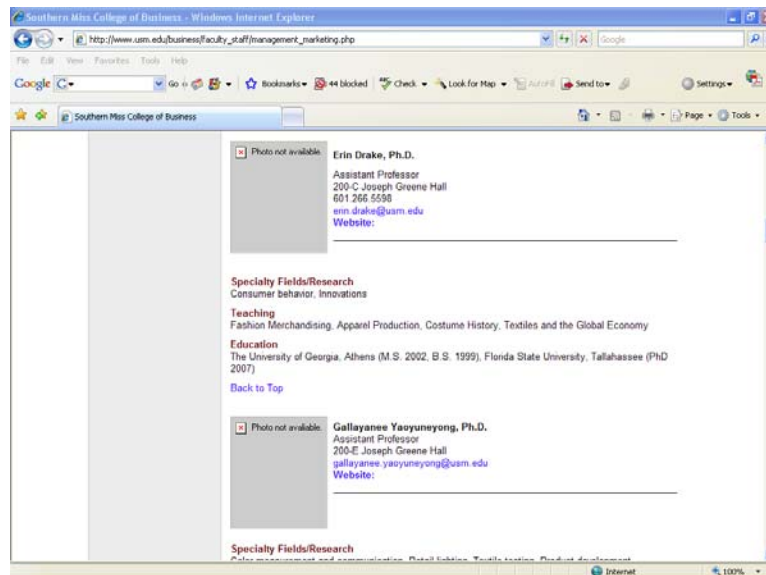


The 2008 USMNEWS.net CoB Person of the Year

by
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Although 2008 didn't bring anywhere near the drama brought by 2007, there were still some interesting stories that developed. There were also some interesting individuals amongst CoB faculty, a few of whom deserve mention for the 2008 USMNEWS.net CoB Person of the Year. After examining the accomplishments of a handful of individuals, a few received an "Honorable Mention" for the 2008 CoBPoY award:

5. Erin Drake and Gallayanee Yaoyuneyong (tie) – despite having been around the CoB awhile, these two assistant professors of fashion merchandising somehow managed to prevent photos of themselves from appearing on the CoB's website for the entire year.



With their likenesses conspicuously absent from the CoB's webpage, it's possible that the biggest thing people remember about these two is from former CoB interim dean Alvin Williams' introduction of them to CoB faculty (early fall 2007) as having been "somewhere else" before coming to the CoB. While we might never know the size of the dividend earned by their avoidance of the CoB webpage, we do know that it certainly didn't hurt.

4. Kuo Lane Chen – this associate professor of decision sciences somehow managed to get tenure in 2008 despite the fact that her [students](#) and colleagues can only just barely understand a small bit of what she says. Chen first applied for tenure back in 2006-07, only to have her application [remanded](#) by then-provost Jay Grimes due to her lack of communication skills. In 2007-08, despite having supposedly completed a required ELI course, and later reportedly facing opposition from Donna Davis (DS professor) and Steven Jackson (SAIS director), Chen’s so-called “7th Year Review” application was supported by then-interim CoB dean Alvin Williams and she was tenured.

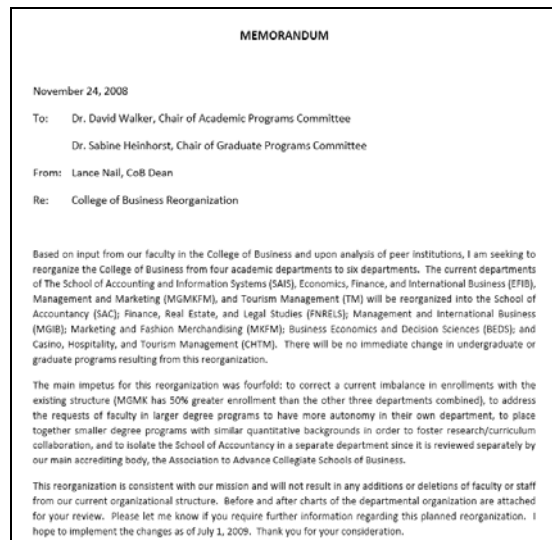
3. Ernest King – 2007 got off to a rocky start for this associate professor of legal studies. First, former CoB dean Harold Doty moved all of the CoB’s LS education program from the EFIB to the SAIS. Next, Doty held a meeting with King to inform him that he was not to engage in any outside consulting and that he was neither “Academically Qualified” nor “Professionally Qualified.” Within a matter of days after delivering this news to King, Doty shocked the USM family by resigning his post (on 9-April-07) as CoB dean. Doty, who would disappear from CoB life for several months, was immediately replaced on an interim basis by Alvin Williams, who almost immediately concluded that Doty’s removal of “PQ” status from King was *unwarranted*. Thus, King’s “PQ” status was restored within weeks of having it taken away, and Williams’ decision would ultimately prove to be a significant factor in the CoB’s favorable 2007 reaccreditation decision from AACSB. It would also show that Doty governed on a personal level, not a professional one.

Fast-forward to 2008, when King would supplement his “PQ” standing with journal publications in the *Journal of Real Estate Finance & Economics* (a premier journal in the field), the *Journal of Real Estate Research*, and the *Real Estate Law Journal*, among several others.



Now, King not only holds practically all of the CoB’s real estate credentials, he’s both “AQ” and “PQ.”

2. Lance Nail – 2008 was a big year for Lance Nail. He started it out as *department chair* at the University of Alabama – Birmingham, and he ended it as *dean* at the University of Southern Mississippi. On top of that, he came to USM's business school with a better sense of the importance of *quality* academic research than any previous CoB dean save Tyrone Black, and he's worked diligently to reorganize the CoB in order to put that new research focus in the best possible position for success.



Throw in what is believed to be the first-ever CoB faculty retreat (announced Dec-08) and you have the makings of a CoBPoY winner. Not quite. 2008 also brought a few gaffes to Nail, such as the widely controversial selection of Kenneth Zantow (of “4th Year Review” fame) as assistant dean. Then there was not only the failure to get ECO moved out of the CoB and into the CoAL, but the loss of a tremendous amount of political capital in the way that potential ouster (of ECO) was mishandled by Nail (& Co.). It was damn near a debacle. These considerations turn a 2008 CoBPoY win into a 2008 CoBPoY consolation prize.

Now on to the **2008 USMNEWS.net CoB Person of the Year . . .**

1. Fujun Lai – all year long we have been following the research successes of decision sciences’ Lai through the pages of USMNEWS.net. And, all year long we have been amazed. When Lai picks up the 2009 Louis K. Brandt Faculty Research Award at the student awards banquet in a few weeks, I hope that part of the gleam in his eye comes from thinking about (at that very moment) also being the 2008 CoBPoY.

What Lai has put together over the last year is phenomenal. From the premier *Communications of the ACM* to the A-level *Tourism Management and International*

Journal of Quality & Reliability Management and *International Journal of Production Research*, the hits just kept coming and coming and coming.



There was so much activity at the top for Lai that it was, and still is, easy to forget about his *Transportation Journal*, *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, *Industrial Management & Data Systems* (2 of these), and others. It's just as the recent **CoB News** headline said – the numbers don't Lai.