

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

### Part 9

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

We organize 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 8 which provide a context for Part 9 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 9 completes the brief history and will return to the series reporting each of the 30 flights of airplane N777AQ.

*At the Faculty Senate meeting on December 5, 2008, "All agreed that the presentation of the data justifying this purchase will be important and should be released to the public. The Provost concurs that "the timing could not be worse..."*

"All agreed that the presentation of the data justified this purchase will be important" but time passed and the reality and facts became lost in a fog of the past. It wasn't in President Saunders' or Provost Lyman's interest to present the data justifying this purchase. If they had chosen to present the facts about the costs of Dr. Saunders' airplane, they had the information in their hands and could have "released [it] to the public". They didn't, of course, because details and facts showed that the plane was an unnecessary and wasteful extravagance. In fact, Dr. Saunders no longer claims that her airplane saves any money, has a published schedule, or has replaced Delta or other common carriers. Instead she tells us that it improves administrators' efficiency. And, since some of the other Universities have planes, Dr. Saunders has to have one, too. Of course, none of these Universities are dealing with budget problems by terminating faculty.

Let's end this brief history with President Saunders' "Vision, Mission, Values, Plan" at <http://www.usm.edu/president/vision.php>:

*"We make efficient and effective use of our resources, for we are accountable to our university communities, the Board of Trustees, and taxpayers."*

Are these empty words intended for "public relations" and "image"? We suggest that Dr. Saunders is more interested in "image" than reality. The figures don't

lie. They show that her airplane is an expensive vanity, which she insists on retaining while faculty and staff lose their jobs.

While usmnews.net does not suggest that selling (or preferably never buying) the airplane would pay for all the jobs, it would save some. It would also show the "University family" that they are not just Dr. Saunders' audience that allows her to play the role of a University president.