

AACSB Probation: How Doty Got Distracted

Harold Doty arrived at USM in 2003. Since then, Doty has had 3 ½ years to get a grip on the CoB – formerly the CBED – and to prepare it for the biggest hurdle in his deanship, the AACSB Maintenance of Accreditation visit that just concluded.

We know now that the visit was not a success. On Tuesday, Chairmen Babin and Carter told selected departmental faculty that the result was a probationary period in which the CoB will have to clean up its act. Oddly enough, Chairman Lewis declined to inform at least one SAIS faculty of the outcome, though he may have told others.

Why, then did the CoB get distracted? If AACSB is so very important (as Doty has led Grimes and Thames to believe) to the CoB's proper functioning, how did Doty allow the college to slip into probationary status?

The answer lies in the fact that Doty allowed or forced too many changes to occur within the CoB in the three years leading up to the accreditation visit. Below is a non-comprehensive list of Doty's agenda as dean since assuming that role at USM:

1. Fight with Economic Development faculty and USM central administration over ED's placement in the CBED. Claim that ED endangers AACSB. Convince Thames to remove ED from CBED, leaving the CoB as we know it now. (Time consumed: 1 year).
2. Fight with Grimes and Thames over research mandate. Circumvent chain of command and go directly to the *Hattiesburg American* in an effort to save job. Wrangle with higher administration in various campus and community forums. (Time consumed: several months).
3. HVAC replacement. CoB classrooms and offices (to date) remain intemperate. (Time consumed: 1 year).
4. Bring Ross Perot to Hattiesburg to accept Entrepreneur of the Year award. Watch Perot fly back to Plano, TX, without writing a check. (Time consumed: several weeks to several months).
5. Force Digital MBA on the CoB. (Time consumed: 1 year, off and on).
6. Push online courses for CoB core classes. (Time consumed: several months).
7. Support George Carter's coup in EFIB. Kill faculty governance. (Time consumed: several weeks to several months).
8. Obfuscate FOIA/MORA requests. (Time consumed: several weeks to several months).
9. Fight with various CoB faculty. Deal with grievances. Claim that meritorious grievances have no merit. (Time consumed: several weeks to several months).
10. Push for a Center for Economics Education so that Susan Doty has cover for her dog and pony operation (Time consumed: several weeks to several months).

In each of these activities, Doty invested valuable time that should have been used to shore up the AACSB accreditation process. Instead, Doty pursued activities that would give him bullet points on his resume as he searched for any of the six to ten deans' jobs he has sought while living in Hattiesburg. Now, without many accomplishments to show for his stint as USM CoB dean, without another job lined up, and without successful AACSB reaccreditation, Doty now appears to be an absolute failure as a dean. It's a certainty that if he continues to allow himself to be distracted, the final tally – assuming Thames allows him to continue to serve as dean – won't look much better than it currently does.