

Where's Skip Hughes Going?

Part 2

USM has posted a notice:

“The University of Southern Mississippi invites applicants for a full-time, 12-month, tenure-track faculty position as director of the School of Accountancy in the College of Business...Starting date is July 1, 2014...”.

Skip Hughes has only been department chairman for less than five years. He came to Southern Miss hailed as someone who was going to turn the accounting program around. Skip was of the opinion the faculty was going to undertake some serious research rather than the low level, vanity publications that were substantially the norm. As we know, [nothing changed](#) and the research continues to be almost exclusively low level research. In fact, Hughes joined in publishing in low level journals .

Where's Skip Hughes going? Actually we don't know. There has been no public announcement of an impending departure. There is a [carefully buried announcement](#) on the Southern Miss web page for a “Director & Associate Professor.” Only when you click on “view” do you find the details.

One reader suggested Hughes might have been the subject of a Patty Munn-like coup. Of course, Patty “retired” or was “pushed out” last June 2013 along with Charles Jordan and Roderick Posey. (As sources have told usmnews.net, the lack of fanfare surrounding their exodus smacks of a forced departure.) Anyway, let's get back to Skip. Perhaps we can gain some insight by looking at some earlier reports.

An earlier report follows (Quotes are Skip's words. He insisted on recording our conversations.):

Mary Morgan Anderson

What is the Quality of Her Research?

To Apply a Director Hughes' Evaluation Criterion: Is She “Smokin' Dope?”

Director Hughes told me “things are going to change around here [University of Southern Mississippi School of Accountancy].” He made this solemn promise in a discussion of research he expected faculty to accomplish now that he was Director of the School of Accountancy. He wasn't the first new director to make such pledge. I advised Hughes that he would have to change faculty who for decades published only in low quality journals. I also wished him luck.

Director Hughes memorialized his commitment to quality in the [SoA Mission Statement](#) which includes a faculty requirement to publish quality research articles.

However, let's match his words with what the faculty is really doing. If Director Hughes accomplishes the mission that faculty produce quality research articles, then Associate Professor Mary Morgan Anderson must be publishing quality research articles – or is she? According to USM's webpage for the School of Accountancy (which has now been replaced)

“Research – Publications (2008-2010)

Associate Professor Mary Anderson

Jordan, C., Clark, S., & Anderson, M. (2008). Unusual Digital Patterns in EPS: Evidence on the Association Between Earnings Management and Company Characteristics. *Journal of Business & Economics Research*, 6 (1), 31-40.”

Mary Morgan Anderson published only one article in 2008, 2009, and 2010. Mary Anderson was the third named author –the first two being SoA Professor Charles Jordan and former SoA Professor Stan Clark. Typically, the order of names indicates she contributed the least of the three, particularly when the names are not presented in alphabetic order.

Furthermore, the *Journal of Business & Economics Research* is the lowest level of publication with a College of Business' Journal Ranking of “O” (other). A rank of O is equivalent to a “D” for a student grade. O is one step above putting research in the trash it is so unworthy. In terms of the School of Accountancy's/Director Hughes' mission “to extend the knowledge boundaries of the accounting discipline,” it's on a par with what to expect from a graduate student's first foray in the publication process—like extending personal knowledge, not extending “the knowledge boundaries of the accounting discipline.”

If that weren't enough, Director Skip Hughes' personal criteria place Dr. Anderson's research *in* the “trash.” Director Hughes specified his criteria for evaluating journals and articles in our conversations that he insisted on recording. Hughes would observe that “Accounting” is not in the title of the journal's or the article's title. He can't support the article without “Accounting” in the journal title and article title. He would also point out that the article is not about “how I love depreciation,” so it will not pass Hughes' “Kosher” criterion. And, let us not forget Hughes' most important journal evaluation criterion: “LSU would say you're smoking dope on this, okay?”

That means that the “Journal of Business & Economic Research” should have earned Dr. Morgan between a zero and one out of a possible score of five on the annual evaluation for research. Given the fact that Director Hughes assigned a zero score for an award winning, A-level publication by this editor, perhaps Dr. Hughes should be considering disciplinary action against Dr. Anderson.

Let's take it a step further, according to the [School of Accountancy webpage](#), Dr. Anderson has not published a single article of any ranking since 2008 – nearly six years.

Furthermore, if Director Hughes fails the mission that faculty produces quality research articles, perhaps Dean Nail should consider whether Director Hughes remain as director.

Of course, Dr. Anderson will not be disciplined for her failure to publish, nor will Director Hughes be held accountable for his failure to carry out his mission, because

Things have not changed around here, Director Hughes.