

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

## Scary Bad

Recent [news](#) that the USM administration is expanding its piloted program of downward mobbing is [spreading](#) across cyberspace at a rapid pace. The admission by USM provost Robert Lyman that three USM faculty have been suspended this academic year pending the results of separate investigations into danger posed by their presence on campus surely sent a chill down the collective spine of the USM community. Having that admission come following an allegation that *not three but six* USM faculty have been suspended this year must have stolen the breath of most, if not all, of those in the audience of USM's 12-April-2011 spring convocation, where the allegation was put to USM administrators.

What's really frightening is all of the nonsense that has been emanating from the Martha Saunders administration since its beginning back in 2007. The latest application of downward mobbing appears to be the worst element of that administration on display thus far. USM faculty and staff are now facing a number of questions. How extensive is this mobbing program? Who has been targeted, and what areas of the campus are represented? Where is the program headed next, and why are campus groups so silent about it? There are so many more questions it would be difficult to cover them all in a single *31<sup>st</sup> & Pearl* column.

Heading into year five of the Saunders administration, USM is scary bad. The real threat, however, is its own administration. As the [Feeling Safe at USM](#) series points out, during federal court proceedings Saunders heard a number of scary stories about USM administrators. Perhaps what the larger USMNEWS.net audience needs to see now is what the United States District Court judge told Saunders about what he thought about the atmosphere at USM, vis-à-vis its administration, way back in the fall of 2007. When they see that, they can multiply the feeling they get by 100 or so in order to sense the mood on campus.

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