands, this appears to be a paper that was written in 1999 and, essentially, shelved at some point near that date, only to be recycled for presentation on 9-Nov-07.

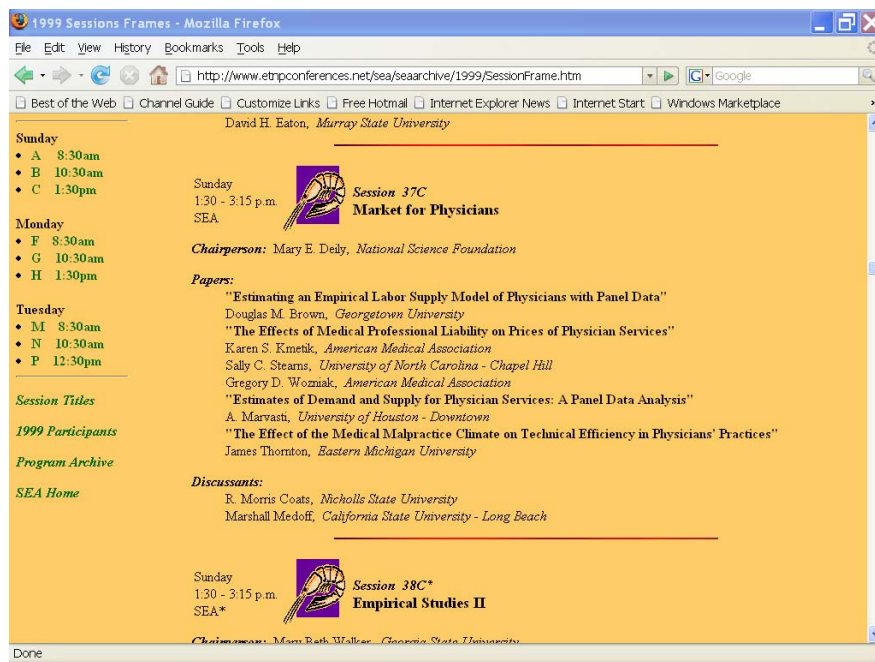
Our reporters' investigation does not end here, however. Next, the document's properties were examined. As the insert below clearly indicates, the document was created at the time Marvasti was affiliated with the University of Houston – Downtown, which, for Marvasti, was two employers ago, and included the year 1999.



As the next screen shows, the attachment included in Gaines-Littles' e-mail was created from a base document that was made back on **19 November 1999!**



A check of the SEA Archives reveals that the 1999 SEA Meetings were held on Sunday through Tuesday, 21-Nov-99 through 23-Nov-99, in New Orleans. Thus, Marvasti was preparing his study on physician services on 19-Nov-99 so that it would be ready to go by 21-Nov-99, or two days later.



The screen above shows that Marvasti presented his paper on Sunday, 21-Nov-99, in a session (Session 37C) entitled "Market for Physicians." From the information available

in this report, it appears that Marvasti will present that paper again, this time on Friday 9-Nov-07 – 8 years after the 1999 SEA Meetings – at the “EFIB Fridays” Seminar Series. This particular (9-Nov-07) seminar presentation will, however, be more like EFIB Groundhog Days for Marvasti, and perhaps others.

The information presented above in this *Special Report* supports an earlier report (published in Aug-07) about the institutional affiliations on the research of the EFIB’s Marvasti, Dakhli and Farooq Malik. That report, entitled ["ECONewbies"](#), pointed out that Marvasti’s 2007 merit raise of \$8,300 (approx.) was awarded to him even though he had, at the time, published only two journal articles with a USM affiliation on the by-line. The best of these two rates as a “C” in the CoB, and the other one – published in a 2006 issue of the *Pacific Economic Review*, was presented by Marvasti at the 54th International Atlantic Economic Conference in **mid-October of 2002**.

While this report supports “ECONewbies,” it goes further by indicating, as other reports on Marvasti have, how little Marvasti is actually engaged in research and other professional endeavors. This report shows that, by recycling a decade-old work, Marvasti is not only slacking on his responsibilities to students and alumni of USM, and to Mississippi taxpayers, he appears to be perfectly willing to *pretend to be* hard at work, instead of hardly working.

Look for additional reports on these and related matters. Even with these reports, we may never know the true cost to the CoB of the EFIB’s 2005-06 job search process.