

## "Anonymous" Describes Why ECO is Doomed Ominous News from *USM Forum – Message Board*

A recent posting to the [USM Forum -- Message Board](#) relayed some ominous news to the CoB's 9 tenured/tenure-track faculty who were slated by USM administrators for elimination in early Aug-09. That posting, by "Anonymous," is inserted below:

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| Anonymous<br>Date: yesterday  | Reply Quote |
| <p>I'm not quite sure of the comments made at the AAUP meeting, but the following is the language from faculty contracts:</p> <p><b>The Board</b> shall have the authority to terminate this contract at any time for the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. financial exigencies as declared by <b>the Board</b>;</li><li>b. termination or reduction of programs, academic or administrative units as approved by <b>the Board</b>;</li><li>c. malfeasance, inefficiency, or contumacious conduct;</li><li>d. for cause.</li></ol> <p>Financial exigency doesn't have to be declared for part b of the contract to be invoked. Will the Board approve any cuts? Don't know, but Saunders was asked this question at the last faculty meeting and she said that she has received no indication that it wouldn't approve cuts like these. She went so far as to indicate that the Board thinks this is what the universities should be doing.</p> <p>Is there some reason why tenured faculty shouldn't be terminated--sure. But I don't think you can invoke financial language to argue the point.</p> |             |

The analysis above is one of the first to examine parts of the \$7.5 million in cuts (proposed by the Academic Planning Group) vis-à-vis USM faculty contracts. "Anonymous" provided the board's readers with a portion of the language that is contained in USM faculty contracts. That language pertains to provisions for terminating faculty. A number of USM faculty have been arguing that the cut of ECO has not been preceded by a declaration by IHL of financial exigency. Note that financial exigency is an *ex ante* proposition from IHL. Sources, however, say that argument is invalid in the case of ECO, which is now suffering instead from a "reduction of programs," a notion that is wholly separate from financial exigency. Reduction of programs requires only *ex post* approval from the IHL, not any type of *ex ante* proclamation. The only remaining question, then, is whether the IHL will support the Saunders administration's decision to reduce to zero the economics programs. "Anonymous" addresses even this issue by pointing out that Saunders has told various USM faculty that she has received no indication from IHL that it would not approve cuts like that of the economics programs. Not only that, "Anonymous" goes on to state that Saunders indicated that reducing programs, such as ECO, is what IHL believes Mississippi's public universities should be doing at this time.

Sources say that it is difficult to imagine anything more ominous for the CoB's economists than the tidbit above. What do you think?