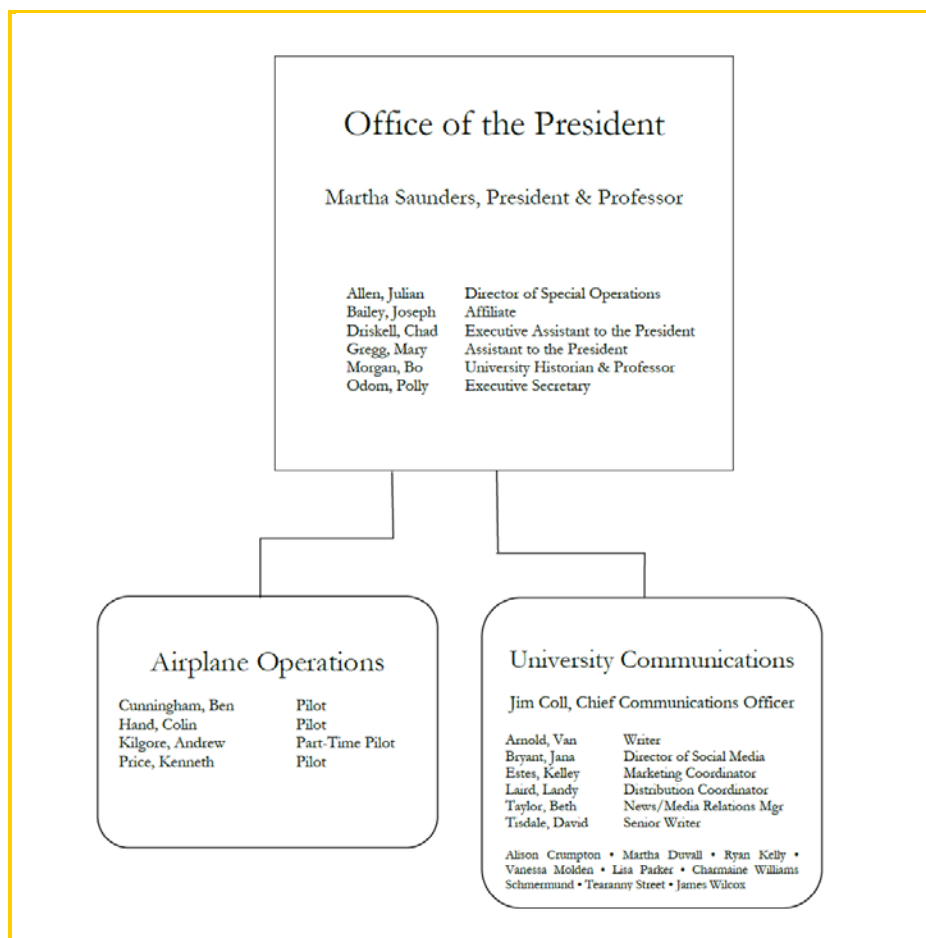


Eat What You Kill?

A Look at How the USM President's Office will Fail at RCM

During a recent meeting devoted to discussing Responsibility Centered Management (RCM), USM president Martha Saunders paraphrased USM provost Robert Lyman by saying that RCM is like the *eat what you kill* model of university budgeting. In the decentralized RCM approach, departments and centers have their budgets linked closely to the revenues that they generate, thus putting a premium on entrepreneurial efforts to drive revenues higher. While many in the USM community are looking forward to this new model, one has to wonder how USM's *Office of the President* will like living under the RCM umbrella.



The diagram above depicts a piece of USM's organization chart, wherein "Office of the President" resides at the top. Directly subordinate to Saunders' office are "Airplane Operations" and "University Communications." At the top, just underneath Saunders, are, according to sources, [some very bizarre](#) administrative positions, such as Julian Allen's "Director of Special Operations" post, and Bo Morgan's [position as](#) "University Historian." How can the Saunders administration maintain such largesse as having an official "state historian" and a covert ops type of position as those shown here?

These administrative lines are [so ridiculous](#), at least according to sources, that one almost fails to notice that Joseph Bailey, Saunders' spouse, is listed near the top as an "affiliate." Regular followers of USMNEWS.net are, of course, [aware of](#) Chad Driskell's [shenanigans](#).

That USM is [buckling under the weight](#) of Saunders' Airplane Operations enterprise is [an inarguable proposition](#). The costs associated with the lease of Saunders' Beechcraft King Air are enormous, even if one counts only the nearly \$17,000 per month lease payment USM is making to retain the plane. Of course, the expenses associated with the plane go far beyond the lease payment, and include fuel, maintenance, pilots' salaries and benefits, pilots' incidentals, hangar rental fees, and more. The Airplane Operations auxiliary above lists *four* pilots, including three full-timers (Cunningham, Hand, and Price) and one part-timer (Kilgore). As sources indicate, this piece of USM's administrative structure has been clearly shown to be nothing more than an extravagance.

The third leg of Saunders' largesse (see above) pertains to "University Communications." This division contains more than a relatively large number of coordinators, directors, and managers. Besides a chief, there is a veritable army of "writers" of "the good news at USM," from Crumpton to Wilcox (see above). Only eight are listed above, but there are more. Sources say that the public image-obsessed Saunders would not likely have it any other way.

Let's return to the original question: How is Saunders going to get along in an RCM model at USM? The piece of the hierarchy above suggests "not so well." There are millions of dollars in outlays, and [about the only obvious source of revenue](#) involved here comes from the tuition dollars generated by the one graduate-level communications course that Saunders teaches each fall. No one knows now how RCM will play at USM under Saunders, nor how much of a "tax" Saunders will have to levy on all of USM's units to keep what sources refer to as her glamorous lifestyle up and running. One thing is certain, though, and that is that time will tell.