

'President Saunders Presents' Love for Athletics

HATTIESBURG - Despite all of the [editorial criticism](#) about how USM president Martha Saunders [\(mis\)uses her blog](#) at www.usm.edu, the USM chief executive has now launched [a new video blog](#) entitled "President Saunders Presents." According to Saunders, "I'm hoping to bring you more in-depth insights into a variety of topics and interesting personalities through regular video blog posts." Saunders used the inaugural video post to familiarize members of the USM family with Austin Davis, the starting quarterback on the Golden Eagles football team (interview pictured below).



Sources tell USMNEWS.net that Saunders' debut video blog with Davis, *a USM football player*, will likely be disheartening to USM faculty, coming as it does at the same time that two USM faculty groups - AAUP-USM and the USM faculty senate - are [publicly opposing](#) the Saunders administration's so-called *athletics* tuition tax. The AAUP-USM voted **unanimously** on 1-Dec-2010 to support Bob Press' [proposal to cut](#) the athletics tuition tax in half, and divert one part of it into academic affairs. At its 3-Dec-2010 meeting, USM [faculty Senator B](#) put forward a motion that the faculty senate also endorse Press' AAUP-USM proposal, one that [actually originated](#) from USM student [Daniel Miles](#). Press' proposal was not met by the faculty senate with the same enthusiasm that it saw with AAUP-USM. Given that the proposal was not on the faculty senate's 3-Dec-2010 agenda, a two-thirds vote to suspend the rules was required to take up Senator B's motion to endorse the Press proposal. That was achieved by a vote of **25-10**, however this vote revealed that a sizable portion of the senate body was opposed to *any consideration* of Senator B's motion. Additionally, the vote on the motion itself was **28-7**, meaning that a full 20% of the USM faculty senate is apparently opposed to

diverting money from athletics to academics. Finally, some of the senators in the winning group of 28 expressed, vocally, their opinion that Press' proposal would ultimately go down in flames upon meeting the USM executive cabinet. Sources tell USMNEWS.net that such thinking likely comes from, and is only buttressed by, the revelation that Saunders' inaugural video blog is with Davis, and, thus, is about one of her favorite subjects - sports.