

# 31<sup>st</sup> & Pearl

## Academic Cannibalism 101

How many faculty lines must be "[cannibalized](#)" so that 25 USM psychology professors can each get a \$3,000 salary bump? Thankfully, for USM students at least, the answer is only one, provided, of course, that the line has an administrative stipend attached to it. How many faculty lines must be "cannibalized" so that one USM president can lease a Beechcraft King Air [plane](#)? Apparently, that answer is about 12, or the number of economics professors, along with another USM prof or two, [who were run off](#) after the 2009-10 academic year to deal with the FY2011 budget cut. That covers it these days – it takes 1 faculty line to feed 25 profs, but 12 faculty lines to feed one self-absorbed university president. It gets worse when one considers that the single psychology faculty line that was "cannibalized" was *unfilled*, whereas the 12 or so other lines were occupied at the time USM president Martha Saunders bit into them in order to have her precious airplane. Yes, that was real flesh she was ravaging on her way, by air, to Beef 'O' Brady's Bowls and College World Series.

With all of the academic and administrative Darwinism that is, and promises to continue to be, prevalent on USM's campus, perhaps Saunders should consider hiring a University Anthropologist to match the University Historian [it seems she recently hired](#) to write a puffy history of the 100-year old institution. This is precisely the kind of expertise that is needed to figure out why it takes so many faculty lines to feed a ravenous administrator, while a single line can support so many professors (in psychology). Unfortunately, there probably isn't an anthropologist around who could stomach the sketchy behavior that is currently spreading across the USM campus. Even Charles Darwin would likely feel queasy about the way that Saunders is sacrificing faculty in order to buttress the self-importance and swagger of USM administrators. At USM, only the fiscally fittest survive, and that promises to be Saunders and [her new](#) USM vice president for [administrative affairs](#) Russ Willis. These two campus "up and comers" will soon be a mile high, soaring over the bottom-tier academic institution placed in their charge.

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*31st & Pearl is a series housed at [usmnews.net](http://usmnews.net) that features commentary on aspects of life in the CoB, and at USM, from a variety of columnists.*