

Why No Niroomand?

by Duane Cobb

I must admit that I'm puzzled as to why former CoB Associate Dean Farhang Niroomand is not a finalist for the CoB's opening at the top (Dean). What's more, I hear that he did not apply, which is even more puzzling to me. One would think that after his "successful solidification" of USM's *new* College of Business just two short years ago, his candidacy would be damn near unstoppable. To climb another bit up Mount Dumbfounded, the news media has reported that Denise von Herrmann, the current Interim Dean of the CoAL, is one of the three finalists for that permanent position. If she has a shot across the way, how could USM President Martha Saunders not support Niroomand – the rock on which the CoB was built – for the top spot in Greene Hall?

Given CoB administrators' penchant for silence, chances are we'll carry the frustration of not understanding the deal with Niroomand and the search process forever. However, nothing is stopping us from imagining what things might be like if Niroomand, the CoB's "attack dog," were elevated back down to the second floor Dean's suite in JGH. For one, I would think the make-up of his "cabinet" would include former CoB finance instructor, Mary Ann Cockerham, at Associate Dean. Of course, former Alternative Learning Coordinator, Melia Hartsfield, would make a grand return to her former position, as would

former executive assistant to the Dean, Sheila Marler.

With every changing of the guard, there's some administration growth. In this case that would likely be the new position of Special Advisor to the Dean – a role that Niroomand would almost certainly beg Beth LaFleur to fill. Filling the chairs would be a snap for Niroomand: Sharon Topping atop MGT & MKT, George Carter in the EFIB, Patty Munn in SAIS, and Cheri Becker returning to TM, provided Niroomand is willing to furnish Becker with her former assistant, Denise Crozier. Of course, when Munn learns that Becker received special treatment in this way, Munn will demand the return of Wanda Crain, and Niroomand will acquiesce.

A second new position – Associate Dean for the Gulf Coast – would be created, and likely filled by Mary Anderson. As for the opening in Development created by Emile Dieth's recent resignation, Niroomand will shore that up with the return of Susan Hollandsworth, while the hole in the Grad Programs Director's suite would be filled by Dolly Loyd. All of this would be topped off with holdovers in the UG Services office (Gwen Pate) and in the Center for Economic Education (Susan Doty). Finally, with no changes atop the BBER, Bill Gunther would be reporting to his old boss (from 1998-2003) once again.