

"Woe is ECO"

On 2-Jan-08, all of the CoB's faculty and staff were informed that the EFIB's secretary, Ms. Lola Ingram, had taken ill and would be out of work for 6 to 7 weeks. CoB faculty and staff were made aware of Ingram's illness via an e-mail to EFIB faculty from EFIB Chair George Carter that was forwarded to "cob-facstaff" by Interim Dean Alvin Williams' administrative assistant, Ms. Sonia Gaines-Littles.

The forwarded e-mail, shown below, is interesting in at least two respects. First,

Date: Wed, 2 Jan 2008

From: Sonia Gaines-Littles <sonia.gaineslittles@usm.edu>

Reply-To: Sonia Gaines-Littles <sonia.gaineslittles@usm.edu>

Subject: [Cob-facstaff] Re: Lola Prescott

To: cob-facstaff@usm.edu

To All:

This is a forwarded email from Dr. Carter in regards to Lola Prescott.

To EFIB Faculty:

I regret to inform you that Lola is sick and will be away from the office for the next six or seven weeks. She is essential to departmental operations and will be sorely missed. However, we must persevere. Since I have not addressed how we will function in her absence, each faculty member must assume an independence that does not include the secretarial support that we have previously had. I will keep you informed as we address this situation.

How prayers go out to Lola during this time. We think the world of her and pray that this time of difficulty will pass quickly and successfully.

George

Gaines-Littles refers to Lola Ingram as Lola Prescott, confusing "Lola Ingram," the administrative assistant to Carter, with "Janice Prescott," the administrative assistant to Tony Henthorne, the Chair of Management & Marketing. Gaines-Littles' snafu is indicative of just how impersonal the CoB has become since 2003, when new Dean Harold Doty arrived in Hattiesburg from Syracuse. Gaines-Littles is the highest ranking administrative assistant in the CoB, yet she can't seem to tell the difference between Lola Ingram and Janice Prescott.

A second interesting aspect of the forwarded message is the way Carter describes Ingram's impending absence to EFIB faculty. After informing EFIB faculty that Ms.

Ingram is ill enough to necessitate being away from the CoB for 6 or 7 weeks, Carter then sympathizes with *the EFIB faculty*, who must "persevere" through the hardship that Ingram's illness has caused. To be sure, Carter's "persevere" is directed at EFIB faculty minus one, as sources tell USMNEWS.NET that the EFIB's *resource hog-in-residence*, Professor Edward Nissan, will not likely suffer any adverse effects from Ingram's unexpected illness. Carter will most assuredly continue to have Nissan's typing, editing and other services provided, without interruption, for the next 7 (or more) weeks. And, Carter will likely dip into the EFIB's general accounts to do so, if that course of action becomes necessary.

Just in case you begin to believe that the CoB's central administration cares about you and your hardships, look no further than this case involving the EFIB secretary, Ms. Lola Ingram. That they would care, of course, also assumes CoB officials even know your name.