

Special Report

More Newbies, More Problems **An Investigative Series on CoB Faculty Research Credentials**

One of the big concerns that the CoB's AACSB Peer Review Team had during their visit to the CoB in February of 2007 was that an alarming portion of the CoB's "Academically Qualified" faculty were classified as such only because they held newly minted Ph.D.s. By virtue of their designation as newbies, these faculty are allowed (under AACSB guidelines) to be counted as "Academically Qualified" without having to meet the "three scholarly contributions in the past five years" requirement faced by more senior CoB faculty. According to the CoB's AACSB Maintenance Review Team, the CoB needed to take steps to (1) reduce turnover, and (2) provide a mentoring program for junior faculty who are retained.

As reported here at usmnews.net, the CoB is yet to implement any plans to address these two concerns. As a result, the hemorrhaging of young faculty continues, including the recent departures of Brian Gregory (management) to Northern Arizona University and Tara Lopez (marketing) to Southeastern Louisiana University. These individuals fall into the newbie category, and their replacements will likely fit that description as well. As such, the CoB's AACSB profile will likely be unaffected by these losses. However, the retention problems continue to creep into the senior ranks, given the recent departures of Barry Babin (marketing) to Louisiana Tech University, Laurie Babin (marketing) to the University of Louisiana at Monroe, and Charles Sawyer (economics) to retirement. Not only are these three faculty "Academically Qualified" by virtue of their research, a recent report indicates that at least **81** refereed journal articles are departing the CoB with them.

Table 1 below provides an analysis of the potential impact that these three departures will have on the CoB's probationary status with the AACSB.

Table 1
The AACSB-Impact of the Departures of Babin, Babin and Sawyer

CoB Faculty	#Articles	Replacement Decision	Impact on AACSB Profile
Babin, Barry	33	Replace with Newbie	Negative
		Replace with Sr. Prof.	Neutral
		Do Not Replace	Negative
Babin, Laurie	11	Replace with Newbie	Negative
		Replace with Sr. Prof.	Neutral
		Do Not Replace	Negative
Sawyer, Charles	37	Replace with Newbie	Negative
		Replace with Sr. Prof.	Neutral
		Do Not Replace	Negative

As Table 1 above points out, there are three decisions the CoB can make with regard to replacing each of these three senior faculty, and two of them have negative consequences with regard to the “AQ-PQ” part of the CoB’s AACSB profile. By replacing senior faculty who are AQ through research output with newbies who aren’t, the CoB exacerbates the situation highlighted by the Peer Review Team as being a major concern. By not replacing some or any of these three faculty, the ratio of newbies-to-total faculty in the CoB goes up, also exacerbating the situation that the AACSB Team reported as being problematic. The remaining choice is replacing the three senior AQ-faculty with other senior (assoc/full) AQ-faculty. This one will be an accreditation profile-neutral choice.

Commentary

You may be wondering, as we are, just how bad the CoB’s odds are at securing a clean bill of health from the AACSB in spring of 2008. The “newbie problem” seems to be getting worse, and with only 10 months left to remedy the situation. It appears to us that the CoB’s only hope now is that the AACSB becomes “known for caving,” similar to the way EFIB Chair George Carter describes USM Provost Jay Grimes (see the “What does Carter Think? entry below).

What does George Carter Consider to be a Reason David Duhon was Ultimately Promoted to Full Professor?

“. . . Provost [Grimes], who’s known for caving, caved.”

George Carter,
on the reason Duhon was ultimately promoted,
2006

That may be right – the AACSB may have to become known for caving, like Grimes, for the CoB to have any hope of getting off of probation and moving forward.