

Part 23

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

Q. The (Interim Dean Williams') letter (that calls for the termination of tenured full professor DePree) states that Dr. Depree engaged in disruptive behavior by cursing and storming out of the [May 4, 2007] meeting in a manner that left faculty members fearful. Did you ask Dr. Williams what Dr. Depree actually did? [Keep in mind that President Saunders had a recording of the meeting—the best evidence available as to the events of the May 4, 2007 meeting—and choose not to listen to it.]

A. I don't remember.

Q. What does "storming out of the meeting" convey to you?

A. Leaving abruptly, slamming the door.

Q. Does any of that rise to the level of threatening behavior, leaving abruptly?

A. I wouldn't think so.

Q. Slamming a door?

A. No. It indicates anger, but...

Q. Not threatens violence?

A. Not necessarily, no.

Q. Is there anything that indicates that Dr. Depree left abruptly?

A. Is there anything where that indicates that?

Q. In any information that you have?

A. I don't recall that being said.

Q. Okay. Would you look at page 152 of Dr. Williams' testimony [sworn testimony which Saunders had chosen not to read until required to do so at the deposition.]?

A. (Saunders looks at document.) Okay.

Q. On line seven: Did he [DePree] throw a chair? And what did Dr. Williams say?

A. [Saunders reads Williams' sworn statement] He [DePree] did not throw a chair.

Q. Did DePree throw anything? That's line 16. What did he say?

A. [Saunders reads Williams' sworn statement] He [DePree] did not throw anything at all.

Q. Did he lunged at anybody? What did he answer?

A. [Saunders reads Williams' sworn statement] The answer was no.

Q. Did he make any type of physically threatening gesture at anybody? And what was the answer?

A. [Saunders reads Williams' sworn statement] No.

Q. So do you see evidence there that Dr. Depree behaved in a threatening manner?

A. No.

Q. Thank you. Did Dr. Williams specifically tell you the identity of any faculty who was left fearful?

A. I don't recall.

Q. Are you aware that Dr. Williams testified that he did not know of anyone who was fearful at the May 4th meeting other than himself?

A. No.

Q. And if he testified that, then his letter to you would be false?

A. I don't know that, that he testified that.

Q. Well, let's find it, and we'll look at it together. Let's go to page 157.

A. (Saunders looks at document.)

Q. Again, you can look before or after, but I'd like for you to start at about line 11 on page 157.

A. (Saunders looks at document.) Okay.

Q. The question is: And right now here today, some ten months later [from May 2007 till March 2008], you can't give me the name of a single person as you [Williams] recall in your mind of Mark Depree storming out of that room, can you?

Tell me the name of a single person who was fearful, can you? And what was his [Williams'] answer?

A. [Saunders reads Williams' sworn statement] I can't give you a specific other than myself.

Q. So when he says he left the faculty fearful, that was not supported by his testimony, was it?

A. It doesn't appear to.

Q. So is that statement false?

A. Well, it's contradicted.

Q. And which would you give more weight to, testimony under oath or a letter?

A. One would expect to give it to a testimony under oath.

Were Williams' claims of fear merely smoke to hide his motive to silence Dr. DePree? Dr. Williams, all by himself, delivered a letter from Dr. Saunders to Dr. DePree on the first day of class, fall 2007, and ordered him from the building. Williams' behavior belied his comments of fear. So, what are we to believe Williams was afraid of? Was he afraid his decision to allow Assistant Professor Dahklia to bushwack Professor DePree at the May 2007 faculty meeting with an off agenda item demanding DePree to be silent about his criticisms of faculty misconduct was cowardly? Was Williams afraid he had orchestrated a mobbing that was, on reflection, evidence of poor leadership? Was Williams afraid that the mobbing of DePree was a disgusting display reminiscent of intolerance to which Williams, an African-American male, should be knowledgeable? Or, was Williams just ashamed of himself for encouraging an attack on a fellow member of the faculty? Was he so ashamed he had to create a reason to justify his behavior?

While we can only speculate concerning Dr. Williams' reasons, we do know that Dr. Williams' sworn testimony contradicted his letter to Saunders in which he requested Saunders fire DePree. We know that Saunders punished a professor without a shred of evidence and without looking for a shred of evidence. When Dr. Saunders unilaterally decides who is worthy of the protection of our rules and procedures and the Constitution of the United States, she denies all of us our rights.