

## FEELING SAFE AT USM

Readers have questioned whether violent and threatening conduct really occurs at the College of Business. Many outsiders find it difficult to believe that such a hateful atmosphere could be created or tolerated. Therefore, usmnews.net's reporters are reviewing sworn testimony relating to acts of hostility and threatening behavior in the CoB. In each case, the conduct was ignored, and by being ignored, was promoted at USM. In fact, in Dr. Cherylynn Becker's case, she was literally promoted following her dubious and threatening conduct.

### Dr. Becker, Is it Okay to Scream and Swear at Staff?

"I was sitting in my office one day and my office door as I sat at my desk I could – if I turned sideways, I could see out into the anteroom of the suite where the secretary's desk was. And the secretary – I saw her get up. I had a student in my office, by the way, so my door was open. I saw the secretary get up and walk, and I could see her get up and then she left my field of vision. And I could hear her say something like, 'Dr. Becker [Dr. Cherylynn Fuller Becker, Associate Professor, former Chairman, Department of Tourism Mangement], I've got something for you.'

Well, Dr. Becker's responsibilities were that she was the signature authority for her department. So anything that was financial or needed to be signed off on she was the person to do it, and this secretary who split time between my department and Becker's department was the secretary responsible for that paperwork. So she was, I assume, carrying some paperwork to Dr. Becker to sign. And this was a usual and customary thing. 'I've got something for you to sign, Dr. Becker.'

And the next thing I heard was that Dr. Becker was yelling, 'Just get away from me. Just get the hell away from me.' And my first thought was that someone was attacking Dr. Becker. It was that – so I had the student – I told the student, I said 'Stay here.' And I got up and I stuck my head out the door. And as I stick my head out the door, I look down to my right and I see Becker flailing her arms, yelling and screaming, saying 'Just get away from me with that petty shit, that petty, petty' – she was just yelling and screaming at this secretary."

Dr. Saunders was present when this sworn testimony was given in Federal Court. She took no disciplinary action. Rather, Dr. Becker was promoted to associate professor under Dr. Saunders' watch.