

# *The Trellis Green Lawsuit: A Decade Later*

It has been about 12 years since then-assistant professor of economics Trellis G. Green filed suit against the University of Southern Mississippi and the Mississippi IHL, and a decade since that suit was settled. Given the current state of affairs in USM's College of Business, it seems fitting that USMPRIDE.COM presents a series on the Green lawsuit. This is part 8 in that series.

## **A Call for Vitae**

Part 6 in this series concluded with an interesting request filed by Green's attorney, Kim Chaze, in January of 1997. That request, inserted at the end of this issue, called for the defendants' production of a number of CBA faculty vitae. Green's case was apparently built on a "lowest common denominator theory" of tenure and promotion, wherein one's record simply has to be greater than only the weakest record to have received the award (tenure, promotion) that one is seeking. Green wanted to show that his own record exceeded that of some of the people listed in his request for vitae.

## **The Farhang Niroomand Denominator**

At the request of USMPRIDE.COM readers, a recent report was published that presented the publication record of CoB Associate Dean Farhang Niroomand over his time (roughly) at USM. The headline from that report is pictured below:

**Updated – See Below!**

### ***Special Report***

## **Old Rivals Collide, and a Clock Gets Cleaned**

**An Investigative Series on CoB Faculty Research Credentials**

The "Old Rivals" aspect of the *Special Report* above deals with Niroomand's rivalry with finance professor Tom Lindley. The USMPRIDE.COM investigators in charge of the *Special Report* series decided to compare Niroomand's USM record with that of Lindley. In doing so, they produced a table of results, using the construct described below:

A look at CoB Associate Dean Farhang Niroomand's research record has been requested by a number of usmpride.com readers. Our investigators put together a *Special Report* that compares Niroomand's research career at USM to what finance professor Tom Lindley published over the corresponding period. Publication data for Niroomand are taken from the College of Business' webpages at usm.edu. Lindley's publication records are taken from a recent report ("The Past 30 Years: E. Ray Canterbury meets J. Tom Lindley") that is available at usmpride.com.

The table produced in that *Special Report* is useful in this series on Trellis Green’s suit against USM officials and the IHL. That table, and the information preceding it, is shown below:

Table 1 below presents the results, using the journal rankings from *Enhancing Faculty Productivity*. The time frame examined, 1987-2005, corresponds (roughly) to Niroomand’s tenure at USM.

**Table 1**  
**Niroomand v. Lindley: Research Output, 1987-2005**

Year	<i>Farhang Niroomand</i>		<i>Tom Lindley</i>		
	A-Level	B-Level	A-Level	B-Level	
2005	0	1	0	0	
2004	0	0	0	0	
2003	0	0	1	0	
2002	0	0	0	0	
2001	0	0	0	0	
2000	0	0	0	0	
1999	0	0	0	0	
1998	1	1	0	0	
1997	0	1	1	0	
1996	0	1	0	0	Niroomand promoted to full
1995	0	0	1	0	Niroomand submits dossier
1994	0	0	1	0	
1993	0	0	0	0	
1992	0	0	2	0	
1991	0	1	0	0	
1990	0	0	0	0	Niroomand promoted to assoc.
1989	0	2	1	2	Niroomand submits dossier
1988	0	2	0	0	
1987	0	0	1	0	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	

That report offers some interesting observations about both of Niroomand’s promotions – first to associate (in 1990) and then to full (in 1996). Commentary from that report, with subsequent corrections, is shown below:

**Commentary**

CoB faculty may be surprised to learn that Niroomand has produced only a single A-level journal article over the past 20 years. That article was published in 1998, or after the 10<sup>th</sup> year of Niroomand’s tenure at USM. From Table 1 above, it appears as though Niroomand may have used only 4 B-level articles to qualify for tenure/promotion to associate professor of economics. Beyond that, it’s difficult to determine, using the A- and B-level publications data above, how Niroomand qualified for promotion to full professor. Niroomand was promoted to full professor at the end of the 1995-96 academic year. Thus, he had not added any in-print A- or B-level articles to his record at the time he submitted his promotion dossier in August/September of 1995.

The period highlighted in yellow indicates the period used by Niroomand “to qualify” for a promotion to associate professor of economics. The period highlighted in blue indicates the period used by Niroomand “to qualify” for promotion to full professor of economics. Thus, our original report was incorrect in pointing out that Niroomand had not added any A- or B-level publications to his record between receipt of promotion to associate and submission of his promotion-to-full dossier. Niroomand did add one B-level article to his record in 1991. That error occurs in the last sentence of the original report, which is now underlined in the font color used in this update. Finally, as a reader

As the *Special Report* series investigators and USMPRIDE.COM readers concluded, Niroomand’s promotions were close calls, at least according to the A- and B-level publications records. The only A-level journal publication on Niroomand’s record at USM appears *after* his promotion to full professor. Records indicate that Trellis Green had an A-level journal publication *before* he was denied promotion to associate professor (in 1994). Thus, Niroomand’s record may have been beneficial to Green in the lawsuit over the denial of his (Green’s) promotion to associate.

The next issue in this series will examine another of the “denominators” in this case.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF FORREST COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

DR. TRELIS GREEN,

PLAINTIFF;

V.

CASE NO.: 6-94-4284

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN  
MISSISSIPPI, ET AL.,

DEFENDANTS.

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**REQUEST FOR PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS  
PROPOUNDED TO DEFENDANTS**

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COMES NOW, the Plaintiff and propounds the following Request for Production of Documents to the Defendants pursuant to the Miss. Rules of Civil Procedure as follows, to-wit:

1. Please produce the Vitae, Personnel File, and Dossier of all persons who have been awarded Tenure and Promotion in the Department of Economics and International Business over the past eight (8) years.

2. Please produce all documents which were in fact reviewed by UNIVERSITY representatives when deciding which individuals would be awarded Tenure or Promotion in the Department of of Economics and International Business over the past eight (8) years.

3. Please produce the vitae, personnel file, and dossier of the following persons:

A. James S. (Scott) McGruder;

B. Chauncey M. (Mark) Depree;

- C. Ernest W. (Ernie) King;
- D. Farhang Niroomand;
- E. Charles W. Sawyer;
- F. Mark Klinedinst;
- G. George H. Carter III;
- H. Eddie Miley Lewis;
- I. Colleen O. Cameron;
- J. Frank C. Whitesell;
- K. Bille Morgan Allen;
- L. Forrest Durwood Ruegger;
- M. Gus Gordon;
- N. Lee P. Gore;
- O. James R. Henderson;
- P. Jerry G. King;
- Q. Davud Duhon;
- R. James L. Davis; and
- S. William Sirmon.

[For reference purposes, the foregoing persons, have been promoted or granted tenure in the College of Business Administration.]

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED on this the 16 day of January, A.D. 1997.



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