

What CoAL Needs to Know

OVERLOOKED DETAILS ABOUT THE MOVE OF ECO TO ARTS & LETTERS

As USM administrators prepare to move the CoB's economics major, and its remaining economists, over to the CoAL, there are some oft-overlooked details that need to be brought to the fore. Some of these are the subject of this new, multi-part USMNEWS.net series entitled "What CoAL Needs to Know." This is Part 1.

Edward Nissan

CoB *economics* professor Edward Nissan has been in higher education since the 1960s. His expertise is in *statistics*. In fact, he never teaches any economics courses. Sources say that it's doubtful whether Nissan has the capability of doing so. Currently, Nissan teaches a full load of statistics courses, both of the BA and the MBA variety. He has been doing this for years. Right now he is being paid \$109,058 per year in salary alone, and about \$131,000 per year in salary + fringes. Sources say that this is one of the bigger travesties at USM, as taxpayers have been shouldering the fiscal burden on Nissan's bloated salary for many years. The CoB's statistics courses could have been covered at a small fraction of this cost simply by hiring some statistics faculty. In fact, that was being done while the CoB employed statistician Jennifer Caveny at the usual instructor's salary. That benefit was ruined by former CoB associate dean and CoB *economics* professor Farhang Niroomand by what sources refer to as Niroomand's usual political games. Niroomand is now the business dean at the University of Houston at Victoria. Both Niroomand and current CoB economics professor George Carter have benefitted immensely from Nissan's presence in the CoB. Reports have long indicated that Nissan included them as co-authors on his research in return for their political (financial) support. Fortunately for CoAL dean Denise von Herrmann, Nissan is among the 5 ECO faculty who have to retire to complete the proposed deal. His presence in this series simply goes to show how much money the ECO faculty were consuming on someone who wasn't even contributing to the service of the unit's 10 majors (approximately).

Business Stats

The Nissan story above highlights another important element of economics at USM. The economists for years have covered the CoB's statistics courses. Those courses will stay in the CoB, and with its dean Lance Nail. They will now be covered by non-economics faculty who are staying behind as well. These courses were an important source of value for the CoB's economists. Now they are gone. All of the ECO faculty's worth falls now to ECO courses, and enrollments therein.

George Carter

Former EFIB chairman George Carter is now teaching 6 sections of business stats (2 of BA 301 and 4 of BA 303). Like Nissan, this is what Carter usually does. And, he has been paid \$130,940 per year in salary alone, and about \$157,000 per year in salary + fringes, for doing so. Thus, Carter's story is Nissan's on steroids. The two were being paid *a combined sum of about \$288,000* to teach business statistics. In effect, Carter has been doing nothing to service ECO's roughly 10 economics majors. As with Nissan, Carter is among the 5 ECOers who must now retire so that the remaining four can be moved into von Herrmann's CoAL.

The International Business Major

The international business major will remain in the CoB. This major was designed by the economists. As a result, it requires students to take international economics II, intermediate macroeconomics, intermediate microeconomics, and economic development. Outside of the two principles courses, these constitute the bulk of ECO's upper-level course offerings. Between ECO and IB, at least 90% of the enrollments in these courses came from IB majors. When ECO moves to the CoAL, CoB faculty will immediately take steps to remove these four courses from the IB curriculum. There is no precedent for having them there. You will not find them there at the 12 Southeastern Conference schools that George Carter refers to as USM's peer institutions. As soon as CoBers remove these, the bulk of the enrollments in these courses will come from the 10 economics majors. Assuming these majors are spread out over their junior and senior years, then one might expect only 5-10 enrollees in these courses at any given time. That range might be optimistic. When word gets around CoAL about the abysmal class-sizes that von Herrmann is allowing the ECOers to cover, there will be tremendous political fallout on her. The decision to take this program and its faculty will be all on her.

Stay tuned for Part 2.