

Was George Carter Disingenuous with the Media?

An Examination of Carter's 12 April 2007 Comments to *The Student Printz*

It's been quite some time, if ever, since the CoB has experienced a week like that of April 9-13, 2007. On 9 April 2007, CoB faculty and staff received an afternoon e-mail informing them that USM Provost Jay Grimes would be meeting with *all* CoB faculty and staff at 12:30pm on 10 April 2007. The e-mail did not even hint at the official agenda of the meeting. Then, on the morning of 10 April, CoB Public Relations Manager Jan May e-mailed all CoB faculty and staff with the news that the USM Human Resources Department had confirmed that CoB Dean Harold Doty and CoB Associate Dean Farhang Niroomand had resigned their administrative positions in the CoB and they would be going to full-time instruction duties beginning fall 2007. That e-mail also stated that Grimes had named Alvin Williams, professor of marketing, as the Interim CoB Dean, and that he (Grimes) would be seeking faculty input about the Interim Associate Dean position at the 12:30pm meeting that day.

The 10 April 2007 meeting came and went, and without any discussion of who was to be considered for the Associate Dean position in the CoB. Grimes gave a short speech indicating that the Doty-Niroomand "resignations" were both "voluntary," while Williams informed CoB faculty/staff that the Joe Greene-style leadership would be returning to Joseph Greene Hall over the next 12 to 14 months. On the following day, 11 April 2007, local print media (e.g., *The Hattiesburg American*) began publishing stories about the turnover at the top of the CoB, and Williams e-mailed faculty and staff to inform them that he (Williams) had selected associate professor of management Joseph Peyrefitte to fill Niroomand's old spot in the CoB's Associate Dean's office.

By 12 April 2007, USM's student newspaper, *The Student Printz*, got in on the action.



Printz writer Candrese Jones put together a front-page story on events in the CoB entitled "Business deans resign posts," a story that relied in part on quotations from EFIB Chair George Carter (see below). The article, inserted in this report below,



George Carter

included quotes from only one CoB faculty – George Carter – to discuss new Interim Dean Alvin Williams' qualifications. An inset on the front page of the paper contains

Business deans resign posts

By Candrese Jones
Printz Writer

USM's Human Resources Department confirmed Tuesday that Harold Doty and Farhang Niroumand have resigned from their administrative duties as dean and associate dean, respectively, of the College of Business. Alvin Williams has been appointed interim dean of the college.

They resigned for personal reasons, said Jay Grimes, university provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Both Doty and Niroumand will remain employed as tenured faculty and will assume teaching responsibilities in the fall of 2007.

Williams has 27 years of faculty experience and served as chair of the Department of Management and Marketing from July 1988 through August 2005.

"I was delighted that he accepted," said Grimes.

Grimes appointed Williams as interim dean and informed USM President Shelby Thames and President-Elect Martha Saunders about his decision.

Williams will appoint an interim associate dean.

"[Williams] has served our students and his discipline with distinction for many years, and I thought he would be a good interim dean," Grimes said.

has approximately 75 full-time faculty members and 2,565 students majoring in 11 different business disciplines and is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International.

"I think this is an opportunity to work hard and fulfill the mission of the college of business," said Williams.

Grimes said Williams would be working with the department chairs making sure they have a complete faculty to serve the students and outside constituents. Williams will also work with the community and doing any other duties that are required of any dean until such time as the new dean is chosen.

"This is an exciting time for the College of Business," said Williams. "I would like to work toward developing innovative programming and circulation with focus on entrepreneur and pharmaceutical sales and marketing programming, and with the Center for Finance Services. And I would like to work with local economic development officials, especially the commercialization park here in town."

Williams also plans to surround his focus on faculty recruitment.

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George Carter
Dept. Chair of Economics,
Finance and International
Business

"He is the perfect choice to take our college through the transition to a new dean and new president"

"He has been appointed until a national search [for a dean of the college of business] is complete,"
USM's College of Business

one of Carter's quotes: "He [Williams] is the perfect choice to take our college through the transition to a new dean and new president." USMNEWS.NET does not take issue with quote. Later in the article, continued on page 3 of *TSP*, Carter is quoted as saying: "Alvin Williams is one of the finest men I know." Again, we do not dispute that this quote represents a genuinely-held belief by Carter. Carter is also quoted on page 3 of the article, inserted at the top of the next page of this report, as saying: "He [Williams] is a proven academic administrator and is exactly what our college needs during this transition." This quote reads much like the first quote above, and is also not disputed as being genuine by USMNEWS.NET.

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"There have been several resignations," said Williams. "We are losing faculty because they are leaving for stronger positions elsewhere."

"Alvin Williams is one of the finest men I know," said George Carter, department chair of economics, finance and international business.

"He is the perfect choice to take our college through the transition to a new dean and new president," said Carter. "Alvin Williams is the most genuine of people, exceptional administrator and a true scholar. He is a proven academic administrator and is exactly what our college needs during this transition."

We do, however, believe that Carter is disingenuous in the only other quote from that article. In that quote, Carter says: "Alvin Williams is the most genuine of people, exceptional administrator and a true scholar." It is the final part of that quote above that we wish to examine in greater depth in this report. Again, that quote is:

"Alvin Williams is . . . a true scholar."

George Carter

**Dept. Chair of Economics,
Finance and International
Business**

Our challenge of Carter's quote above is based on information available in the "What Carter Thinks" series that is available here at USMNEWS.NET. That series, along with other reports on Carter, can be found at <http://www.usmnews.net/Carter1.html>.

Let's begin our analysis by exploring what Carter thinks about the quality of scholarship outside of the EFIB Department:

What does George Carter Think About the Other (non-EFIB) CoB Departments?

