

## President Martha Saunders Under Oath

Are You Listening, Mr. Bounds, Mr. Lucas? Do You Approve?

### Part 9

“Don’t count her out yet. There are plenty of low level colleges where she could rise again.”

[Name withheld](#)

If there is a chance that Martha Saunders can repeat her incompetence as an administrator at another college or university, its faculty and administrators should have a clear picture of her conduct as president of Southern Miss. This series provides a rare opportunity for the Southern Miss family, as well as potential employers, to consider Martha Saunders’ words, under oath. Click for [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), [Part 3](#), [Part 4](#), [Part 5](#), [Part 6](#), [Part 7](#) and [Part 8](#).

Martha Saunders didn't just squander millions of dollars in student and taxpayer money on an airplane, or hundreds of thousands decorating the Presidential mansion's bedroom, or hundreds of thousands on a misguided, illegal computer tablet give-away scheme, or at least a million in mismanagement on athletics that we know of, etc. She spent approximately two and a half million dollars trying and failing to fire me for opposing and exposing the questionable conduct of USM faculty and administrators.

It’s your money -- your millions and millions of dollars. Taxpayer and students’ money. If you care to understand just how incompetent Martha Saunders is, take a front row seat at her deposition. And where were Hank Bounds and Aubrey Lucas? With millions being spent to try to fire DePree, you can bet they knew. And, you don't have to take anyone's word. Observe it for yourself. Her deposition continues below:

Questions directed to President Martha Saunders at her deposition on April 12 and 13, 2010 - -  
Q is question; A is President Saunders’ answer.

### Part 35

Q. When do you intend to review the depositions? *[Depositions were taken in 2008 of faculty and administrators who had made accusations in letters in 2007 to Saunders who relied on them to punish DePree. The claims in the letters and annual evaluations of DePree were recanted in the accusers’ sworn depositions.]*

A. I don't know.

Q. Do you think the information contained in this deposition would have been useful to you in evaluation Dr. Depree's appeal?

A. It may have.

Q. And do you intend to review it in conjunction with the appeal?

A. I don't know.

Q. And when will you know?

A. I don't know.

Saunders says, "I don't know...I don't know... I don't know." Three years Saunders has luxuriated in "I don't know." She "I don't knows" us to the point that we wonder what does she know? Since "I don't know" is her preferred answer, what does she spend her time doing? It does not take much time to prepare for "I don't know." We recommend that President Saunders spend less time posing for what appear to be either very old or air brushed photographs, which seem to be everywhere. We know what you look like. Stop with the public relations nonsense and actually prepare yourself so you don't have to answer, "I don't know...I don't know... I don't know." After all, taking the responsibility to fire a tenured full professor requires more work and more evidence than saying "I don't know...I don't know... I don't know."

### **Part 36**

Q. Dr. Saunders, you've made a great deal that [DePree's] grievances have been fully grieved and they will not be administratively revisited; is that correct?

A. I believe that's about what I said.

Q. Even if you were in error, they would not be revisited; is that true?

A. I can't say that it would or not happen.

Q. Do you intend to review the depositions [which shows her decisions were seriously flawed] in conjunction with your evaluation of these grievances and determine whether false statements were advanced to you in support?

A. I don't know.

Q. And when will you know?

A. I don't know.

Q. Do you have any present intention to review the depositions?

A. I can't say.

Q. When will you be able to say?

A. I don't know.

Q. Do false statements in evaluations give you concern?

A. Errors give me concern.

Q. And if they were deliberately false, do they give you more concern?

A. Yes.

“Yes,” Dr. Saunders says she is concerned about false representations in Professor DePree’s annual evaluations, but, “I don’t know,” is Saunders commitment to correcting deliberate, false representations in the evaluations. Her decisions have advanced those false representations to punish a full professor for speaking truth to power about petty corruption and misconduct at the School of Accountancy and College of Business, University of Southern Mississippi. Although they were readily available to her, Saunders has not reviewed the depositions in the years before this April 2010 deposition and Saunders has not reviewed them since April 2010. One might conclude that Dr. Saunders has no concern for the competent, honest conduct of her duties as president of USM. If she were secure in her leadership, she would review the depositions that show her decisions were seriously flawed and act with confidence and honesty in correcting her mistakes.

### **Part 37**

Q. Would it concern you if Dr. Jackson [Interim Director of USM’s School of Accountancy] testified that he had not read Dr. DePree’s research product?

A. I would find that odd, that a department chair had not done that.

Q. Would you go to page 40?

A. (Witness looks at document.) Okay.

Q. And I believe it starts about line 22: [Attorney reads questions directed to Interim Director Jackson at his deposition.] Okay. It’s my understanding that Dr. DePree created a case study based in the Wall Street Journal; is that correct?

A. [Saunders reading Interim Director Jackson’s answer.] That’s what I hear.

Q. Have you reviewed that case study?

A. [Saunders reading Interim Director Jackson’s answer.] I’ve never seen it.

Q. Have you asked to review it?

A. [Saunders reading Interim Director Jackson’s answer.] No.

Q. And you say that case study doesn't have anything to do with managerial accounting?

A. [Saunders reading Interim Director Jackson's answer.] Not in my mind.

Q. How could you make that determination if you hadn't reviewed the case study?

A. [Saunders reading Interim Director Jackson's answer.] Because managerial accounting has nothing to do with the use of the Wall Street Journal or the ethical behavior of the dean.

Q. How can he say that if he hadn't read it?

A. I don't know.

Q. Does it trouble you that a department chairman does not read publications before he reviews -- before he assigns rates [i.e., scores the research in DePree's annual evaluation]?

A. It would be unusual, although I'm not sure they all do.

Q. Do you know if Dr. Jackson read any of Dr. Depree's publications?

A. No.

Q. Have you asked him?

A. No.

Q. Were you aware that Dr. Jackson copied portions of a previous years' evaluations rather than seek or rely on objective evidence for his scores [of DePree's annual evaluation]?

A. No.

Interim Director Jackson refused to read (or perhaps he simply didn't bother because he had already made up his mind what the outcome would be and the content was irrelevant) Dr. DePree's research but scored his research as unsatisfactory in his annual evaluation. That decision was in spite of an "A" level publication which warranted an excellent score for DePree's research. President Saunders knew these details and still affirmed the unsatisfactory evaluation. She chose to participate in the mobbing of Professor DePree.