

## A Brief History of Saunders' "Lease" of Airplane N777AQ During a Recession

### Part 10: A Post Script

#### Why Is There So Little Trust In Leaders?

We organized the history by documenting representations made by President Saunders and Provost Lyman in their report to a Faculty Senate meeting on [December 5, 2008](#) (page 2, para. 7). See Parts 1 through 9 which provide a context for Part 10: A Post Script and the documents obtained from USM in a Mississippi Open Records request that are the sources of information concerning the plane and passenger usage, costs, lease agreements, etc.

Part 10: A Post Script concludes the history by asking, "What are our leaders thinking? Or are they thinking at all?"

Consider Phase V of President Saunders' "Strategic Planning:"

#### **"Phase V: Strategic Budget Model Task Force**

A Strategic Budget Model Task Force is meeting regularly to consider new approaches to the budget process. Faced with declining state appropriations and the need to generate new revenue sources, the group is working to provide **greater transparency** in the budget process. The intent is to provide **a more flexible model** for how budgets are determined." (<http://www.usm.edu/strategicplanning/>)

Does President Saunders mean her budgets about expenditures such as her airplane will be open and honest? That her representations will be transparent so that we won't need to pry information loose with a Mississippi Open Records request? And that we will get all of the information with the first request and not have to return a second time, and perhaps a third time for obviously missing documents. And, oh boy, watch out for administrators who talk about "more flexible models." That cogent sounding admin-speak typically precedes manipulation of financial information and contributed to bringing you (and hiding from you as long as possible) the financial crises in recent history.

Last but not least, consider why there is so little trust in our leadership. President Saunders represents in her "Vision, Mission, Values, and Plan" that "We [including President Saunders] make efficient and effective use of our resources, for we are accountable to our university communities, the Board of Trustees, and taxpayers." How can President Saunders show her face in public blathering such nonsense in the context

of spendthrift lease/purchase of air an airplane (N777AQ) during a recession and termination of faculty.