

## Part 29

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

Q. Have you reviewed Dr. DePree's research?

A. No.

Q. Do you know if he has sufficient refereed publications to meet presumption of academic qualification?

A. I do not. I'm told no.

Q. Who told you no, Dr. Saunders?

A. I've been told by the current dean and the provost.

Q. While Mr. Hooks is looking at that document, do you know how many publications are required for Dr. DePree to be considered prima facie academically qualified?

A. No.

Q. Have you asked how many publications would be required?

A. No.

Q. Have you reviewed Dr. DePree's vitae?

A. No... [Saunders looks at documents] It [USM College of Business AACSB self study] says given the mission of the accounting unit -- it uses as an example, three refereed publications including two journal articles.

Q. Do you know if Dr. Depree has three publi- -- two publications in refereed journals at another refereed proceeding?

A. I don't know.

Q. Have you checked?

A. No.

Q. Have you asked?

A. No.

Keep in mind, President Saunders was the decision-maker to initiate termination proceedings against Professor DePree. Ask yourself what a decision-maker does. Now consider that President Saunders had access to Professor DePree's research record for the relevant period. She could have accessed on her computer the USM research vita for Dr. DePree in a matter of seconds. That search would have identified several publications, two of which are "A" level publications (Publications are listed as A, B, C, and Other, similar to grades.) One paper won an award from the premier professional accounting organization. It was also reprinted in several ethics books and translated into foreign languages and published in a premier international professional accounting journal. Dr. Saunders would also have learned from the College of Business Handbook within ten seconds that the journal ranking system was developed for people just like her:

### **"Operation of the Journal Ranking Committee**

*3/25/2008*

#### **PURPOSE:**

AACSB requires that faculty publish in peer-reviewed journals to maintain disciplinary currency in their respective fields. A journal rankings list enables faculty to identify appropriate publication outlets that will help them maintain their status as academically qualified for AACSB purposes. Similarly, the new P&T document suggests the need for a journal rankings (henceforth JR) list to guide the P&T process.

Because departments include multiple disciplines, faculty members are often evaluated by someone *[like President Saunders]* who is outside their area of expertise. A J[ournal] R[anking] list would thus be invaluable for a department head seeking a fair and impartial evaluation of a faculty member who is outside his or her area of expertise.

Because the J[ournal] R[anking] list is used for performance evaluations, it also provides guidance for the types of journals that faculty members should target... We define four distinct ranking classes: A, B, C, and O... A and B journals are also peer-reviewed but are evaluated more stringently using acceptance rates, quality of editorial review board, and rankings in journal classification studies..."A" journals are considered top-tier journals for promotion, tenure, and merit evaluations."

Or, Dr. Saunders could have simply "Googled" *Chauncey M. DePree, Jr.* and she could have found many publications. Identifying the journal in the Journal Ranking list would have given her the School of Accountancy's peer-reviewed, well-considered views of the relative value of Professor DePree's publications. What do you think? Is it a task within the capability of any Phd? What about a life-long administrator? What about the president of a "world class" university?

How could President Saunders get away with such a display of ignorance and/or arrogant indifference to facts? The obvious answer is that she is immune from accountability. To paraphrase the legal scholar, Stewart E. Sterkz: **Greater immunity from accountability encourages greater misconduct.**

**Will you, dear colleague, be the focus of President Saunders' continuing misconduct? What is your hard-earned tenure really worth?**