

# Special Report

## Rarefied Air

### An Investigative Series on CoB Faculty Research Credentials

A USMNEWS.net reader recently commented that the list of CoB faculty who have exited the CoB since 2003 contains the names of individuals who are arguably the best scholars to have ever represented their particular units in USM's business school. That comment inspired the idea for a new series on the greatest scholars to have graced the suites of each unit in the CoB. Interestingly, the common thread among these individuals is that they were generally brought to USM under the business school leadership of former CBA dean, Tyrone Black. And, among the ones who have left the business school for other pastures (usually greener ones), most of them departed under the leadership of either former CBA dean, William Gunther, or former CoB dean, Harold Doty (usually the latter).

The *Special Report* series argues that former CoB professor of marketing, Donald Robin, is the most accomplished marketing faculty to have worked in USM's business school. Prior to joining the CoB, Robin had served on the faculty at both the University of Georgia and Mississippi State University. Robin joined USM's business school at a time when Black was dean of the institution. Now, Robin is closing out his academic career the way it began -- at a Tier I institution. Robin is currently the J. Tylee Wilson Professor of Business Ethics at Wake Forest University.

Robin's research record (before USM, at USM and after USM) is simply amazing. It began in 1967, one year after earning an MBA from Louisiana State University, when Robin published a **solo-authored** piece in *The Academy of Management Journal*, the premier journal in the field of management. Robin was, at the time, a doctoral student at LSU.



Robin has also published a number of studies in the *Journal of Marketing* and the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, both of which are A+ journals in marketing. Additionally, Robin has published papers in *The Accounting Review*, an A+ accounting journal. As such, Robin's research career spans A+-level journals in three academic disciplines -- accounting, management and marketing. With such a record, one would think that Robin is "the greatest ever" scholar to have journeyed through the CoB. Not so, according to a [recent](#) *Special Report* that argues that finance professor, Tom Lindley, holds that distinction. Lindley has published in the *top journal* in **three** academic disciplines, a feat that appears to have been necessary in order to hold off Robin for the gold medal of academic research in USM's business school. Lindley's presence places Robin in the all-time #2 spot in the CoB.

As with others profiled in this series, Robin's research does not end with the A+ journal publications discussed above. His research has appeared in at least 14 other academic journals, and a few of these are A-level journals.



Among the A-level journals shown above are the *Journal of Business Research*, the *Journal of World Business*, and the *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*. With the JWB falling under the international business umbrella, Robin has published in an A+/A-level journal in each of four separate fields (ACC, IB, MGT and MKT). Other notables above are *The CPCU Journal*, a B-level finance journal, and two B-level management journals, *Business Horizons* and the *Journal of Small Business Management*. Fitting Robin's current WFU title are publications in the *Journal of Business Ethics*, *Business Ethics Quarterly* and *Business & Professional Ethics Journal*. Robin's research profile is nothing short of sensational.

Another former marketing professor fought Robin to the very end for the top all-time spot in marketing. That individual is Eric Reidenbach, who also joined USM's business college during the Black administration. Like Robin, Reidenbach has published in four A+ journals (first row below). He has also hit four A journals (second row below).



In addition to the "four over four" set above, Reidenbach has also published in a number of other business and marketing journals. Some of these are shown below.



The journals in the top row are the same ones shown above for Robin. So, what separates Robin from Reidenbach in this area is the comparison of the second row. Cross-discipline publication in journals like *The CPCU Journal* keep the race between Robin and Reidenbach close at this level. Ultimately, however, Robin's placement above Reidenbach is cross-discipline publishing at the highest levels, and it is Robin's *The Academy of Management Journal*, the solo-authored paper written during Robin's grad school days that also gave him an A+ journal in each of three fields, that propelled Robin over Reidenbach. Still, Reidenbach's record is so good it deserved mention here. Although it might rank second all-time in marketing, based on what we have seen, it will likely rank third all-time for the business college as a whole. That is a tremendous feat.

Finally, yet a third Black-hire deserves mention here. That individual is Barry Babin, who is now at Louisiana Tech University. Though some of the CoB's younger faculty likely expected to see Babin take this prize, and were surprised to see how productive Robin and Reidenbach have been, Babin still finishes a strong third in this race. Over the past two decades, Babin has published in three A+ marketing journals (top row below) and in five A marketing journals (second row below).



What gave Reidenbach the edge over Babin's "three over five" collection is Reidenbach's "four over four" result. With two cancellations, Reidenbach's *Journal of Marketing Research* takes away much of Babin's *Journal of Consumer Research*. The cross-discipline nature of Reidenbach's *The Accounting Review*, also an A+ journal, gives him a noticeable edge over Babin at this level. Of course, it did not help Babin that two of his second-row journals -- *The Journal of Personal Selling &*

*Sales Management* and the *Journal of Services Marketing* -- were upgraded to A journals only recently, during the [highly politicized 2007-08 journal ranking process](#). Babin's use of his [editorial position](#) with the *Journal of Business Research* to [gain](#) entry into that journal was yet another strike against him.

The quality of Babin's second-line research (shown below) is arguably better than that from Reidenbach, though not enough to overtake Reidenbach for second all-time in MKT and third all-time for the overall CoB.



Still, Babin's overall record not only deserves mention here, it will likely place him among the top seven all-time for the overall CoB, if not the top five. For that, we'll have to wait and see.