

What did Doty & Becker do to TM?

More on How the CoB's TM Program was Devastated under Harold Doty

Like in the waning days of a petty dictatorship, former CoB dean Harold Doty's final days atop USM's College of Business were spent oddly - in this case [sending e-mails](#) to USM's central administration about "mental health concerns" and "racism." The Doty-Farhang Niroomand administration of the CoB was spiraling out of control by the spring of 2007, and then-USM provost Jay Grimes recognized it. Just 41 days prior to Doty's eventual "resignation," Grimes [wrote to](#) Doty demanding that Doty stand before the USM Executive Cabinet and account for the demise of various pieces of USM's b-school. One of Grimes' concerns was that Doty had allowed the CoB's tourism management program to seriously erode over the course of Doty's 2003-07 administration. As Grimes pointed out, having a poorly administered TM program at an institution with a beachfront location and in a state with legalized gaming was wholly unacceptable.

Over the past year reporters at USMNEWS.net have uncovered evidence supporting Grimes' take on the CoB's tourism management program under Doty's leadership. However, a recent find further highlights the devastation wrought on TM by Doty, and Doty's hand-picked TM chair Cherylynn Becker. Recent reports here at USMNEWS.net have indicated that the departure of CoB TM assistant professor Johye Hwang, now at the Tier II University of Missouri, represented a major loss to the CoB. Those reports indicated that before coming to USM, Hwang, a product of Pennsylvania State University, had published an article in the *Journal of Foodservice Business Research*.



Hwang was affiliated with the CoB for only a brief time before departing for the University of Missouri, and so she did not provide the CoB with any journal publications during her stay. Shortly after getting to UM, however, Hwang provided that institution with publications in the *Journal of Foodservice* and the *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, the latter of which is an **A-level** journal in USM's b-school. It was these two accomplishments that various reports here at USMNEWS.net focused in on in making the case that Hwang loss

was a tremendous one as far as USM's TM program was concerned. What reporters did not know at the time was just *what* Hwang had accomplished that *had been overlooked* by reports on these webpages.



What reporters would eventually learn just this week is that Hwang now has *six additional journal publications* that are in various stages of production (in press). This list includes two additional articles in the *Journal of Foodservice Business Research*, and one each in the *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, and *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*. The penultimate among these six, the *JHTR*, is also an **A-level** journal in the CoB.



What is perhaps most remarkable about Hwang's amazing run of nine publications since 2005 (2.25 per year) is that eight are in either A- or B-level journals. That mix represents an A/B "hit rate" of **88.9%**, a number that would stand up to any in USM's CoB.

Combining these data from Hwang with the recent **A-level** publication in *Tourism Management* by former CoB TMer Joe Hutchinson really brings to light the devastation wrought by Doty et al. on the CoB's tourism department. The more recent loss of former TM chair Tony Henthorne, and to the Harrah College at UNLV no less, forces one to contemplate what could have been the possibilities for USM, particularly on the Gulf Coast, with regard to hospitality/tourism management.



What actually happened to TM? A number of previous reports here at USMNEWS.net have addressed this issue. They have [pointed out](#) that CoB administrators, for reasons that remain a mystery to some, focused the TM-related rewards on former CoB TM assistant professor Zaher Hallab. At the time Hallab [departed](#) the CoB for *California State University at East Bay* -- a move Hallab made while other former TM faculty found their way to Ole Miss (Tanya Ruetzler and Jim Taylor), Missouri (Johye Hwang), Central Florida (Joe Hutchinson) and UNLV (Tony Henthorne) - Hallab had published six journal articles. However, one of these is currently an "unlisted" journal in USM's CoB, while another is a C-level outlet. None of the remaining four qualifies as an A in the CoB. Yet despite these considerations, Hallab received one of the top raises in the CoB during both the 2004 and 2006 merit raise processes. In the 2004 process alone, Hallab was rewarded with a \$10,890 merit raise, one of the largest ever given to a rank-and-file faculty member in USM's business school. Of course, other TMers and many other CoBers were on the outside looking in at Hallab's preferential treatment during the 2004 and 2006 merit raise processes, hence the dramatic turnover in both TM and the CoB as a whole. Though it is not known what role former TM chair Cherylynn Becker played in the favoritism toward Hallab, Internet searches reveal that Hallab's research appears to have fallen to zero or near zero since his move to CSU at East Bay.

There is also documentation in the USMNEWS.net library that indicates that then-interim TM chair Joe Hutchinson opposed Doty's decision (shortly after Doty's arrival as USM's new CBED dean in 2003) to hire Becker. At that time Hutchinson expressed his views to then-USM president Shelby Thames, who also disapproved of Becker's candidacy. The hiring of Becker was delayed several months as Doty aired his disgust with the Thames administration through the local newspaper, *The Hattiesburg American*. After facing Doty's wreckless use in the media of "the gender card," the Thames administration relented and allowed Becker's hiring to go through.

Shortly after Becker's arrival, the CoB hired Hwang (from grad school), who asked Becker to find a residence for her, given the distance between Hattiesburg and State College, PA. According to sources, Becker made the "easy yet stupid" decision to secure for Hwang a unit in USM's notorious (Pine Haven) family housing complex. Upon arrival, Hwang found her roach- and rat-infested living accommodations completely unacceptable, and made the last-minute (emergency) move to another location through the help of other colleagues. Later, much of the rest of the CoB would experience Becker's volatile temper, as she (Becker) verbally assaulted (using profanity), and without provocation, the administrative assistant in the TM department. That assistant would file a complaint with USM's Human Resources Office, and Becker's treatment of her would become a significant portion of a federal court proceeding about two years later. At the time of the incident, the Doty-Niroomand administration focused almost solely on the welfare of Becker, the episode's antagonist.

Some of those who departed the CoB's TM department since 2003 would credit their decision to do so to the hopelessness of the prospect of serving under Becker (and Doty) for an extended period of time. As a result of Doty's mismanagement of the CoB, particularly with regard to TM, the CoB's hospitality and tourism areas are no longer viewed as substantial by peer institutions and prospective faculty.