



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
PLATTEVILLE
OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

April 23, 2015

Sabina Burton, Associate Professor
Department of Criminal Justice
University of Wisconsin-Platteville

Re: Complaint filed Against Dean Elizabeth Throop dated April 2, 2015

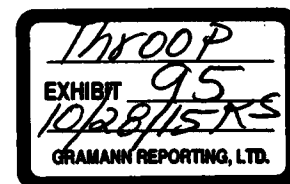
Dear Dr. Burton:

This letter serves as my official findings and determination in regard to a complaint filed by you against Dean Elizabeth Throop on April 2, 2015 (via email). In your complaint, you allege that Dean Throop falsely accused you of cancelling your classes on December 12, 2014 which you believe resulted in defamation against you.

Upon receipt of a complaint, I have the authority to investigate the complaint and issue a determination, dismiss the complaint, or submit the complaint to a standing committee for review. Upon receipt of this complaint, I chose to conduct an internal investigation into the allegations with the assistance of Dr. Dominic Barraclough, Director of Graduate Studies and Academic Projects. Dr. Barraclough conducted an investigation into the complaint and provided his written findings to me on April 8, 2015. Based upon his written findings, I have concluded that the initial allegations against you for cancelling classes on December 12, 2014 were not substantiated by factual evidence which was acknowledged by Dean Throop to you via an email on December 19, 2014. Therefore, no disciplinary action was issued against you.

In regard to your allegations against Dr. Throop, as a dean of a college, Dr. Throop is responsible for assuring that faculty members are conducting their official duties in accordance with their professional obligations, including conducting classes as expected. When information is obtained by a dean or chair that creates a reasonable doubt to whether a faculty member is fulfilling his or her professional duties, the dean or chair has an obligation to address the issue. In this case, that is what Dr. Throop attempted to do. However, admittedly, she failed to obtain sufficient information prior to issuing her email to you on December 12, 2014. In response to her failure to meet with you first, I have directed Dr. Throop to modify her approach to allegations involving faculty member misconduct in a manner that will include discussing the allegations with the faculty member (if the situation warrants such, which in this case, it did) prior to taking any type of action.

As to whether her conduct rises to the level of defamation, I find that such allegation is without merit. Dr. Throop based her accusations against you on a good faith belief of wrongdoing. Further, as an administrator, Dr. Throop is expected to address this type of alleged misconduct. In addition, she did not publish this information to an uninvolved third party. Finally, I find no

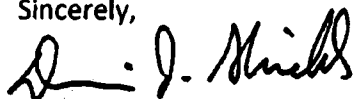


evidence of any actual harm caused to you or to your reputation by this incident. Therefore, I hereby dismiss your complaint against Dr. Throop and consider this matter closed.

I want to commend you for immediately responding to Dean Throop by stating you had taught class on the day in question. However, I do not condone involving students in these types of matters unless it is absolutely necessary. In this case, I believe both you and Dr. Throop could have handled the situation differently to avoid any direct student involvement.

If you have any questions or concerns in regard to my decision, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis J. Shields". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and "S".

Dennis J. Shields
Chancellor