

# Special Report

## Let's Spin the Wheel

### Gut Courses and Gut Profs in the EFIB Department

It's that time again -- time for CoB students to spin the wheel on the course scheduling process and see what comes up. In this report, USMNEWS.NET provides its annual look at grade distributions across courses and faculty in USM's College of Business. As always, the grades are provided to us by **pickaprof**, and, in the words of **pickaprof**, these "[g]rade histories are (painstakingly) obtained directly from university records."

We begin with Table 1 below, which contains grading histories from the EFIB department. While all of the information is available to our readers below, the discussion that follows Table 1 concentrates mainly on core courses and the professors that teach them.

**Table 1**  
**Gut Courses and Gut Profs in the EFIB, May/June 2008**

Course Prof	#Grades	A	B	C	D	F	George Carter Rigor Ratio
BA 301 Carter, G.	127	37	38	24	11	17	0.373
Lambert, J.	40	18	19	3	0	0	0.000
Monchuk, D.	216	28	69	65	41	13	0.557
Nissan, E.	39	14	10	12	3	0	0.125
BA 303 Malik, F.	71	29	26	15	1	0	0.018
Nissan, E.	352	95	123	123	7	4	0.050
EC 101 Green, T.	214	30	58	81	15	30	0.511
Klinedinst, M.	37	5	15	12	3	2	0.250
EC 201 Carter, G.	89	12	18	26	10	23	1.100
Green, T.	192	35	44	75	21	17	0.481
Klinedinst, M.	87	7	14	37	24	5	1.381
Shi, W.	60	11	19	18	8	4	0.400
EC 202 Marvasti, A.	93	10	20	38	13	12	0.833
EC 336 Dakhliya, S.	96	21	24	26	12	13	0.556
Lambert, J.	82	7	33	32	5	5	0.250
EC 440 Klinedinst, M.	33	6	11	14	1	1	0.118
FI 300 Hood, M.	90	11	20	28	14	17	1.000
Shi, W.	116	46	35	25	3	7	0.123

FI 350	Jiao, F.	39	6	16	10	4	3	0.318
	Lindley, J.	34	15	13	6	0	0	0.000
FI 472	Jiao, F.	27	4	8	7	5	3	0.667
	Lindley, J.	86	18	48	18	1	1	0.030
IB 472	Lambert, J.	21	11	10	0	0	0	0.000
IN 325	Hamwi, I.	66	11	12	30	11	2	0.562

**Notes:** Only data where #Grades>19 are included above. None of Klinedinst's EC 101H grades are included in his EC 101 entries above. The "George Carter Rigor Ratio" is equal to (D+F)/(A+B).

Let's begin with managerial statistics, a set of courses that time and again causes problems for the CoB when it comes to AACSB accreditation. Standardized tests continually show that, upon graduation, CoB students lack an understanding of basic statistics. CoB faculty also report, over and over again, that CoB students fail to show an understanding of basic statistical concepts in upper level CoB courses. Like data in previous reports here at USMNEWS.NET, the data in Table 1 above indicate why the CoB faces difficulties with stats. For one, when it comes to BA 301 both John Lambert and Edward Nissan are gut professors. Neither has a "George Carter Rigor Ratio" (GCRR) above 0.150.<sup>1</sup> In fact, Lambert's GCRR is an amazing 0.000, while Nissan's is only 0.125.

Given the "weeding out" role stats plays at many universities, sources indicate that even Carter's own GCRR of 0.373 is not adequate to address the importance of learning stats. Only Monchuk's GCRR, which is greater than 0.5, approaches something that is usually expected of stats profs. Having said that, the data from BA 303 (regression) are simply abysmal. According to the data in Table 1 above, not only are Nissan and Farooq Malik gut profs, the two of them have turned BA 303 into a gut course. This is striking given Carter's past admonitions to Interim Dean Alvin Williams to resist CoB faculty attempts to remove BA 303 from the CoB's core curriculum. According to Carter, BA 303 contains material that is essential to a business students' success in upper level courses and beyond. With BA 303 rigor ratios ranging from 0.018 to 0.050, regression analysis appears to be the CoB's version of the proverbial basket weaving course.

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<sup>1</sup> The "George Carter Rigor Ratio" is equal to (D+F)/(A+B). Sources say Carter first developed this ratio for use in the EFIB's spring 2007 annual evaluation, though none of the other CoB departments adopted the GCRR for annual evaluation purposes. CoB insiders have told reporters at USMNEWS.NET that Carter created the GCRR with the assistance of former EFIB economist Charles Sawyer, who is now at Texas Christian University, in an effort to develop a weapon that could potentially be used to lower the teaching ratings of so-called EFIB dissenters.

Moving forward to ECO 201 and ECO 202, things look relatively normal. In ECO 201, Klinedinst's GCRR of 1.381 is commendable, as is Carter's GCRR of 1.100. In terms of ECO 202, CoB students appear to have no choice other than Akbar Marvasti, whose GCRR is 0.833, a figure that is closer to Weihua Shi's ECO 201 GCRR of 0.400 than it is to Klinedinst's ECO 201 GCRR of 1.381. Marvasti's GCRR is also well below that of Carter's ECO 201 GCRR, which may explain why, according to sources, Marvasti and Carter have had past disputes about Carter's use of the GCRR teaching standard in the EFIB department's annual faculty evaluation process.

Skipping forward, Lambert has turned IB 472 -- the CoB's only *real* IB course -- into a gut course. And, with a GCRR of 0.000 in IB 472, and another for BA 301, Lambert is officially EFIB's most prominent gut prof. With that designation, sources say that EFIB economist, Sami Dakhli's GCRR of 0.556 for ECO 336 -- another CoB core course -- is a little too close to Lambert's own GCRR of 0.250 for ECO 336 for comfort (from embarrassment). Finally, as far as principles of finance (FIN 300) goes, CoB students have a stark contrast in Matthew Hood and Shi when it comes to selecting a prof. With a GCRR of 0.123, Shi offers FIN 300 as a gut course, while Hood maintains some standards with his GCRR of 1.000 for FIN 300 classes.

According to USMNEWS.NET sources, though it may be difficult to quantify, Lambert's presence in the CoB has done some real damage to the learning environment that existed prior to his arrival. Aside from pulling Lambert from the classroom altogether, there are no real good options for Carter, the EFIB chair, to mitigate the damage being done by Lambert. About the best short-term option for Carter would be to remove Lambert from BA 301, a course that still has a chance of being a *real* one according to sources, and place him in BA 303 instead. As Table 1 indicates, BA 303 is already a gut course, so Lambert's presence there would have no apparent costs. Shamefully, and with the backing of Williams, Carter is only expanding Lambert's "learning environment reach" by also placing Lambert at the lecterns of ECO 201 and ECO 202 classrooms.