"Other than our department [the EFIB], you just don't have a lot of professionalism from a scholarly standpoint like we do."

George Carter,
on the other (non-EFIB) CoB departments,
2006

Carter states his belief that, outside of EFIB, there is not a lot of professionalism in the CoB from a scholarly standpoint. Williams is a professor of marketing (i.e., Williams is outside of EFIB). Therefore, Carter begins in a hole. As the quotes that follow indicate, he (Carter) only digs that hole deeper.

Alvin Williams has spent a large portion of his 27 years at USM as an administrator, primarily as a departmental chairman. What does George Carter think about those in academe who spend large portions of their career as administrators? Let's see:

**What does George Carter Think about the Type of People
Who go into Academic Administration?**

"Academic administration basically attracts people who aren't that good. They go into administration because they're not true scholars . . . People who are scholars don't want any part of administration . . ."

George Carter,
on the type of academic who gets into administration,
2006

The first two quotes from Carter above basically damn his statement of 12 April 2007 to Candrese Jones (of *The Student Printz*) about Williams being a "true scholar." Notice in the quote above that Carter believes that ". . . administration basically attracts people who aren't that good" and that people ". . . go into administration because they're not true scholars." This is probably enough proof already that Carter's statement to Jones is disingenuous. But, let's get more specific.

In the "What Carter Thinks" series, Carter makes some specific derogatory comments about the scholarship in departments outside of his own EFIB Department. One of these was directed at Management & Marketing, Williams' home department:

**Who Among the Faculty in Marketing and Management
does George Carter Consider to be a Scholar?**

"Management and Marketing has got Barry [Babin] and maybe one or two others. But . . . you wouldn't consider other members of the Management and Marketing Department as . . . the caliber that we have [in the EFIB] . . . as far as members of the scholarly profession."

George Carter,
on scholarship in Management & Marketing,
2006

The staff at USMNEWS.NET takes the word "maybe" in the quote from Carter above to mean "one-half," at least in terms of quantifying the number of scholars in MgtMkt (according to Carter). So, we'll stipulate, as does Carter, that Babin is the one sure scholar in MgtMkt. Who is in the "maybe one or two others" group. For our argument, "maybe one" equals ½, while "maybe two" equals 1. Let's dig in on this point. What about Jon Carr? Carr is fresh off of his victory in the 2007 Louis K. Brandt Research Award race in the CoB. Carr has two recent publications in the

Journal of Management (A-level), and sources indicate that he has (or has had) invitations to revise and resubmit papers to the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, the *Journal of International Business Studies*, and the *Academy of Management Journal*. All of these are highly-regarded journals, and at least two of these would be thought of as premier publication outlets in their respective fields.

Staff at USMNEWS.NET would be content to name Carr the *one possible other scholar* in the CoB's MgtMkt Department. But, let's take the analysis a step further, and analyze the second of "maybe" two other scholars in MgtMkt. What about Joseph Peyrefitte? Peyrefitte has published in the *Academy of Management Journal* and is, at this point, one of the CoB's more consistent publishers. He has held BAC and/or Partnership Society Professorships in recent years, and he had a number of research successes listed in the Fall 2006 issue of *Joint Venture*, the CoB's alumni/donor magazine. There is also former Dean Harold Doty, who was a member of the CoB in 2006, the date of Carter's quote above. Doty has published in the *Academy of Management Journal* and the *Academy of Management Review*. Some would consider him to be one of the MgtMkt Department's top researchers. The point here is that, if one were to rank the scholarship of professors in this department from best to worst, one would encounter more than two or three names before Williams' appears.

As a final piece of our presentation, let's re-consider Alvin Williams' role in the "letter of agreement" episode involving management professor David Duhon's promotion to professor. At the time the agreement was brokered between Duhon and then-CoB Dean Doty, Williams was the chairman of MgtMkt. Sources indicate that Williams played a big role in brokering the so-called "agreement" concerning Duhon's promotion. EFIB Chair George Carter has spoken at length about his own view of Duhon's "letter of agreement"-based promotion to full. The quote below indicates how Carter views Duhon's promotion:

How Does George Carter Explain David Duhon's Promotion to Full Professor?

"People went to bat for him, 'cause he's a nice guy. And, the people who went to bat for him, by and large, are people who, when you look at their credibility in this profession, they're not particularly well known scholars . . ."

George Carter,
on how Duhon was promoted,
2006

As Carter states, Duhon was promoted to full professor simply because he (Duhon) is a "nice guy." Carter also believes that the people who "went to bat" for Duhon are ". .

. not particularly well known scholars.” Sources indicate that Williams is one of the primary figures who “went to bat” for Duhon, as was management professor Stephen Bushardt. For a look at Bushardt’s scholarship, see the numerous reports here at www.usmnews.net, or visit www.timbersnursery.com. Not many faculty in the CoB would consider Bushardt a “true scholar.”

What does Carter think of those who went to bat for Duhon? We are fortunate to have Carter’s answer available at our fingertips:

**Now that We have Been Told that the People Who Went to
Bat for David Duhon’s Promotion are not Well Known
Scholars, how does George Carter Describe Them?**

“They’re just good ol’ boys. That’s what good ol’ boys do. They take care
of their own.”

George Carter,
on the people who went to bat for Duhon,
2006

According to EFIB chairman George Carter, the people who supported Duhon’s “letter of agreement”-based promotion to professor are “. . . just good ol’ boys.”

Was George Carter statement to Jones about Williams being a “true scholar” disingenuous? Given the evidence from his words above, it’s difficult to argue that it was not.