

Special Report

Kaetsu Who?

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

The news that the CoB's Interim Dean, Alvin Williams, will be joining the South Alabama business faculty at the end of June of 2008 is still hitting the ears of those in the CoB and beyond. Williams' looming departure now raises a new question: Who will hold the Kaetsu Distinguished Professorship in International Business during the 2008-09 academic year?

Until 2006, the Kaetsu Professorship had been retained by the EFIB, as it should have been. The original holder of the title was IB professor Eddie Lewis, who is now on faculty at William Carey University. After Lewis, the professorship was awarded to former CBA Dean Tyrone Black, and the award for Black came during Black's "phased retirement." If awarding a professorship to a semi-retiree doesn't say enough about where the CoB's professorship process has been heading in recent years, then it should be pointed out that (1) Black did not hold any international business credentials (Black is an economist), and (2) the CoB was unable to retain its IB professor, Len Trevino, at the time the professorship was passed from Lewis to Black. According to sources, Trevino holds a PhD in international business from Indiana University, and he left the CoB for Washington State University -- a Tier II institution -- shortly after Black was awarded "the Kaetsu."

After Black, the Kaetsu took an even sharper turn, heading into the waiting arms of Williams, then chair of management & marketing. Williams is a professor of marketing, and, like Black, does not hold any international business credentials. Unlike Black, however, Williams was (is) not housed in the EFIB. Thus, for the first time the Kaetsu exited the EFIB for different pastures.

There is little doubt among usmnews.net sources that EFIB Chair George Carter will attempt to wrestle the Kaetsu away from the management & marketing department at the end of 2007-08. Carter is likely facing some heat to have the Kaetsu awarded to former CoB Associate Dean, Farhang Niroomand. According to sources, Niroomand likes titles, and money, and would probably like to see the Kaetsu in his grasp in order to bolster his efforts to retain federal funding for his international business grant projects. However, like Black, Niroomand does not hold any *real* IB credentials.

Enter John Lambert. Will Carter fight to have Lambert awarded the Kaetsu Professorship? One source says he will. Lambert, however, holds an *online* PhD in management, and he does not do international business-related research, at least according to various sources. Once again, any effort by Carter to provide Lambert with the Kaetsu will follow the "Black model."

Like so many other CoB dramas, look for a twist in this saga. Tony Henthorne, the new chair of management & marketing, will likely want to retain the Kaetsu for his

department, if not for himself. Williams will have the authority to make that happen before departing for the University of South Alabama after 30-June-08. If such a plan is carried out, and a pliable new dean emerges during the spring of 2008, the EFIB's days of having a professorship may be over for good.