

Special Report

Traveling to the Top of TM **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 story of "the greatest ever" in tourism management is an interesting one. To begin, the business school at USM adopted the tourism management department in 2003, after former USM President, Shelby Thames, fired about 10 University deans and reorganized the University. When the reorganization went through, about five TM faculty joined the CoB.¹ In those early days, then-MGT & MKT chair, Alvin Williams, assumed the title interim chair for TM. A search for a permanent replacement was launched immediately. After a year-long search, sources say that Williams attempted to hire Cherylynn Becker from Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University. A coalition of central administrators, along with TM faculty Joe Hutchinson, blocked the hiring of Becker (for undisclosed reasons).

Former dean Harold Doty later wrote a letter to USM Provost, Jay Grimes, accusing Thames and Grimes of engaging in gender discrimination practices in their effort to thwart the hiring of Becker. That letter was sent to *The Hattiesburg American*, putting the USM administration in an untenable position. Becker was hired in the spring of 2005, and assumed the post immediately. In light of this history, our analysis of TM begins with Becker's record, which is below.



As shown above, Becker's record contains at least five publications in unique tourism management journals. The first two of these are classified by USM's CoB as A journals. These

¹ Out of these, only one remains (professor Catherine Price).

are the *International Journal of Hospitality Management* and the *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*. The second row journals are lesser-ranked, though important journals in the field. These are the *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education*, the *Journal of Foodservice Business Research*, and the *Journal of Restaurant & Foodservice Marketing*.

Becker's reported rival, Hutchinson, is now at the University of Central Florida, an institution much more well-known for TM than USM. However, Hutchinson's record, though respectable, is not as strong as Becker's, at least on the TM front. As shown below, Hutchinson has produced journal publications in two separate A journals. But, these journals are classified by the CoB as A journals in other units. In this case those units are MIS and MKT, respectively.

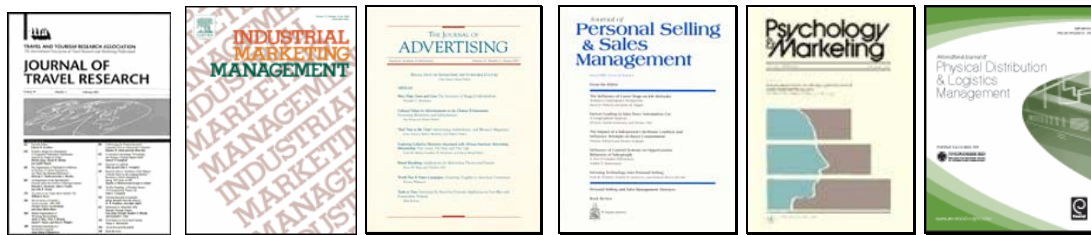


Hutchinson has, however, published in *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, arguably a better outlet than any of Becker's second tier journal publications. This one is joined by only one other, a B journal in MIS. As it stands, Hutchinson's record is too light on TM research.

Fortunately for the CoB, there is one record that is vastly superior to both Hutchinson's *and* Becker's. That record belongs to former interim TM chair, Tony Henthorne. The "former" part of Henthorne's title reveals the rub -- though hired by Black, Henthorne has departed for the *Harrah College* at the University of Nevada Las Vegas.



Henthorne's record begins with at least one publication in the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, an elite-level journal in marketing, the field in which Henthorne is formally trained. Henthorne's record goes on to include no fewer than six publications in unique A journals, including TM's the *Journal of Travel Research*. And to Henthorne's credit, he has more than one publication in the *JTR*.



In addition to multiple publications in *JTR*, Henthorne has published articles in at least five other A journals, all of which are in MKT (see above).



As with Hutchinson, Henthorne's second-line portfolio includes *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*. It also includes the *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*. Like Hutchinson, Henthorne record reveals inter- and cross-disciplinary research, with articles in the *Journal of Business Ethics* and the *International Journal of Social Economics*, both quality journals according to the CoB's new management and economics journal rankings.

Again, Henthorne's presence has been good for the CoB, given the lighter records of both Becker and Hutchinson. However, as stated earlier there is a downside. Not only has Hutchinson departed, and with at least two A journal publications, Henthorne is now history. With him goes a pack of high-quality journal publications. Once again, "the House" (i.e., Las Vegas) wins.