

## **The Doty Sidestep: How to Bypass Faculty Governance**

From July 1, 2003, until April 9, 2007, Duane Harold Doty was the dean of the College of Business and Economic Development/College of Business at the University of Southern Mississippi. A hallmark of the Doty regime was actively seeking to circumvent faculty governance processes when those processes threatened to limit Doty's ability to finalize "check boxes" on his dean's resume. "The Doty Sidestep: How to Bypass Faculty Governance" is a multi-part series highlighting some of Doty's most egregious efforts to put his wants above the mission of USM and the governance processes that protect USM faculty.

The series is a cautionary tale for those who might consider allowing Doty a second chance at managing a business school.

### **Part 2: The Secret Degree Program**

In 2006, Harold Doty presented the Undergraduate Programs Committee in the College of Business at the University of Southern Mississippi with a very interesting proposition. The UPC is the faculty committee within the CoB that oversees changes to the undergraduate curriculum in the CoB. Doty appeared before the committee and asked that the committee create and approve an unadvertised degree in Business that would be granted solely at the dean's discretion. When pressed for a motivation behind the request, Doty cited that there was a need to "be sensitive" to the needs of certain students who earned the requisite total hours for a bachelor's degree but who could not or had not achieved enough hours in any area to warrant one of the CoB's established majors.

When pressed further for his reasoning, it became clear that Doty had given the matter little thought. Where [in what department] would this degree be housed? How would the degree be assessed for AACSB and SACS purposes (USM was, at that time, on SACS probation.)? Was this proposal even within the allowable purview of the UPC? Doty had no substantive answers and reacted with the usual Doty blustering and bristling at having his ideas questioned. Doty reportedly had a heated exchange with former Assistant Professor of Finance Sean Salter when Salter referred to

Doty's suggestion as the "Secret Degree" program. Doty claimed that the program would not be *secret*, it would merely be *unpublicized*. Readers are invited to join Doty in splitting that proverbial hair.

In the end, the UPC failed to support Doty's request, citing a lack of necessity for the program and its obvious accreditation pitfalls. As former dean William Gunther pointed out, Doty could always approve an *ad hoc* substitution for any such students that would allow them to receive a diploma through an established degree program. UPC members Stanley Clark (Professor of Accounting) and Michael Vest (Professor of Management) each provided vocal opposition, which was equally uncharacteristic for both individuals at that point in time.

Multiple sources from within that UPC meeting confirmed that, after Doty stormed out of the meeting, Undergraduate Programs Director Gwendolyn Pate imparted information to the UPC that a particular student, whose father was a major CoB donor, would have been a candidate for such a degree. Fortunately, that incarnation of the UPC decided not to sell out the CoB's academic integrity to support Doty's academic prostitution.

Although this scheme of Doty's failed in the end, it provides the uninitiated reader with the types of rule-bending and rule-breaking that Doty practiced regularly during his tenure as CoB dean at USM. It has been reported to USMNEWS.net writers that in his ongoing search for another dean's job, Doty often blames his USM failure on Shelby Thames and a "small minority" of disgruntled faculty. For those readers who might be considering Doty's claim, we suggest that this example illustrates the fact that Doty supports Faculty Governance, just as long as the faculty gives him exactly what he wants and gives him the authority to control it completely.