

## *Special Report*

### **“No Job for the Faint Hearted”**

#### **An Examination of the Costs of the CoB’s Recent Faculty Losses**

Regular readers of USMNEWS.NET will recall reports of the mass exodus of CoB faculty that occurred in the weeks and months following the February 2007 AACSB Maintenance of Accreditation visit made by the CoB’s AACSB Peer Review Team. As [Will the Bleeding Stop?](#) showed, that exodus included both Barry and Laurie Babin from marketing, both Stephen and Dana Haggard from finance and management, respectively, Charles Sawyer from economics, Zaher Hallab from tourism management, and Stan Lewis from management information systems.<sup>1</sup> Thus, almost every academic area in the CoB was touched. Also leaving were Brian Gregory (management), Michael Madaris (finance), and Tara Lopez (marketing).<sup>2</sup> And, as [Will the Bleeding Stop?](#) pointed out, the faculty exodus that began in February of 2007 extended into August of 2007 with the departure of Sean Salter from finance.<sup>3</sup> Only adding to the human resource disaster described in [Will the Bleeding Stop?](#) was the decision by the CoB administration to deny assistant professor of management Daniel Michael’s Hurricane Katrina hardship claim. As a result, Michael was handed a “terminal letter,” increasing the number of faculty exits over this period to 12.

With these **12 faculty** also went **115 refereed journal articles**, figures that have been mentioned (in some form) by current Interim CoB Dean Alvin Williams in various settings (e.g., CoB-wide faculty meetings, etc.). Now, with a new series of faculty departure announcements that began in the fall of 2007 and has continued through March of 2007, the post-AACSB visit losses between February of 2007 and the end of August of 2007 look more like the first of two major faculty departure waves. For a College that is reeling from the strain of a **6<sup>th</sup> Year Probationary period** under AACSB, and that is also housed in a University toiling under *U.S. News & World Report’s* **Tier 4 status**, any loss of “intellectual standing” could be devastating, not to mention what might result from a loss as potentially big as that in the CoB’s double-wave (-whammy) departure episode described above.

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<sup>1</sup> Barry Babin is now with Louisiana Tech University, while Laurie Babin is affiliated with the University of Louisiana at Monroe. The Haggards are now with Missouri State University, Sawyer is at Texas Christian University, Hallab is affiliated with California State University at East Bay, and Lewis is with Troy University.

<sup>2</sup> Gregory is now with Northern Arizona University, while Madaris and Lopez are affiliated with William Carey University and Southeastern Louisiana University, respectively.

<sup>3</sup> As [Will the Bleeding Stop?](#) indicates, Salter won the 2006 AT&T (BellSouth) Outstanding Faculty Award in the CoB. Salter is now affiliated with Middle Tennessee State University.

This report examines the costs, in terms of Google Scholar citations lost, represented by these two potentially devastating waves (of faculty departures). USM President, Martha Saunders, has [blogged](#) that being Dean of one of USM's Colleges is "... no job for the faint hearted." USMNEWS.NET staffers decided to use those same terms to describe the "job" of reading (the results of) a report like this one.

Table 1 below shows the cost, in terms of GS citations lost (GS cites compiled in April of 2008), of **Wave 1** of the recent two-wave CoB faculty departure episode.

**Table 1**  
**Wave 1 (2/07-8/07) of Recent CoB Faculty Exodus**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>GS Cites 4/08</b>
Babin, Barry	MKT	1,390
Babin, Laurie	MKT	240
Gregory, Brian	MGT	13
Hallab, Zaher	TM	5
Lewis, Stanley	MIS	1
Lopez, Tara	MKT	17
Haggard, Dana	MGT	0
Haggard, Stephen	FIN	0
Madaris, Michael	FIN	0
Michael, Daniel	MGT	0
Salter, Sean	FIN	11
Sawyer, Charles	ECO	<u>208</u>
		<b>1,885</b>

As Table 1 above indicates, the CoB lost **1,885 GS citations** when it faced the first wave of the recent faculty departure episode. On a per-faculty basis, the figures shown above come to **157 GS cites lost per faculty departure**. With such massive losses as those that occurred during the first wave, the CoB was fortunate that, at the time, its next non-Probationary AACSB cycle did not occur until 2012.

After Salter's surprise departure in August of 2007, the dust from the first wave settled a bit. But, as Table 2 below indicates, the CoB was experiencing only the eye of the storm at that time. By mid-Fall 2007 semester, the second wave of CoB faculty departures hit, beginning with Interim CoB Dean Alvin Williams' announcement that he was moving on, after June of 2008, to other corners of the academic world.<sup>4</sup> Williams' departure was followed by similar announcements from Michael Vest of management, Frank Mixon of economics, Stephen Bushardt of management, Tony Henthorne and Talai Osmonbekov of marketing (and, in

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<sup>4</sup> It was later reported by USMNEWS.NET that Williams would be joining the faculty at the University of South Alabama after June of 2008.

Henthorne’s case, also tourism management), and Jon Carr and Francis Daniel of management.<sup>5</sup>

**Table 2**  
**Wave 2 (9/07-3/08) of Recent CoB Faculty Exodus**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>GS Cites 4/08</u>
Bushardt, Stephen	MGT	64
Carr, Jon	MGT	30
Daniel, Francis	MGT	3
Henthorne, Tony	MKT/TM	329
Mixon, Frank	ECO	465
Osmonbekov, Talai	MKT	63
Vest, Michael	MGT	49
Williams, Alvin	MKT	<u>126</u>
		<b>1,129</b>

The data in Table 2 above indicate that, in **Wave 2** alone, the **eight departing CoB faculty** have carried, or will carry, **1,129 GS cites** with them when they depart the CoB in 2008. On a per-faculty basis, the figures shown above in Table 2 come to **141 GS cites lost per faculty departure**. And when the **Wave 1** and **Wave 2** losses are combined – losses that span the course of a year – a massive hemorrhage of **3,014 GS cites** results. Such a hemorrhage is one that only the academic administration equivalent of a quadruple bypass surgery would have prevented.<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately for the CoB, and as so many reports and editorials here at USMNEWS.NET have shown, such an “academic surgery” is one that administrators like former CoB Dean Harold Doty and former CoB Associate Dean Farhang Niroomand lack the skills and fortitude to perform. Now, in the spring of 2008, the (fewer and fewer) remaining CoB faculty wait to see if Saunders’ choice to be the CoB’s next top executive isn’t so “faint hearted.”

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<sup>5</sup> According to sourced reports here at USMNEWS.NET, Vest is retiring after June of 2008, while Bushardt is joining the faculty at Spring Hill College. Henthorne and Osmonbekov are joining faculties at UNLV and Northern Arizona University, respectively, while Carr and Daniel will soon be joining faculties at Texas Christian University and Tennessee State University, respectively. Finally, and in another surprise move, Mixon resigned from the CoB after Fall 2007 semester and promptly joined the faculty at Auburn University.

<sup>6</sup> Most academicians recognize that such “surgery” requires (is represented by) use of “instruments” like proper faculty governance protocols, a merit-based pay system that actually rewards merit and is executed at every turn, and an overall administrative structure that is more humane.