

## **Administrators' Advantage**

See a report in today's [\*Chronicle of Higher Education\*](#): "Texas Community College Seeks Dismissal of Tenured Professor."

My views reported in the Comment section:

Don't expect administrators and their ally faculty to proclaim they are firing a colleague because they disagree with their target's speech.

This is what administrators will say in public or in court documents regardless of the actual facts: "The college's president, Beth Lewis, told the newspaper that the recommendation to terminate Mr. Smith stemmed from his performance as an employee, and was not an attempt at retaliation, though she did not discuss the details of the recommendation."

This speech works to the advantage of administrators. Who knows who's telling the truth? And how does a targeted faculty member prove administrators are lying?

Assume a majority of faculty do not back you--a pretty good bet. They have lives or are hiding under their desks--a tough job market will promote that behavior. Assume faculty have an open mind, they may not know who's telling the truth either.

Administrators have the deep pockets to deal with a lawsuit. The targeted faculty member usually does not have the resources to vindicate her/his speech or academic freedom.

Retaliation is affirmed. Criticism abates. "Freedom of speech" is an empty phrase.

If you want to see how a targeted faculty member vindicated his speech, even in the face of the most outrageous and false accusations, see "Virginia Tech Danger" at Amazon.

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