

Will Harold Doty Get Off of the Hook?

It's no secret in the CoB that the Feb-07 AACSB Maintenance of Accreditation visit did not go as hoped for by CoB administrators and faculty. Former CoB Dean D. Harold Doty, in his first job as Dean of a School or College of Business, did not come through at clutch time. Instead, he folded like a bad hand in poker, and now, as a result, the CoB faces a continuing review process wherein AACSB officials will return to Joseph Greene Hall in Feb-08. What becomes of Doty now that he is "back with the faculty" in the College of Business at USM? This question is an important one given that Doty is being paid about \$180,000 per year in salary and benefits, *and* that Mississippi taxpayers provided a six-figure account for CoB administrators to use to attend AACSB conferences, administer ETS exams, etc. -- money that now seems like a waste.

DePree Addresses the Doty "Resignation"

That very question (see above) was addressed by CoB accounting professor Marc DePree via a letter to the editor of *The Hattiesburg American* on 8-May-07. In that letter, entitled "**Doty should be held accountable**," DePree stated:

". . . Mississippi taxpayers spent tens of thousands of dollars to send Professor Doty to AACSB meetings to become educated in AACSB expectations. . . For example, then-Dean Doty made an impassioned plea to Provost Jay Grimes to attend a Paris meeting of the AACSB. Paris, France, that is. Former Associate Dean Niroomand and Dean Doty got permission to attend this meeting prior to the College of Business's AACSB maintenance of accreditation visit. Unfortunately, soon thereafter, then-Dean Doty failed accreditation. . . Professor Doty should take another try at getting it right. On Friday [5/4/07], Interim Dean Alvin Williams said he is considering hiring someone to help with AACSB tasks. My question is, why spend state money to hire someone else when we can assign this important task to Professor Doty? . . ."

DePree's letter indicates that the CoB's new Interim Dean Alvin Williams is considering hiring someone to help oversee the CoB's AACSB 2008 continuing review. And, DePree asks "Why?"

Some readers of *The Hattiesburg American* questioned why DePree's letter was even included in the LTE section of the paper. Here is a list of very good reasons:

1. Doty's "resignation" as CoB Dean was front page news on 4/11/07
2. Doty's USM salary and benefits come to about \$180,000; USM is a public institution, meaning that taxpayers pay this bill.
3. The CoB didn't exactly pass its 2007 AACSB Review exam. That failure rests directly on Doty's shoulders.
4. Doty hasn't been doing anything for USM since early April, or about one (1) month ago. Is he going to get a four month, fully paid vacation off the backs of taxpayers?

Of course, if Doty were a fired football coach, people wouldn't be shy in expressing their displeasure in him being "rewarded for failure" with a highly paid vacation. Why should this situation be any different?

Grimes and DePree Agree About Doty's Future

Not only do the above ideas support DePree's position on the matter, DePree seems to be on the same page as USM Provost Jay Grimes. Grimes spoke to CoB faculty on 10-April-07, the day that the Doty-Niroomand "resignations" were announced to the public. In his general remarks, Grimes expressed the following views about Doty's (near) future in the CoB:

Grimes' Statement on D. Harold Doty's Future at USM [4/10/07]

"He and I are talking right now, and your new Interim Dean Dr. Williams will be talking with him about what he can do. He's focusing in on AACSB and the final things that need to be done in terms of doing a better job of tracking alumni and some of the things that were discussed in the AACSB exit interview and then the report that followed on. So we'll find something for Harold to do, in addition to fishing. He said he'd try to do some fishing in the next few weeks, but we can put him to work."

As Grimes' remarks indicate, though Doty would like to do some fishing, an activity Grimes seems willing to allow to a certain extent, Grimes and Thames ("we") have plans for Doty, which seem to involve more work with the CoB's lagging AACSB campaign. Thus, from our vantage point both DePree and Grimes seem to agree that Doty should remain in Hattiesburg in order to help the CoB get a clean bill of health from AACSB (in 2008).

Will Doty Fish or Track Alumni?

The answer to this question remains to be seen. Both Doty and DePree say "track alumni," while Williams may be leaning more towards "fish." If it's "fish," then Doty will be the fish that got off of the hook, and that will be too bad. USM is not a good enough institution, and Mississippi is too poor a state to withstand many outcomes like that.