

Part 11

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

Q. I believe you have the entire package of letters that was delivered to you. Would you tell me specifically what disruptive, intimidating and frightening behavior was described in these letters?

A. (Saunders looks at document.) One – and I'm just working my way through these.

Q. Please do.

A. In Dr. Steve Jackson's letter, he said that he had been told not to send emails on the USM network because Dr. Depree had access to all emails.

Q. Stop. How is that, to use your words, I believe, in paragraph five of your affidavit disruptive, intimidating and frightening behavior by Dr. Depree?

A. According to Dr. Jackson, he would have used them on his web site.

Q. And how is that disruptive, intimidating and frightening?

A. He doesn't say.

Q. Well why do you believe it was disruptive intimidating and frightening as you state in paragraph five of your affidavit? Would you like to look at paragraph five of your affidavit?

A. I probably should (looks at document). It does not specify nor can I understand from the context why it would be, but it was used as an example of things that they describe as my word is chilling.

Q. And how is that chilling, to use your word?

A. I think it is important to have open exchange of ideas in a department.

Q. I agree. Absolutely.

A. I think that if people feel that their ideas or opinions are going to be used against them in some way that that would have a chilling effect.

Q. And what did Dr. Depree do to make people feel that their opinions would be used against them to use your word?

A. I don't know.

Q. You have no evidence at all that he did anything?

A. I don't know that, correct.

Again, President Saunders doesn't have any evidence to support her punitive action against a tenured professor. At this point in our revelation of her decision-making habits, does President Saunders have any evidence for any of her decisions? The answer is no.

And here is a question that Dr. Saunders didn't bother to consider, how does a rank and file professor have access to all emails on the USM network? The answer is, the claim is stupid on its face. However, that didn't matter. Dr. DePree's colleagues couldn't tolerate differences of opinion. They wanted Dr. DePree silenced. Dr. Saunders was not going to let nonsensical and false claims get in her way.

When she decides that she wants to remove you from your classroom with a view toward taking your hard earned tenure, what evidence will she have? How will you know unless she is required to answer questions under oath? Of course, she is probably betting that in most cases she won't have to answer questions or defend her behavior.