

Saunders Named Provost at University of West Florida

HATTIESBURG – Public relations officials at the University of West Florida announced late in the afternoon on 16-Nov-2012 that Martha Saunders, the former president of USM, is now the new provost at the Pensacola-based institution. Saunders assumes the post on 2-Jan-2013, meaning that her last days on board the faculty at USM-GC are already upon her and her USM-GC colleagues.



UWF president Judy Bense expressed excitement at bringing Saunders *back to* UWF as provost, saying, “[w]e’re delighted to welcome Martha back to the UWF campus. She is a proven leader and her wealth of experience will be a tremendous asset to our team, as we plan the implementation of our new strategic plan. I look forward to working with Martha to meet the challenges we face now and in the future.” The naming of Saunders to this new post comes only days after the USM and [wider community learned](#) that Saunders’ 27-April-2012 resignation from the USM presidency was not a resignation after all. Instead, Saunders was [forced out of the presidency](#) by the Mississippi IHL. That information was uncovered by *WDAM-TV*’s Randy Swan, whose *7 on Your Side* news team also learned that Saunders was never awarded tenure by Mississippi higher education authorities back in 2007, when she moved into the USM presidency from her post as chancellor of the University of Wisconsin – Whitewater. Saunders’ agreement with the IHL, at the time she was forced out of the USM presidency back in April-2012, provided one year (2012-13) on the faculty at USM-GC as an *untentured* professor of communications, with *the possibility* of up to two one-year renewals to follow. As such, securing alternative employment, or entering retirement, was essential for Saunders going forward.