

Nepotism at Italian and American Universities

A few days ago, usmnews.net received an email from Concerned Citizen addressing nepotism at the University of Texas – Tyler. A few days later, a research project entitled, “[Measuring nepotism through shared last names: the case of Italian academia](#)” was announced. Before you read the email from Concerned Citizen, it is instructive to consider an excerpt from the Italian experience.

Italian Nepotism

“In recent years, several scandals have hit Italian academia over the hiring of close family members to prominent faculty positions at public universities...Unusually high clustering of last names within Italian academic institutions and disciplines indicates widespread nepotism in the country's schools, according to a new computational analysis.

By comparing the frequency of last names among more than 61,000 professors in medicine, engineering, law, and other fields, University of Chicago researcher Stefano Allesina found the pattern to be incompatible with unbiased, equal opportunity hiring. The analysis, published online in the journal *PLoS ONE*, refutes the notion that recently publicized cases of academic nepotism in Italy were isolated incidents.”

If you think nepotism doesn't occur in American universities, you may want to review what's going on at your school. At far too many universities, bureaucrats, primarily upper level administrators, are on the same track as our Italian colleagues when it comes to hiring family.

American Nepotism

Dear [USMNEWS.net](#) Editor,

I have been following the news on your website and want to thank you for bringing some of the deceitful practices by many in higher ed to public attention. I have especially been interested in the UT Tyler news. I live in Tyler. I wanted to send you some information regarding Dr. Peter Fos- his questionable employment practices also seem to benefit his wife as well. Harold Doty was able to secure his wife Susan a position at UT Tyler , and so did Peter Fos. It is very difficult to find what classes [Ms. \(Mrs\) Lori Fos](#) actually taught. I do find it extremely suspicious that she was able to just walk on in and be [hired as a lecturer](#) in the Department of Education and Psychology given her [weak credentials](#). Must be nice to get what you want when your hubby is the Vice President of the University you get hired at. I have attached some findings and believe that the residents of East Texas and employees at UT Tyler and the greater Tyler Community [would benefit](#) from [this information](#) being made public on your site. I wish

to remain anonymous at this time.

Thank you,
Concerned Citizen

Over the next few weeks, expect reports concerning nepotism at Southern Miss.