

# 'The Morgan Resignation' – Does Something Smell?

A Guest Editorial by **Victoria Tyler**

With Ed Kemp's 6-May-2010 [article](#) for *The Hattiesburg American* entitled "Morgan leaving USM post," we now have a good bit of information about the surprise resignation of USM chief financial officer Joe Morgan. Much of that information paints a picture suggesting that there is more to Morgan's [departure](#) from the CFO gig than official reports indicate. Here are the highlights:

- Morgan has about 20 years in at USM – the USM website says just under 20, while the various media are reporting just over 20.
- Morgan's resignation announcement came during an ongoing semester, much like the surprise "resignations" of former CoB dean and associate dean Harold Doty and Farhang Niroomand, respectively. Both of these came in April of 2007.
- Morgan is only 58 years old, per Kemp's 6-May-2010 report.
- Morgan's step-down date is 30-Aug-2010, just one day before tenured faculty at USM must be notified about termination after the 2010-11 academic year – this connection is drawn by Kemp in his 6-May-2010 article.
- Morgan is only leaving the CFO job, not USM, at least according to USM public relations official Jana Bryant, who spoke to Kemp for the 6-May-2010 news story. However, Bryant noted that Morgan's upcoming position "hasn't been completely defined yet."
- Morgan's resignation announcement hit the streets right smack in the middle of news that the USM Research Foundation is dealing with a *financial* scandal involving Pinion Properties, Saone Corporation, former USM employees Richard and Helene Hadden, and former USM provost Jay Grimes.
- Morgan rose to the CFO post in 2006, during the Shelby F. Thames administration (2002-07) of USM, arguably the most controversial administration in the institution's 100 years.
- Online followers of *THA* began slamming Morgan about as soon as the paper posted the news on its LATEST HEADLINES section on 5-May-2010.
- Morgan could not be reached for comment by Ed Kemp, *THA's* higher education reporter.

Why does a 58 year old who has a cushy USM CFO title, but not 25 years with PERS, resign the cushy USM CFO job? How/why did this all happen, and yet the person did not leave USM? And, why hasn't his next job at USM been defined yet? These questions are just the beginning of a list of questions that can be formulated from the bulleted information above. Isn't it time the USM faculty senate began asking some pointed questions of Saunders and USM provost Robert Lyman? Since 2007, it seems to some that this body has done next to nothing when it comes to questioning the current executive leadership team. How much longer can the USM community afford to wait?