



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
PLATTEVILLE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES

To: Chancellor Dennis Shields
From: Complaints and Grievances Commission
Re: Burton grievance against Caywood
Date: April 19, 2013

Dear Chancellor Shields,

On April 12, 2013 the Complaints and Grievances Commission held a hearing concerning a grievance filed by Dr. Sabrina Burton, a faculty member in the Department of Criminal Justice, against Dr. Thomas Caywood, the chair of that department.

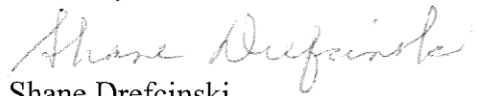
Dr. Burton alleges that Dr. Caywood has treated her in a demeaning and unfair way. Among the evidence she cites to support her allegations are: (1) He disapproved of the way in which she handled a student complaint raised last October against a faculty member of the Criminal Justice department. Specifically, despite assurances from HR that Burton had handled the student complaint appropriately, in an e-mail to department faculty and at a department meeting he disparaged her conduct in the student complaint matter. The male colleague who committed the offense that led to the student's complaint did not receive a public reprimand 2) He withdrew support for her AT&T grant proposal to work on curriculum that might lead to a cyber-security program at UW-Platteville shortly before she was scheduled to make a public acceptance of a \$7000.00 grant. Burton believes the late withdrawal of support is retaliation for how she handled the student complaint. (3) He consistently favors one of her male colleagues over her when it comes to professional and administrative decisions. Based on the behaviors listed above, Dr. Burton believes that Dr. Caywood has discriminated against her on the basis of her sex. She wants an official apology from Dr. Caywood and his removal from the position of chair; a clarification to AT&T that restores her tarnished reputation; consideration as chair of the next search and screen committee; and an office that she believes is appropriate to her rank.

At the hearing, Dr. Caywood admitted that he poorly handled the student complaint against the faculty member. He defended his last-minute withdrawal of support to her AT&T grant proposal, saying it was due to a concern that Dr. Burton was misrepresenting the university's commitment to a cyber-security program. He also denied that he discriminated against Dr. Burton or treated her unfairly. For example, he noted that he voted in favor of her request to receive early tenure and almost always approved her requests for overloads.

Given the evidence presented to us, the Commission believes there is not sufficient support for the charges of sexual discrimination. There is, however, ample evidence of departmental dysfunction. There is evidence for the appearance of favoritism towards one of Dr. Burton's male colleagues. There is also evidence of some lack of support for Dr. Burton, especially in the chair's serious mishandling of the student complaint and in his lack of oversight and miscommunication concerning the AT&T grant proposal and the development of a cyber-security program.

The Complaints and Grievances Committee recommends: (1) the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Education write a letter of explanation to AT&T which clarifies the status of a cyber-security program at UW-Platteville and which also tries to restore Dr. Burton's professional reputation; (2) the Criminal Justice department take steps to resolve the dysfunction within the department, such as communication training; (3) the Criminal Justice department take advantage of Dr. Burton's willingness to be more actively involved in the hiring of new faculty members; and (4) a third party needs to investigate further how the breach experiment which prompted a student complaint was handled before and after the experiment took place.

Sincerely,



Shane Drefcinski

Chair of the Complaints and Grievances Committee

CC: Dr. Sabina Burton, Department of Criminal Justice
Dr. Thomas Caywood, Chair, Department of Criminal Justice
Dr. Elizabeth Throop, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Education